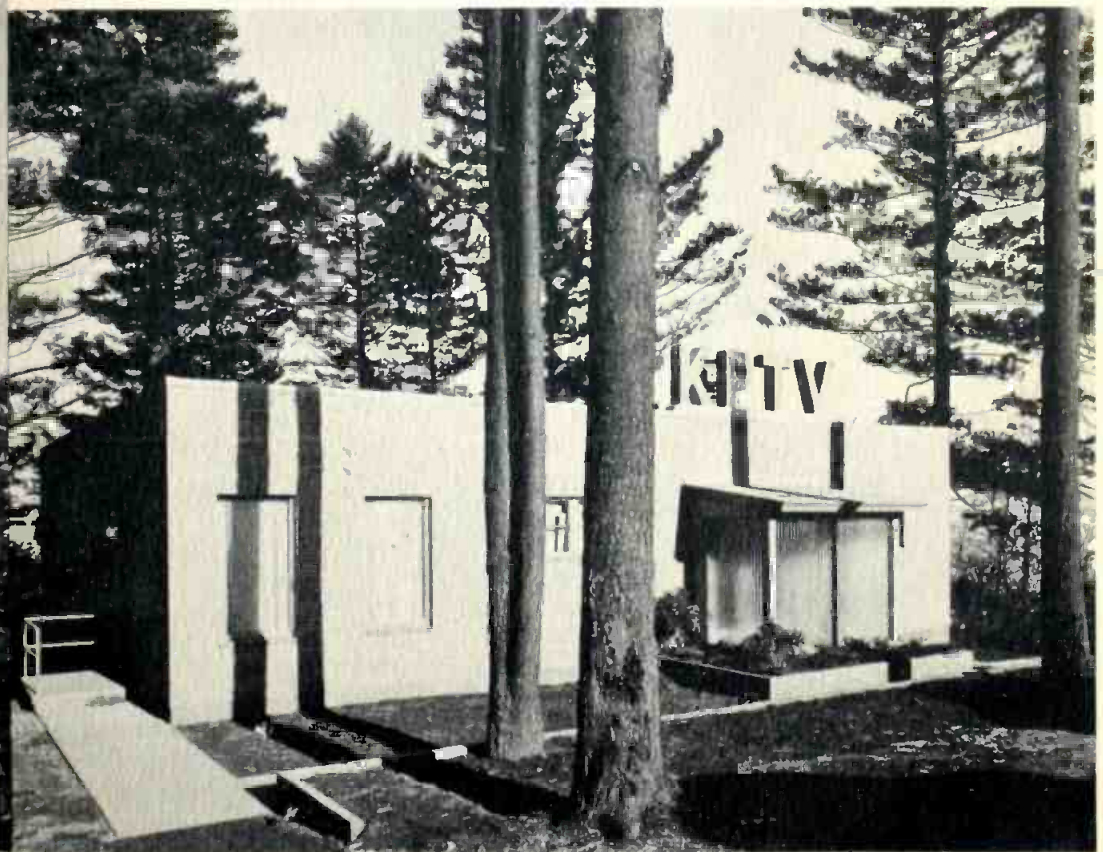
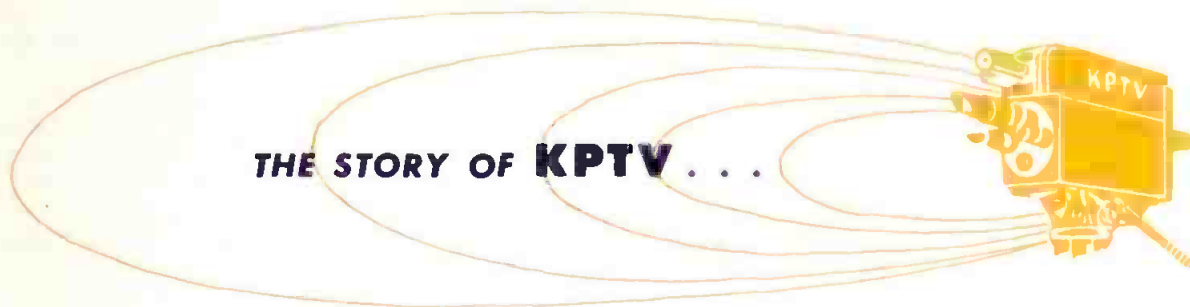


THE STORY OF **KPTV**



*Channel 27 . . . Portland, Oregon*



**Channel 27 . . . Portland, Oregon**

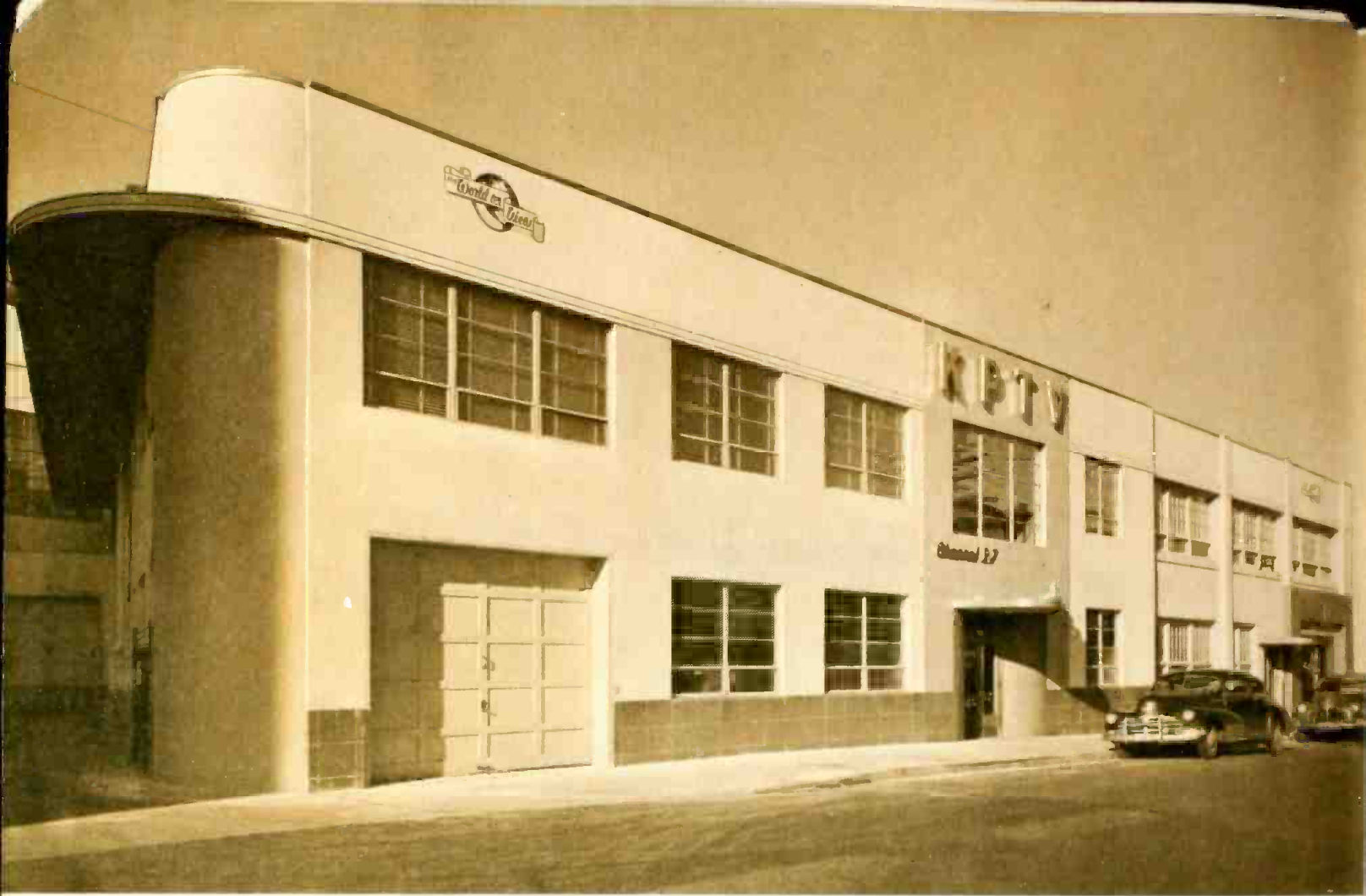
*Depicting the construction and initial operations  
of the first commercial UHF station.*

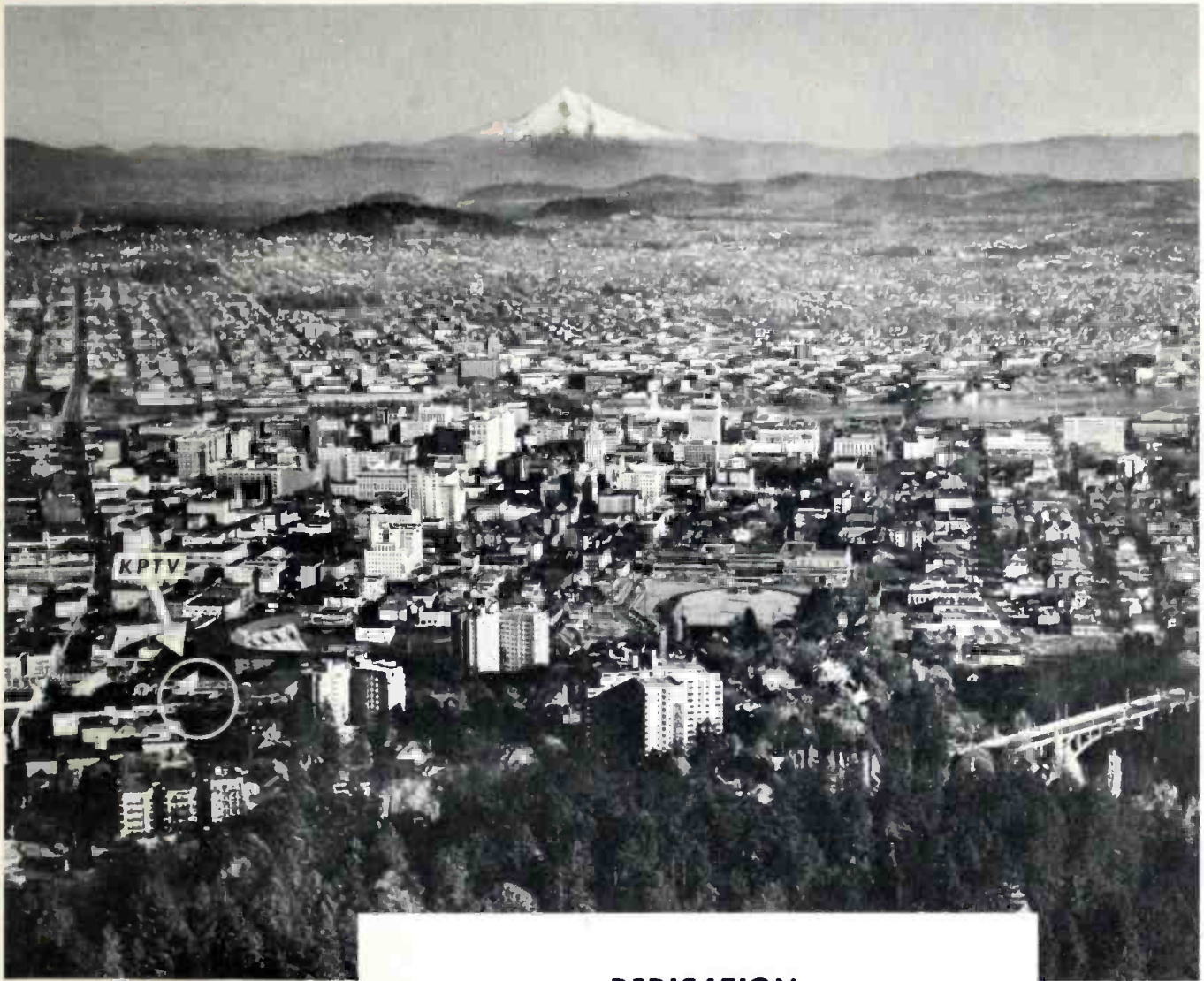


**Owned and operated by  
EMPIRE COIL COMPANY, INC.**

Copyright 1953 by EMPIRE COIL COMPANY, INC., New Rochelle, New York







## DEDICATION

*Dedicated to the men and women of our company who have worked together as a family team. Through their diligence, ingenuity and faith Empire Coil Company has built this station.*

*Herbert Mayer*

*Herbert Mayer*

March 1, 1953  
Portland, Oregon





**T**his is the story of television's coming to Portland. It is a story as drama-packed as any KPTV will ever telecast.

Long after citizens of all other large American cities were laughing and learning by television, Portlanders were without it.

Townspesople chafed. Visitors quipped. The most-frequently asked question on Portland streets came to be: "When do we get television?"

Nobody knew, but everybody guessed. Some said in six months. Some said in six years. Some said never—because, they declared, Portland was a handicapped child—born "television-blind."

Then, suddenly, Portland papers told an elated commonwealth that Portland had the green light for TV as far as the Federal Communications Commission was concerned—and on August 25, 1952 there began a fast-moving panorama that saw completed, in a miracle three-week period, all construction, tests and operations necessary to make KPTV a functioning television station.

It was a great day for Oregonians when the first program was telecast: September 20, 1952. The story of that proud day is here told, in news stories, pictures, comments of national and city officials, and in the resounding commendation of the television industry.

The industry itself declared it was an historic event not only for Oregon, but also for the world, because it ushered in commercial ultra high frequency television.

**FOREWORD, CONTINUED . . .**

A page from the October issue of Martin Codel's *Television Digest*, reprinted in this booklet, says in part :

*"Portland's KPTV, which as the pioneer UHF station is becoming a sort of petted darling of the industry, got an exceptional sendoff October 1, when, just prior to the opening World Series telecast, owner Herbert Mayer's very telegenic 14-year-old daughter Sandra went before NBC-TV cameras to present a scroll to RCA's Brig. Gen. David Sarnoff.*

*"Portland and the rest of the network first saw and heard FCC chairman Paul Walker welcome KPTV as 'harbinger of the more abundant TV to come.'*

*"Sarnoff referred to Mayer's effort as being 'in the traditional pioneer spirit of the great Northwest,' and likened the opening of 'new UHF frontiers' to the Lewis and Clark expedition."*

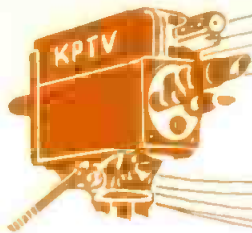
This, then, is the "petted darling's" baby-book. The birth announcements, first photographs and congratulations of friends are all here.

They're small and humble documents, perhaps: news clippings which will yellow; trade publication comments which will date themselves. Yet, linked, they report a "blessed event" which Oregon knows to be neither small nor humble—but instead, for this part of the great West, the beginning of a new era; a new way of life.

November 14, 1952



Edgar W. Smith, President  
PORTLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



## WORLD PREMIERE OF UHF . . .

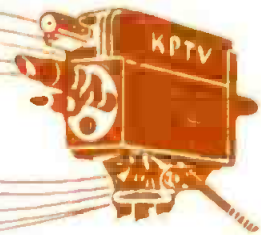
KPTV Presents  
The Inauguration of Television in Portland  
and  
The First Commercial UHF Broadcast in History  
Saturday, September 20, 1952

### PROGRAM

12:00 NOON	RECEPTION GRAND BALLROOM, MULTNOMAH HOTEL
1:00 P. M.	LUNCHEON
2:00 P. M.	ADDRESSES
3:00 P. M.	BUSSES TO COUNCIL CREST
3:30 P. M.	INSPECTION TOUR TRANSMITTER BUILDING
4:00 P. M.	BUSSES TO BENSON HOTEL
4:30 P. M.	FIRST PROGRAM ON THE AIR
5:00 P. M.	ALL STAR REVUE
6:00 P. M.	SHOW OF SHOWS
7:30 P. M.	SIGN OFF

Refreshments will be served during the Show of Shows, which continues until 7:30 P. M. Each guest may invite an additional person to the Benson Hotel to view the first television program in Portland. Kindly ask your guest to arrive before 4:30 P. M.

## INAUGURATION ADDRESS . . .



### INAUGURATION ADDRESS

*On Saturday, September 20, at 4:30 p.m. the first program to be broadcast by KPTV began in Portland, Oregon. At that time, the station's signature appeared on the screen, and a voice—unidentified at the outset—introduced the program about to become the first of its kind. Following is that introduction given to Commercial UHF broadcasting:*

"Ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. This is Television Station KPTV—Portland, the World on View, Channel 27. We are signing on the air this 20th day of September, 1952, in accordance with authority granted to us by the Federal Communications Commission.

"You are about to witness the inauguration of television in Portland, and the first commercial UHF broadcast in history. In a few minutes you will see a motion picture entitled "Success Hill," produced and sponsored by the Radio Corporation of America. This film depicts the story of a famous experimental television transmitter. To us in Portland as we watch this picture, it will be interesting to realize that we are seeing the very transmitter which is now at work for us here, and which is giving us the visual story of its own history. This is the only transmitter of its kind in the world! It was built by RCA and used by NBC's experimental station, KC2XAK, which con-

cluded its operations August 25th in Bridgeport, Conn., at the other side of the nation.

"On that day, a large crew of trained and skilled engineers from NBC, RCA, Adler Communications Laboratory and Empire Coil Company participated in the dismantling of the equipment. At the same time, expert tower men began to take down the 210-foot heavy-duty tower which now stands so majestically at the summit of Council Crest.

"In addition to the shipment of the transmitter in Bridgeport, many other items of equipment had to be built and procured. New crystals tuned for Channel 27 were ground and aged. The filterplexer, a complicated and essential part of the equipment, had to be completely remodeled. This was taken immediately by Empire Coil Company's truck to Portland, Maine, where it was worked upon around the clock. An entirely new transmitting antenna for use on Channel 27 had to be built.

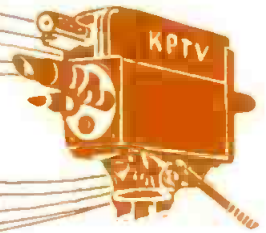




GUESTS OF KPTV . . .



ON WITH THE SHOW . . .



Film cameras and a whole long list of related and auxiliary equipment were shipped here by air. A special express car attached to a passenger train was the transportation medium used to bring our 41-foot antenna here on schedule.

"On that same day, August 25th, at this side of the nation, on Council Crest here in Portland, a ground-breaking ceremony took place. At that time, Empire Coil Company was accorded a heart-warming welcome by civic leaders of the city. During the ensuing period, rapid preparations were made here to house the transmitter, to prepare foundations for the tower, to provide adequate power and to make available video and audio network service over the telephone lines.

"Many ifs, ands, and buts hung over us during that period after August 25th. But on September 13th we were ready to go, except that approval of FCC had yet to be obtained. This was granted us September 17th. September 18th, we tested our equipment—and to our great relief the signal proved excellent. Today our first television program is about to begin.

"We feel that this rapid installation has served a major purpose for you, our television audience.

"First, it will enable us to give you television this fall. We know that many of you want to see the world series baseball games, the football games, and other major sports events this year. By virtue of our being ready at present, they will be yours to enjoy. The election campaign and the forthcoming election itself may now also be followed by you visually. And the many delightful entertainment programs to be shown will, we hope, add

to your pleasure of living. And last but not least, religious and educational programs will offer you many benefits of high value.

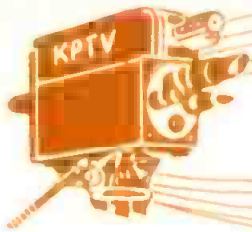
"We did not disclose this earlier-on-the-air date until recently, because we weren't sure of it ourselves and because we thought that non-disclosure would help to avoid the sale and distribution of bootlegged and defective sets in this area. Such a development might have caused you many disappointments, as it did residents of Denver. We are glad that condition has been avoided here.

"Before this first program begins, I wish to express deepest appreciation to Mayor Dorothy McCullough Lee and to members of the City Council, who, through their immediate attention to the matter at hand, made available to us a site on Council Crest, which we believe to be the best location for Portland television service. The Hoffman Company "rubbed Aladdin's lamp" and there before us was our transmitter building, a miracle of speed. The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company and the Portland General Electric Company did a splendid job in aiding us to complete our installations on schedule. RCA and NBC have had their executive personnel and engineers working with our own engineers and staff tirelessly to get the necessary equipment installed and on the air at the earliest moment. They, too, did a magnificent job.

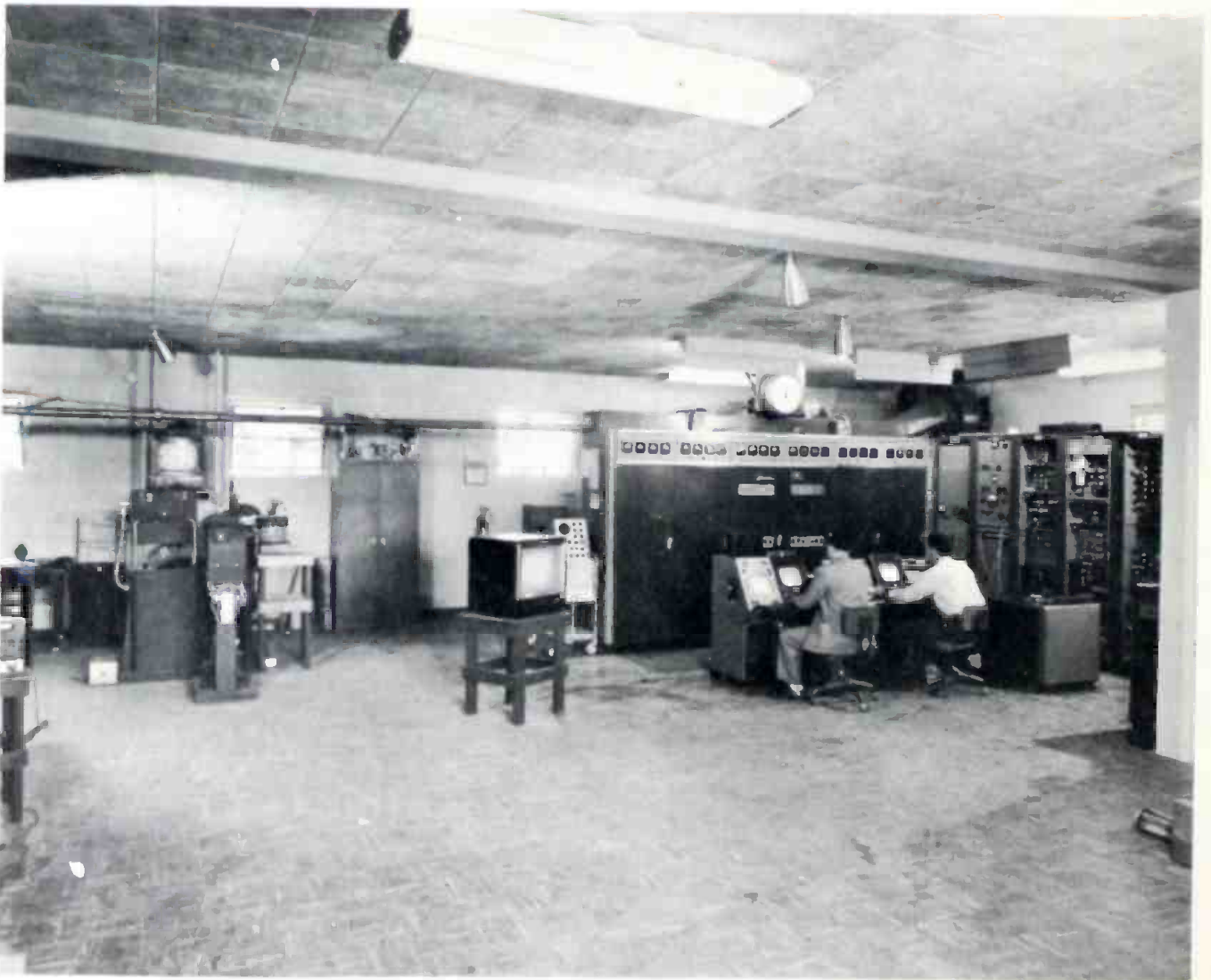
"Congratulations to all of these people on the fine contributions they have made. Without their splendid help this result could not have been achieved.

"To bring you good television service quickly, has been our one prevailing desire during the past 25 days. It was to achieve that

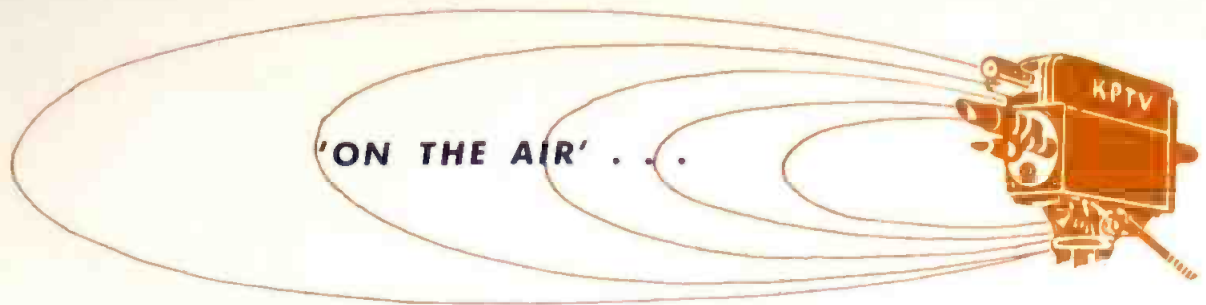




BUILT IN 14 DAYS . . .







goal that so many of us have worked so hard. We sincerely hope that this effort will prove to be worth your while and that KPTV will provide you with a new source of enjoyment and happiness. To that end we dedicate this station, today.

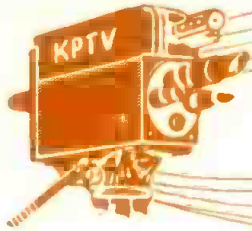
"My name is Herbert Mayer, and this is indeed a thrilling and happy day for my family and for me. We all thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your warm welcome and hospitality.

"And now the historic moment has arrived.

The eyes of the nation are focused on you here today. The success of UHF in Portland will mean great things for that wonderful service across the land. Ironically enough, this city—the largest city heretofore unserved by television—is the pioneer of the United States and the world in this great new television medium—UHF—soon to serve millions of your fellow-citizens from coast to coast. And so, let us now witness the inauguration of television in Portland and the first commercial UHF broadcast in history!"



**ON** the following pages, appear a sequence of selected news releases and photographs giving a pictorial history of events which transpired commencing with ground-breaking ceremonies on August 25, 1952.



CONSTRUCTION STARTS . . .

# STREET **Oregon** *DAILY* **Journal** FINAL

Portland's Only Home-Owned Newspaper

VOL. LI. NO. 145    PORTLAND, OREGON, MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 1952    PRICE 5c

## TODAY: Heave-Ho for TV



**DIRT FLEW** this morning at Council Crest park transmitter site of KPTV, city's first authorized television station. Hard ground drew heavy shovel work by Sandra Mayer (left), daughter of station owner, and Mayor Dorothy McCullough Lee. Amused spectators are (from left) City Commissioners Nate Boody and Fred L. Peterson. Edgar Smith, president of Portland Chamber of Commerce, and R. G. Freeman, vice president of Empire Coil company, holder of TV license.

By **JOE STEIN**

Television may hit Portland sooner than Thanksgiving day, it was hinted this morning at ground-breaking ceremonies for the city's first station.

The word came from the lips

talks were made by Mayor Dorothy McCullough Lee, Edgar Smith, president of the Portland Chamber of Commerce; City Commissioners Fred L. Peterson and Nate Boody and representatives of the telephone and power companies.

sist of a 210-foot steel antenna tower and a transmitter building. L. H. Hoffman, general contractor, said work would begin before noon today. Plans call for completion of both structures within five or six weeks.

Freeman said the first parts of

NEWSPAPERS HEADLINE IT . . .



# RITE BREAKS GROUND FOR CREST TV

★ STAR EDITION

Tel. Columbia 2121

Printed at Portland, Oregon

28 PAGES

# The Oregonian

VOL. XCII—NO. 28,642

PORTLAND, OREGON, TUESDAY, AUGUST 28, 1952

PRICE FIVE CENTS

## WELCOME VOICED FOR CITY

Picture on This Page

Empire Coil company broke ground on Council Crest Monday for a hurry-up construction project aimed at giving Portland television by Thanksgiving.

The first shovelful of dirt was turned by Mayor Dorothy McCullough Lee, Edgar W. Smith and Miss Sandra Mayer, 14-year-old daughter of Empire Coil company's owner, so far as posterity is concerned.

However, Smith, president of the chamber of commerce, lost his grip on the shovel to Mrs. Lee and Miss Mayer, who coordinated smoothly.

Richard G. Freeman, vice president and purchasing agent of Empire Coil, said a 210-foot temporary tower and transmitting station will go up on the site.

### Rapid Completion Seen

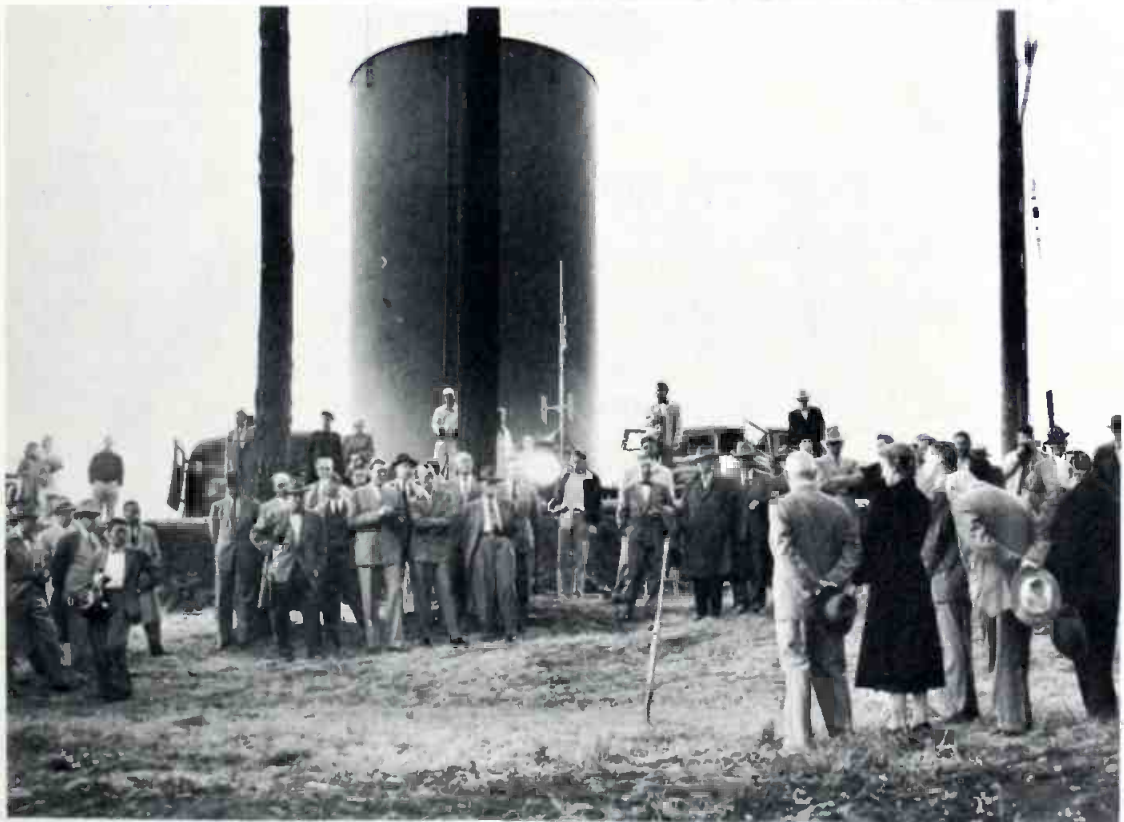
The station building will be completed within five to six weeks and equipment will begin to arrive next month, Freeman told a substantial group of Portland civic leaders and city council members.

He lauded co-operation of the council which made expedited construction possible.

Miss Mayer, who was flown to Portland from California to represent her father, Herbert Mayer, delighted the audience with a description of what her four younger siblings think of television. She also read a letter from her father.

Brief talks summarizing Portland's interest in TV and welcoming the company to Portland were made by Mayor Lee, Smith, Commissioners Fred L. Peterson and Nate Boody, Verne

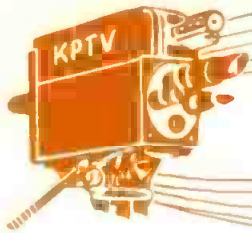
## Council Crest Ground Broken for First Portland TV



Civic leaders, shivering under leaden skies, turn out for a ground-breaking ceremony on Council Crest, where Empire

Coil company will construct Portland's first television station. Company expects to be on the air by Thanksgiving at latest.





'TEST TUBE CITY' . . .

MARTIN CODEL'S

AUTHORITATIVE NEWS SERVICE  
FOR MANAGEMENT  
OF THE  
VISUAL BROADCASTING  
AND ALLIED ELECTRONICS  
ARTS AND INDUSTRY

# Television Digest

with **ELECTRONICS REPORTS**

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY RADIO NEWS BUREAU • WYATT BLDG. • WASHINGTON 5, D.C. • TELEPHONE STERLING 1755 • VOL. 8, No. 35

August 30, 1952

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Network TV-Radio Billings, January-July, page 10

**PORTLAND WILL BE UHF 'TEST TUBE' CITY:** It's clear now that Portland, Ore., granted CP for uhf while city's vhf go to competitive hearings, will be the proving ground for commercial uhf -- eyed intently by every other grantee or prospective grantee.

That Portland will have first uhf station on the air, possibly by Election Day Nov. 4, definitely by Thanksgiving Day, was fairly well assured this week when RCA-NBC sold to Channel 27 grantee Empire Coil Co. their famed Bridgeport (Conn.) "guinea pig" transmitter and began at once to dismantle it for immediate shipment to Portland -- tower and all.

Empire Coil's president Herbert Mayer, who built and operates the highly successful vhf WXEL, Cleveland, and holds CP also for uhf Channel 26 in Denver, broke the news of his definite plans and purposes this week coincident with ground-breaking ceremonies for his building on Portland's city-owned Council Crest.

Most of city is within 5-6 miles of antenna, which is 1300-ft. above town. Since city is very flat, 20-kw radiated from 210-ft. tower is expected to provide good reception. All 4 networks will feed programs to station (to be called KPTV). It may get as much as year's head start on any vhf station there, thus placing the burden on set makers to see to it that uhf receivers and converters are available.

The Bridgeport station and its equipment are well known to trade, operating as experimental KC2XAK since Dec. 29, 1949 -- used not only by RCA-NBC for propagation tests but by nearly all manufacturers for testing uhf receivers. It requires some modification for the Portland channel, including new antenna.

RCA-NBC are giving up Bridgeport after what technical v.p. Dr. C.B. Jolliffe says was "an expenditure of more than \$3,000,000 [on this] vital factor in making uhf technically and commercially practicable for home use throughout the nation."

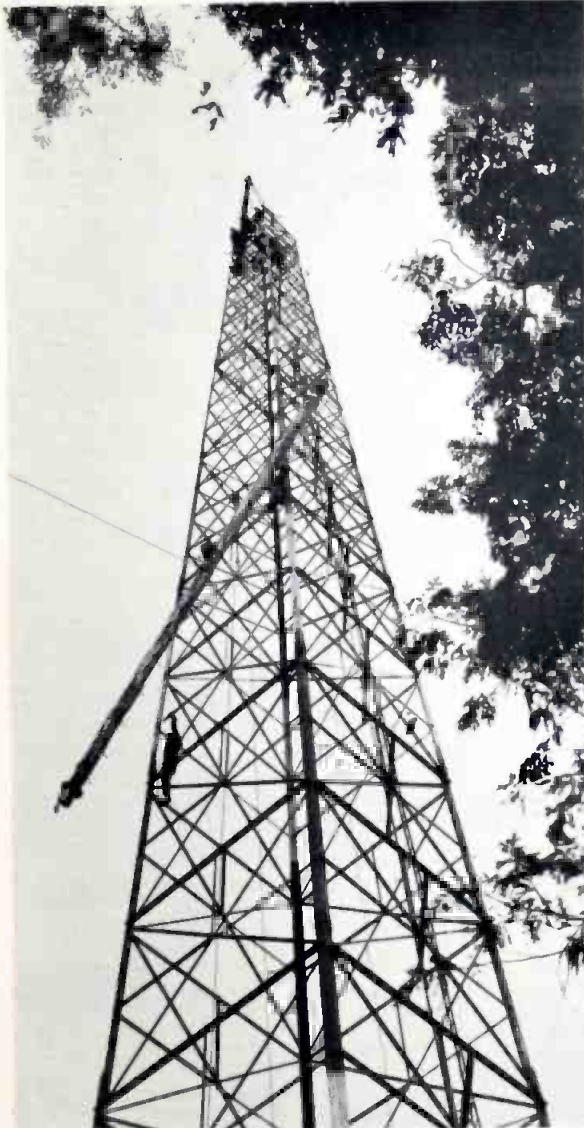
With resources of RCA and other big equipment makers behind uhf, with FCC eager to get it going, those channels are gaining favor. But most applicants prefer vhf, seek uhf only when it's only thing available. They want to wait-&-see how uhf works out for other fellow. Portland operation looks like one they're waiting for.

ANTENNA TOPS TOWER . . .



THE OREGONIAN, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1952

# TV Grows High Over Portland



**HOISTING** A 41-foot-long television antenna is shown being lifted to the top of a new 210-foot TV tower atop Council Crest Thursday. A red beacon on top of the antenna will be in line of sight of most of Portland.



**DISHPAN** On roof of new television building, which is near tower (background), a "dishpan" antenna was also raised Thursday and was beamed to the dishpan tower on top of telephone building, where microwaves are sent.

## TV Antenna Set on Top Of Tower

### Council Crest UHF Mast First Built For Portland Use

Pictures on Wirephoto Page  
Many cars crowded atop Council Crest Thursday evening as Portlanders gathered to watch the city's first television broadcasting antenna hoisted to the top of a new 210-foot tower. The steel tower on which the 41-foot antenna was placed was raised in only two days. When the antenna was delivered by truck to Council Crest, D. A. Johnson, technician for Radio Corporation of America, carefully tested it before it was hoisted. Johnson said it was the only ultrahigh frequency antenna yet raised in the country west of the Mississippi. He said two other UHF antennae had been

### Monitor Receives Signal

"Engineers 'beamed' the dishpan at the sending tower on the downtown telephone building, where TV signals have been sent for some time to Seattle, and when the hook-up was completed, a monitor TV set in the station began receiving the television program.

Officials of Empire Coil company's KPTV warned, however, that hoisting of the dishpan and of the sending antenna, which, with its red beacon, will now become a familiar sight on Portland's skyline, does not mean that television will be in the city tomorrow.

Richard Freeman, KPTV vice president, again scotched rumors that test patterns were definitely planned to be sent in a week or two. He said much electronic work still remained and, although the company was rushing its work as fast as possible, no change had been announced in its plans for beginning operations during November.

But engineers were working fast to install the complicated TV equipment now arriving in the city for the new station. The antenna came to Portland Thursday morning by Railway Express from Philadelphia.

Express officials said the antenna required a special car and special handling, for, although constructed of 1/2-inch steel tubing, its interior was "very delicate."



TELECASTS 48 HOURS AWAY . . .

# Oregon Journal

PORTLAND, OREGON, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1952

## Oregon's First TV Telecasts Due Saturday

### FCC Approves Empire Coil's Authorization

Portland's first television station almost certainly will begin commercial telecasting Saturday.

The Journal received word Wednesday from its Washington, D. C. bureau that the federal communications commission at Washington, meeting secretly, had notified an attorney for Empire Coil company that its application to begin operations here on that day had been granted.

The precise time for the initial telecast was not determined but the most logical guess is that it will coincide with the Empire Coil luncheon at the Multnomah hotel Saturday noon for press representatives and other invited guests.

#### MAYOR, MAYER IN

Definite word on the time awaited the arrival in the city of Herbert Mayer, Empire Coil president, and Mayor Dorothy McCullough Lee. Both were scheduled to arrive late Wednesday. The mayor will pull the switch officially opening the company's transmitter on Council Crest.

The Journal's Washington correspondent said the Empire Coil attorney refused to be quoted but indicated the information had been confirmed and was to be relayed to Mayer on his arrival in Portland. KPTV officials here were saying nothing.

In the application filed Monday with the FCC, Mayer requested a special temporary authorization to start "interim operation." The application stated that KPTV would begin commercial telecasting Saturday.

A test pattern probably will be sent out before Saturday, but Mayer indicated that telecasting of programs would not start until then.

#### WORK RUSHED

Meantime, work is being rushed on the telecasting transmitter and antenna atop Council Crest, where micro-wave relay equipment already perches on the roof of the brick transmitter building.

One of the troubles Portlanders who own TV sets may face is that of reception—if they bought the sets up until a short time ago. KPTV will telecast on ultra high frequency (UHF), whereas the channel 5 telecasts received here from Seattle are very high frequency (VHF). Old sets will have to be adapted for the Portland signal.

#### OPINIONS VARIED

Installation and repair experts here offered varied opinions about whether VHF antennas will receive UHF telecasts. One large firm handling TV sales, installation and service said present

### TV Blindness May End Soon

*Continued From Page One*

VHF aerials can be used in some areas with the addition of an inexpensive "rabbit ear" or "bow tie" antenna for UHF reception.

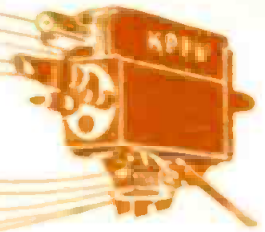
According to the FCC, interim authorization is granted when the commission decides a station may transmit programs even though it may not entirely meet the terms of its original station grant.

In his application, Mayer said some equipment for full operation of KPTV will not be delivered until late in 1953, so he plans to run the station on a modified basis. The station's grant specifies that it will have effective radiated power of 88 kilowatts from a 5-kilowatt transmitter. The new application asks permission to telecast with 17.6 kilowatts of effective radiated power from a 1-kilowatt transmitter. (The antenna will boost that power by 21 times.)

Reception in the Portland area still should be good, if engineers are correct in their figuring, with only one fifth output. With the tower on its high location in Council Crest park, reception may be had as far away as 50 miles on the basis of experience elsewhere.



TELEVISIONARY ARRIVES . . .



THE OREGONIAN, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1953

# 'Mr. TV.' Family Visit Portland



**ARRIVES** Herbert Meyer, head of firm that will operate the Portland TV station, arrived in city with his family Wednesday. With him are Mrs. Meyer and four of the couple's five children, Margie, Tommy, Carlo and Sandra.

By B. Mike

## Behind the Mike

**SATURDAY WILL BE TV DAY** for Portland, quick transition from last city in country without TV station to first with one. UHF . . . whole nation will be watching to see what happens when first program is sent TV into this afternoon. . . . Production here led by Paul A. Walker, NBC division, in long-distance phone conversation with The Oregonian. . . . to release the one station was fully aware of Portland's attitude to run TV and to build media structure otherwise type of Portland policy (top) conditions conditions has placed in UHF operating. . . . Walker arrived here with high sense of responsibility. . . . for and competitors did everything humanly possible to register "UHF" for KPDX to do as he. . . . on other hand, Portlandian should be grateful to Herbert Meyer for national change for one station to start a short time. . . . national requirements regarding station as what happens when TV suddenly lay down and by more than a half million potential viewers. . . . to a fact that UHF is better than VHF.



KPTV TESTING . . . TESTING . . .

# The Oregonian

PORTLAND, OREGON, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1952

## FCC Approves Start of TV Programs Saturday

### Test Signal Airing Due Thursday

Regular Schedule For Initial Station Seen by October 1

BY WILLIAM LAMBERT  
Staff Writer, The Oregonian

Pictures on Wirephoto Page

The federal communications commission Wednesday removed one obstacle facing KPTV in its headlong race to give Portland residents their first locally-broadcast television by Saturday, and station engineers got ready for tests aimed at surmounting the last remaining obstacle—technical bugs.

Both developments coincided with the arrival in Portland of Herbert Mayer, president of Empire Coil company, New Rochelle, N. Y., firm which

#### FIRST TELEVISION SEEN IN PORTLAND DISTRICT

Portland's first television station, KPTV, went on the air for the first time early Thursday when it broadcast a test signal from its 251-foot tower-antenna installation in Council Crest park.

Officials of the station and RCA test cars said reception of the first test pattern signal was "excellent" and sound was "wonderful."

owns the station. Mayer, his wife and four of their five children arrived by plane Wednesday afternoon.

The dapper, 44-year-old executive—Mr. TV himself as far as Portland is concerned—immediately confirmed a report published exclusively by The Oregonian Tuesday that he intends KPTV to broadcast its first commercial television program Saturday.

#### Regular Programs Due Later

But regularly scheduled programs probably will not be on the air until October 1—the target date set by the station—Mayer explained.

En route to Portland he learned that the FCC had approved the application he filed Monday seeking to put the station on an "interim operation" with lower power than he originally had asked.

Wednesday afternoon Paul A. Walker, FCC chairman, told The Oregonian by long-distance telephone from Washington, D. C., that a few minutes before the agency had approved Empire Coil's request.

The approval, which communications people call a "special temporary authorization," will permit the station to broadcast with an effective radiated power of 17.6 kilowatts until it gets equipment next year to boost its output to 88 kilowatts.

#### Test Signals Planned

Station engineers and other television technicians immediately got ready to test KPTV's transmitting equipment, in line with the FCC's order which also authorizes it to send test signals starting Thursday.

Mayer said the first test signals probably would go on the air at 12:01 a. m. Thursday, but emphasized that the first test patterns "probably won't be very good pictures."

KPTV's first commercial broadcast will be an NBC network program to be put on the air Saturday, probably about 4:30 p. m. DST, Mayer said. This broadcast may be timed to coincide with a luncheon party the station head has scheduled for Saturday afternoon in the Multnomah hotel for press representatives and other invited guests.

#### World Series May Be Aired

Several television sets were to be installed in the Benson hotel, and it was reported that Mayer intends to invite the group to move there from the Multnomah to watch the first commercial program transmission if it goes on the air as scheduled at about 4:30.

Complete program for the Saturday broadcast will be announced Thursday, Mayer said.

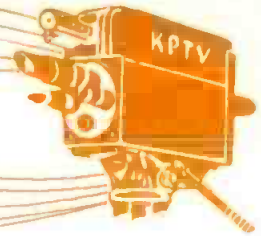
Target date for regularly scheduled programs is October 1, he said. If technical difficulties can be overcome and that schedule is met, the station will be able to carry the world series games. It also will be on in plenty of time to catch the final days of the political campaign and the election.

#### Tests Due During Day

Until that date, KPTV probably will have programs but not on regular schedules. Some network shows, some motion picture films will be telecast, probably in the evenings, during the ten-day period preceding the target date for regular schedules.

Daytime broadcasts will be devoted mostly to test patterns to permit adjustment of individual owners' television sets. Patterns will be on the air from 9 a. m. to 5 p. m. during this period, and will be broadcast occasionally after October 1.

TV PREMIERE PLANNED . . .



PORTLAND, OREGON JOURNAL

September 19, 1952

## Test Patterns Sent; 'Live' TV Saturday

Portland's first television station, KPTV, plans to broadcast three hours of "live" television from 4:30 to 7:30 p. m., PDT, Saturday for TV's premiere appearance from a Portland transmitter.

Television broadcasting began in Portland at 12:01 a. m. Thursday when KPTV started telecasting a stationary geometric test pattern. KPTV thus became the first commercial station in the United States to telecast in the recently authorized ultra high frequency (UHF) range.

The station made its first sound broadcast, lasting about 20 seconds, at 12:15 a. m. Thursday. The sound part of television is carried by frequency modulated (FM) radio. Both the audible and visible signals are broadcast from KPTV's temporary transmitter tower on Council Crest.

Saturday the Empire Coil company, owner of KPTV, has planned a full afternoon of entertainment for invited guests, marking the start of program telecasting. R. G. Freeman, vice president of the company, announced.

### SPEECHES SLATED

Following a noon reception and luncheon at the Multnomah hotel, the guests will hear speeches

by Mayor Dorothy McCullough Lee; Edgar W. Smith, president of the Portland Chamber of Commerce, and Herbert F. Mayer, president of Empire Coil.

Guests then will be taken by chartered bus to Council Crest to visit the transmitter. They will return to the Benson hotel, where distributors have been invited to set up sets.

Freeman said actual telecasting will begin at 4:30 p. m. Saturday with a half-hour program, from film, showing KPTV's operations. At 5 p. m. the station will hook into the transcontinental network for the "All-Star Review, a regular TV feature starring Jimmy Durante and Margaret Truman.

From 6 p. m. until its signoff at 7:30 p. m. Saturday the station will carry another network feature, the "Show of Shows," featuring Imogene Coca and Sid Caesar, two of the greatest Eastern TV attractions.

Three different test patterns were transmitted from KPTV during the day Thursday, and monitoring engineers said the pictures were amazingly good. Good reception was reported from as far away as Salem, and fair reception in Corvallis.

A few sound signals also were broadcast by the station Thursday, and occasionally the test pattern was transformed into a "live" show when a moving hand, apparently that of a station engineer, appeared on the screen.

Mayer, who arrived in Portland Wednesday night, said telecasting of regularly scheduled programs is expected to begin October 1, with only intermittent broadcasting between Saturday and then.

With an interim operation permit granted by the federal communications commission Wednesday,

KPTV was allowed to begin testing.

### WORLD SERIES DUE

"If the tests are satisfactory," Mayer said, "the target date for regularly scheduled programs will be October 1. We will open with a coast-to-coast salute preceding a network World Series telecast."

He said stations throughout the country probably will salute KPTV as Portland's first station and the first UHF station in history.

Some programs probably will be telecast through KPTV between next Saturday and the October 1 start of regular programs. Mayer stated. They will be mostly in the evenings. Some test programs will be run in the daytime to give TV servicemen a chance to install and align sets.

The telecasts at first will be entirely network shows. Live shows, originating in Portland, will come later.

"If we go as fast as we have so far," said Mayer, "we may have live telecasts in three months—but that will be a tight schedule. We have a lot of work to do."

He said one TV camera already is in Portland and two more are on the way. However, the station's studio building must be completely remodeled, crews must be trained and other details taken care of before things are in readiness.

Although the station will operate at first on about one fifth of its ultimate power output of 88 kilowatts, reception throughout Portland should be excellent, according to engineers. Fringe reception still may be good beyond a 25-mile radius.

### 'BOW TIE' BEST

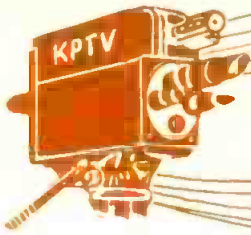
Some TV set owners probably will be able to pick up the UHF telecasts on their regular VHF antennas—the kind they are now using to pick up Seattle telecasts. However, according to Mayer, the best UHF reception will be through a "bow tie" antenna which may be clipped to a VHF antenna. A separate transmission line from the UHF antenna is needed, however.

Mayer spoke freely on his com-

pany's planned operations. He said earlier secrecy was for two reasons:

"If we had set an early deadline and then ran into trouble and broke our promise, it would have been bad. It also would have been bad to announce an earlier date and have a repetition of what happened in Denver with regard to sales of sets."





ALL SET . . .

THE OREGONIAN, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1952

# Television Control Room Ready



**SOURCE** The center of Portland television is the control room of KPTV, opened for photographs

Thursday. Above is view of transmitter and its control board in foreground. It is first UHF television station in country.

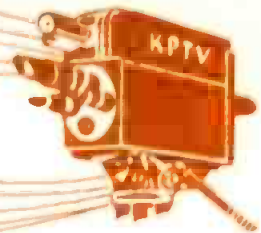


**LOG** Russ Olsen (left), KPTV chief engineer, and William McAlister, NBC engineer, check log in front of transmitter, which was formerly in operation in Bridgeport, Conn., where it was used experimentally by RCA in tests of new UHF.



**FILTER** Victor Bary, NBC engineer who is helping to install KPTV's equipment, examines ultra high frequency filterplexer, which co-ordinates TV sound and image. Test pattern shown had "excellent" signal Thursday.

TV INDUSTRY AMAZED . . .



MARTIN CODEL'S  
AUTHORITATIVE NEWS SERVICE  
FOR MANAGEMENT  
OF THE  
VISUAL BROADCASTING  
AND ALLIED ELECTRONICS  
ARTS AND INDUSTRY

# Television Digest

with **ELECTRONICS REPORTS**

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY RADIO NEWS BUREAU • WYATT BLDG. • WASHINGTON 5, D.C. • TELEPHONE STERLING 1755 • VOL. 8, No. 35

September 20, 1952

**PORTLAND'S FIRST STATION ON THE AIR:** It took a born-&-bred easterner, who confesses he'd never been west of Chicago until this week, to lead in pioneering not only TV but uhf TV in the nation's largest unserved city -- Portland, Ore.

This week, he threw the entire industry -- telecasters, manufacturers, distributors, even the Federal regulators -- into a dither of excitement by the amazing manner of his successful effort to bring TV service into Portland quickly. His new KPTV (Channel 27) went on the air at midnight Thursday, only 60 hours after transmitter and tower completed journey across continent!

Having staked a bonanza TV claim in Cleveland, where he sought and obtained a vhf grant in 1949, while skeptical local interests sat on their hands, 44-year-old Herbert Mayer, president of Empire Coil Co., New Rochelle, N.Y., asked for and got first uncontested grant (uhf) in Portland last July 11, immediately upon lifting of freeze (Vol. 8:28). Local interests had disdained the uhf channel he sought.

What's most astonishing was that some 5 weeks after grant he bought up the RCA-NBC experimental uhf station in Bridgeport, tower and all (Vol. 8:35); had it dismantled Aug. 25 and shipped by trucks and special freight car to Portland; got it installed and 250-ft. tower up within 2½ days after arrival Sept. 11, along with a small cinder-block building; went on air for tests at 12:01 a.m., Sept. 18; and --

KPTV begins carrying NBC-TV network, some films and a few commercial spots this Saturday, September 20, to give city its first program service. Formal debut date is Oct. 1, time of World Series, and in a matter of months consulting engineer Ben Adler will have 25,000-sq. ft. studio-office building ready in downtown district.

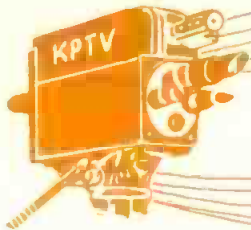
\* \* \* \*

It's much too early to gauge signal values, though RCA, Philco and other set makers have crews on hand taking measurements. First report from RCA fieldmen was that test patterns were very good within 10-mi. radius, and from Philco that its built-in antennas got excellent pictures 8 miles from transmitter.

By Friday afternoon, dealer Earl Heider reported good reception in Salem, 40 air miles away, and field testers told of clear pictures in Vancouver, about 15 miles. Transmitter on 1300-ft. Council Crest is 6 mi. from downtown Portland, and some 85% of the metropolitan area's population is within 10-mi. radius.

Engineers are cautious about early spot checks, though one noted that a 250-ft. antenna surmounting 1300-ft. elevation offers "ideal conditions" and told of





## PORTLAND UHF 'PROVING GROUND' . . .

TELEVISION DIGEST  
September 20, 1952  
Page 2

"very satisfactory signals" despite building obstructions to line-of-sight. There were other reports that reception in some shadow areas wasn't too good.

\* \* \* \*

Commercial program service was to start at 4:30 p.m. Sat., with Mayer on air to introduce "first uhf commercial in history" over "only station of its kind in the world". Commercial is RCA's "Success Hill," 18-min. film of old Bridgeport operation. Then, at 5 p.m. (8 p.m. EST) NBC-TV pipes in All-Star Revue -- another good break for KPTV, inasmuch as Jimmy Durante and Margaret Truman are stars. After that come Show of Shows, Hit Parade, possibly a local wrestling show.

Station signs on Sun. with Philco Playhouse, which comes at 6-7 p.m. PST, then 2-hour film "Meet John Doe." Going light on spots at outset, Mayer is programming on day-to-day basis at first. He has 3 camera chains on hand, ready for local productions. Rate card's base is \$250 an hour, \$50 per spot.

\* \* \* \*

Were the set makers ready? Not too many of them -- for even RCA, from whom Mayer had bought the plant, had no thought that he could beat his announced intention of striving for debut "possibly by Election Day, Nov. 4."

But there's little doubt about availability of sets -- in matter of weeks. And there's none about the industry's eagerness to see Mayer's faith in uhf upheld, if only for its own profit. (See roundup on set and tuner activity, p. 9.)

This is indeed uhf TV's proving ground, which all segments of the business, especially other prospective telecasters & the set manufacturers, are eyeing keenly and critically. If the technicians are satisfied, if customers buy the slightly-more-expensive uhf receivers or the converters, if Mayer puts this one over, he will go down in the annals of telecasting as one of its most venturesome pioneers.

\* \* \* \*

When Mayer and his Washington counsel, Morton Wilner, called on FCC chairman Paul Walker last Monday to tell him KPTV was ready to go on the air Wednesday, that veteran radio regulator thought they were simply joshing. They assured him of their seriousness, whereupon Mr. Walker at regular Wednesday session of Commission pushed through the required STA (special temporary authority). One minute after midnight KPTV's power was turned on.

Mayer is the toast of the town as well as the trade, meanwhile; was to be introduced to local bigwigs at luncheon Saturday. Already the newspapers refer to him as Portland's "Mr. Television." It's his first visit to the city of his new enterprise. He's managing things personally, now recruiting permanent staff, with assistance of his advance man -- a non-TV chap from his factory named Dick Freeman.

Assuming consistently satisfactory signals, it's regarded as a foregone certainty that Mayer will make his Portland operation pay. While other local applicants are forced into competitive hearings in their quest for remaining channels, he stands to gain year or two head start on any competition.

Whether this property will turn out as successful as his WXEL in Cleveland, for which he has declined offers up to \$5,000,000, is conjectural. Empire Coil, a major transformer manufacturer, and WXEL, he says wryly, will have to carry the load for KPTV during its swaddling days; also for the other uhf he's building in Denver.



SIGNAL 'BETTER THAN EXPECTED' . . .



RCA VICTOR

division of Radio Corporation of America

NEWS



PRESS DIVISION • CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY • WOODLAWN 3-8000

FOR RELEASE:  
ON RECEIPT

#### COMMERCIAL UHF TELEVISION BECOMES A REALITY

UHF TELEVISION SIGNAL SUCCESS—Thus read a page one headline in the September 19 issue of the Portland Oregonian—a succinct appraisal of the opening of the world's first commercial ultra-high-frequency television station.

The station was completed much sooner than expected, and the first signal, a test pattern with the stations call letters, KPTV, was broadcast at 12:01 A.M. on Thursday, September 18.

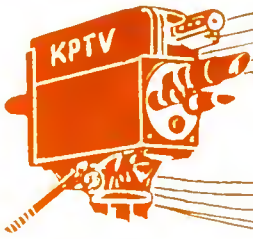
During the early morning hours, a specially equipped testing truck from the RCA Service Company toured the streets of Portland, from the downtown business district through residential neighborhoods and suburban areas, measuring the signal strength. With the TV engineers and technicians in the truck rode Herbert Mayer, president of the Empire Coil Company of New York, owner of KPTV.

Reception was clear and steady, and as the testing truck moved from one locality to another, it became evident that reception was consistently good throughout the area. Said Mr. Mayer: "The picture is far better than I expected . . . this is great news for the nation."

If not the whole nation, at least the major part of the television industry—the 48 grantees and 291 applicants for other UHF channels, an uncounted number of prospective applicants, and the members of the Federal Communications Commission—were enormously interested in the strength and quality of KPTV's signal. Success in Portland with the medium-power equipment now commercially available demonstrated to the TV industry that properly-located UHF stations could provide excellent service to the public. It meant the FCC's allocation plan, more than three years in the making, which blueprinted an eventual national TV service of 2053 stations, could be carried forward with full confidence by all concerned.

#### Many Men and Many Skills

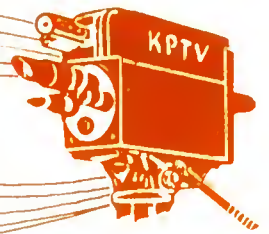
The speed with which Herbert Mayer put KPTV into operation brought startled praise from most of the industry and from the citizens of Portland. He insists, however, that the station's dramatic



'HEY! TELEVISION!' . . .



## KPTV GETS 'ROYAL WELCOME' . . .



success was the result of the all-out effort of many men, who contributed a variety of skills. . .

Local or network, "live" or film, KPTV is getting a royal welcome from Portland. Four hours before the first commercial program, 300 of the city's civic and business leaders gathered at a luncheon in the Multnomah Hotel. They applauded Portland's Mayor Dorothy McCullough Lee, who thanked Empire Coil for bringing television to the city, and Mr. Mayer, who thanked the city for its hospitality.

After telling the audience of his telecasting plans, which include at least one or two hours of programs daily until the official opening on October 1, Mr. Mayer presented loving cups to several industry and civic leaders cooperating in the UHF debut. He paid special tribute to the Radio Corporation of America, acknowledged by Harold R. Maag, vice president and western manager of the RCA Victor Division, and to NBC engineers William McAllister and Victor Bary. . .

As soon as the citizens of Portland became aware that KPTV was about to go on the air, they flocked to dealer and department stores in search of receivers. In most retail outlets, demand exceeded supply.

# *trade* *news*

**RCA BUILDING · RADIO CITY · NEW YORK**

. . . "We congratulate Mr. Herbert Mayer and the Empire Coil Company for having transplanted, with amazing speed, the UHF station from Success Hill to Council Crest, overlooking your wonderful city."

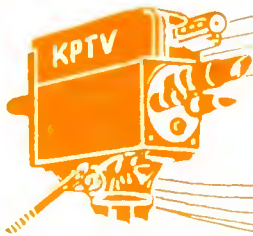
—Brig. Gen. David Sarnoff,

Chairman of the Board,

Radio Corporation of America

(Addressing the KPTV audience on the occasion  
of the station's first broadcast.)





SIGNAL USHERS IN TV . . .

# The Oregonian

VOL. XCII—NO. 28,863 Entered at Portland, Oregon Post Office as Second-Class Matter

PORTLAND, OREGON, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1952

CI

## KPTV Signal Starts in City



A test pattern from KPTV became Portland's first television "program" Thursday. Number "27" in center is station's channel in the ultra high frequency range. Slogan at lower right is "The World on View." First program will be Saturday.



The old maestro of TV, Groucho Marx, came in on television in Portland Thursday—but not for general consumption. He was "piped" into KPTV's control room on telephone company equipment. Groucho was not transferred to KPTV's transmitter.

Portland's "televsindness" ended officially at 12:01 a. m. Thursday with the first telecast of an ultra high frequency test pattern from KPTV atop Council Crest.

The test patterns were pronounced "excellent" by Empire Coil officials, with reports of good reception from many points outside of Portland, including Camas, Wash., and Salem.

The city's first television program, which will be a one-half-hour local show, will go on the air at 4:30 p. m. Saturday, Empire Coil officials announced Thursday. The show, sponsored by RCA, will be from film and will show UHF television development at Success Hill in Bridgeport, Conn.

The station will join the network at 5 p. m., when it will present the All Star Review, a one-hour program starring Jimmie Durante and Margaret Truman. At 6 p. m. the Show of Shows, featuring Sid Caesar and an hour and a half program, will be presented, and the sta-

tion will sign off the air at 7:30 p. m.

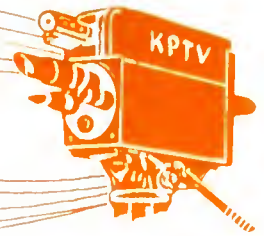
KPTV has scheduled a reception for press representatives and other invited guests at noon Saturday in the grand ballroom of the Multnomah hotel. At 1 p. m. is scheduled a luncheon, with addresses from 2 to 3 p. m.

At 3 p. m. chartered busses will take the guests to Council Crest to view KPTV transmitting facilities, and at 4 p. m. the guests will go to the crystal room of the Benson hotel, where television sets will be ready for them when the first show goes on the air.

The city's first telecast—a stationary geometric pattern—continued through the early morning hours to allow station technicians and RCA officials to determine how the signal was coming through in various parts of the city and in Vancouver, Wash. This followed FCC approval late Wednesday of KPTV's special permit to transmit.

More on page 13, section 2.

TELEVISION 'RICH IN PROMISE' . . .



## Television Comes to Portland Rich With Promise

### World Series Slated on Air

#### KPTV Operator Bills Top Shows

Television in Portland, frozen as solid as a Siberian log pond last March, was hotter than the blazing September sun as autumn and station KPTV made their bow last week end.

The heat was generated by several factors: The speed with which Herbert Mayer's technicians wrestled their transmitter together and put it on the air; the frantic haste of television manufacturers, distributors and retailers to get sets, antennas and converters into Portland; and finally, the white-hot interest of Portlanders themselves.

This heat will be maintained for several weeks yet, for two principal reasons: The World Series and the political campaign, with a strong assist from football.

#### Net Stars Due

KPTV will give Portland its first televised World Series, with the first game going on the air Wednesday. The starting time will depend partly on how long before game time the telecast is put on the cable, as well as the finally announced starting time. Since the games will probably be in New York and Brooklyn, starting time will be about midmorning here.

On the political front, KPTV brought Portland one of the year's biggest programs Tuesday night: Senator Nixon's explanation of his \$18,000 fund. The viewing audience was limited by the small number of sets and shortage of converters here, but the sets which could catch the program were undoubtedly heavily attended.

The station broadcast its first commercial program September 20, just 26 days after ground was broken for its transmitter on Council Crest. In the interim, the transmitter itself was dismantled at Bridgeport, Conn., trucked to Portland, erected and tested. It is the first commercial UHF station in the world—and at the moment the only UHF station, although it was previously operated experimentally at Bridgeport by RCA.

Dick Freeman, executive from station WXEL in Cleveland, another Mayer operation, was in general charge of setting up the Portland operation. RCA and NBC technicians did the actual installation.

Mayer, in a speech at the Multnomah hotel September 20, said public service would always be a principal objective of the station.

He also expressed the faith of his group in ultra-high-frequency transmission.

"When we opened our Cleveland station on channel 9, which is in the high band of VHF frequencies, people told us we would put out a very poor signal," he said. "But we had faith in it, and it panned out."

"We have the same faith in channel 27 in Portland. We know from our test patterns that we are getting excellent reception as far away as Salem."

Mayer was especially pleased with the "splendid site" which the city made available on Council Crest.

#### Final Work Swift

He has been in electronics work since 1944, when he started Empire Coil company with five employees. After the war, he began supplying transformers and coils to RCA, Philco and other radio and television companies, and in 1949 opened station WXEL.

Station KPTV will use shows from all available network facilities, according to Charles White, commercial manager. While the majority of shows will continue to originate from NBC, the station has already used several CBS and Dumont features, and will use more in the future.

These commitments are all on a temporary basis and may be changed when other Portland channels are allocated, White said.

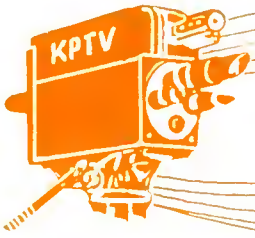
Governor Stevenson's speech last Tuesday night, for example, was originated by CBS. The first Dumont program was General Eisenhower's talk Thursday night.

Among NBC shows last week were Dinah Shore, Tuesday night; John Cameron Swayze at 7:30 p. m. Wednesday and Groucho Marx at 8 p. m. Thursday. Due for every-other-week airing is the Kukla, Fran and Ollie show at 4 p. m. Sundays.

Local programs cannot be telecast for several months yet, since cameras and studio facilities are not now available.

KPTV is certain to be the only TV station in the Portland area for many months, since the other four commercial channels are all being contested. The city's educational frequency has not been spoken for, giving rise to the possibility that it might be opened eventually for commercial use.



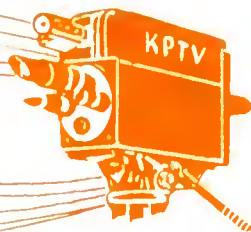


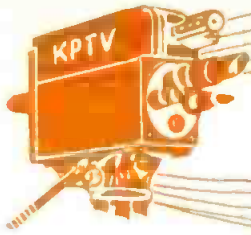
**LOBBY CROWDS WATCH . . .**





**STREET CROWDS WATCH . . .**





## DOWN-STATERS WATCH . . .

THIS PHOTOGRAPH WAS TAKEN BY US ON OCT. 6, 1952 AT THE RALPH JOHNSON APPLIANCE CO. 355 CENTER ST., SALEM, OREGON.

McEwan Photo Shops  
245 N. High St., Salem



THE OREGONIAN, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1952

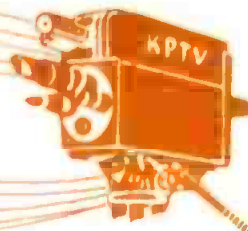
By B. Mike

# Behind the Mike

Copyright, 1952, Oregonian Publishing Company

DISCOVERY THAT SALEM could get a good TV picture from KPTV was a pleasant and profitable sensation to retailers in the capital city. Initially it had been supposed that Oregon City was in the fringe of good UHF reception. But Salem, 38 air miles away, has been getting strong signals from the Council Crest tower, at least on some sets. One dealer in South Salem sold and installed 42 sets in a week and then ran short of strips for UHF. Sales are waiting.

TRANSMISSION 100 MILES AWAY . . .



**FLETCHER & SMARTT**  
RADIO AND APPLIANCE SERVICE  
1381 WILLAMETTE STREET  
EUGENE, OREGON

10 November 1952

Mr. Russ Olsen  
KPTV  
Portland, Oregon

Dear Mr. Olsen:

Following is a report of reception and details as received in Eugene, Oregon of KPTV Channel 27 at a distance of slightly over 100 miles air distance:

"Using an antenna of 16 half-waves in phase (4 over 4) backed up with a screen, KPTV's signals have been received on any one of a dozen different receivers, every day since KPTV's first program.

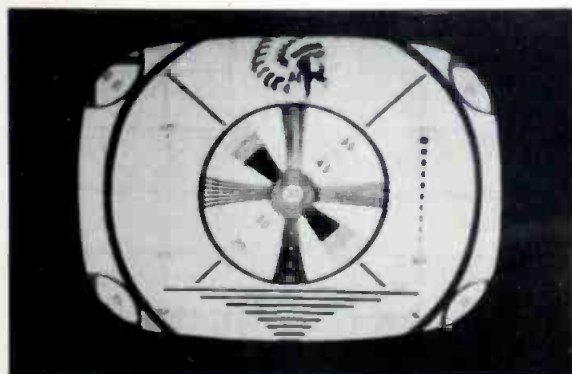
"Reception in clearing weather is much better than at any other time; the cooler temperatures better than during warm weather. During warm weather, signals were strongest from sign-on, at 9 a.m., until noon; down until an hour before sunset, then up again during evening. In cool weather signals are consistent through day and evening.

"Tests were made on a hill 125 feet above the city, at its elevation of 500'. Enclosed is a photograph of KPTV's test pattern and station identification, taken November 2."

---Excerpts from the two-page technical report of reception in Eugene, 100 air miles from the KPTV transmitter in Portland

Sincerely,

H.C. Smartt  
Fletcher & Smartt







## SALUTE ACROSS THE NATION . . .

PORTLAND OREGONIAN

October 2, 1952

# NBC Salutes KPTV Role, Starts Day-Long Telecasts



Opening ultra-high frequency spectrum is comparable to Lewis and Clark expedition which opened Northwest. Gen. David Sarnoff said in NBC's "Salute to KPTV" Wednesday.



Sandra Mayer, young daughter of KPTV's owner, presents scroll to General Sarnoff, president of NBC, "for all NBC has done for television." Pictures from KPTV's monitor screen.

The start of day-long programming by KPTV was signaled Wednesday by a 15-minute National Broadcasting company "Salute to KPTV, Portland, Or."

Figuring in the program were Morgan Beatty, NBC commentator; Paul Walker, chairman of

the federal communications commission; Sandra Mayer, young daughter of KPTV's owner, and Gen. David Sarnoff, president of NBC.

Highlight of the occasion was Walker's comment that KPTV, the first commercial ultra high frequency television station in

the nation, will be followed by many more.

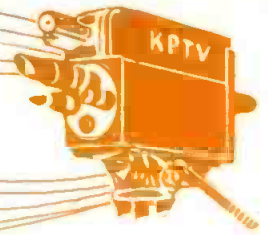
He said equipment and set manufacturers were doing very well in keeping up with demand.

Sandra Mayer presented General Sarnoff with a scroll "for all NBC has done for televi-

sion."

Sarnoff asserted the "opening of the UHF spectrum may be compared to the Lewis & Clark expedition which opened the Northwest," and hailed the Empire Coil company, headed by Herbert Mayer, for its "pioneering" in KPTV.

## MEN OF NOTE TAKE NOTE . . .



*The following paragraphs are portions of speeches made October 1, 1952 in a National Broadcasting Company nation-wide program saluting KPTV's initiation of daylong programming:*

"This is Morgan Beatty, introducing, if I may, a piece of a miracle—a part of the electronic miracle in modern American life—that marks the formal opening of what we may call a new window in our homes, a window that will ultimately bring all of our present and our past, and some of our future, before us in a continuous cavalcade.

"To the engineer and the technician, today's formal opening (of KPTV telecasting) is not just a window or a screen where music, news, history, flow in succession into our homes. Today marks the official beginning—to the technician—of UHF: ultra high frequency television broadcasting.

"Once successful, UHF television will multiply public service . . . Once established . . . UHF will penetrate the heart of any wilderness.

"Today . . . is a milestone in history, for three reasons: Because the Federal Communications Commission . . . has licensed the first UHF television station in the world. In Portland, Ore., Station KPTV is on the air on Channel 27—the very first television station of any kind in the City of Roses.

"Today is a milestone because the personal enterprise of Herbert Mayer has accomplished the impossible. He has begun operations from scratch, since July 11. Today he is performing, through KPTV, a complete service to the community of Portland.

"Today is a milestone because the Radio Corporation of America consigned new and pioneering equipment to Mr. Mayer, transported the delicate mechanisms across the nation, and had them operating in a month's time. This is an example of teamwork among government, the enterprising citizen and the great corporation—an example unexcelled in the history of American industry."

—Morgan Beatty,  
NBC commentator

"A new era of expansion has opened in American television. The post-war development of television has been one of the wonders of American industrial progress.

"Today we salute the first UHF television station

to go on the air. This proud distinction goes to Station KPTV, of Portland, Oregon. . .

"I congratulate Station KPTV on being America's pioneer UHF station. It is blazing a trail. It is a harbinger of more abundant television service to all Americans."

—Paul A. Walker, chairman  
Federal Communications Commission

"I am in NBC studios in New York, representing my father, who is now in Portland with you. I am very thrilled to be here today with General Sarnoff, who is such a wonderful man, and I know you are all thrilled to have UHF in Portland, the first television station in the world and in history that is UHF; which means ultra high frequency."

—Sandra Mayer, 14, representing  
her father, Herbert Mayer, president,  
Empire Coil Company,  
owner of Station KPTV

"As a triumph in radio exploration, the opening of the ultra high frequency spectrum may well be compared with the historic Lewis and Clark Expedition that opened up the Northwest wilderness . . .

"As those famous explorers pushed westward overland through forests, over rivers and mountains, so the RCA research scientists and engineers, for more than 25 years, have conducted expeditions in the wilderness of space to reach the goal of ultra high frequency . . .

"As the pioneer explorers confronted obstacle after obstacle, so have the radio pioneers found the going hard. It is no easy job to open up new and invisible territories that spread through space. It is no easy job to make space itself captive. Indeed, it may be said of UHF as it was said of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, that few feats of exploration excel this in romantic interest . . .

"We are happy to have had a part in blazing this trail across the continent, and are pleased to have KPTV affiliated with the NBC TV network."

—Brig. Gen. David Sarnoff,  
Chairman of the Board  
Radio Corporation of America





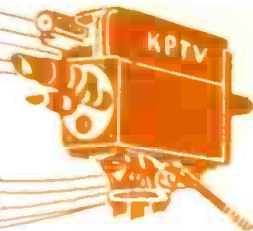
## NEWSMEN PAY TRIBUTE TO . . .



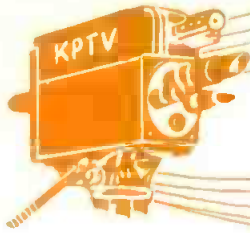
ONCE IN A LIFETIME, perhaps, one might find all typewriters idled, all newsstaffers stopped in their tracks, in the City Room of a metropolitan morning paper at three in the afternoon. Such an event took place in the editorial department of the Portland Oregonian, the historic afternoon television made its advent, and the collection of editors, reporters, radio station men, political figures, and engravers, interspersed with dispatch department personnel, is here shown, watching the first TV telecast. Shown: Herb Larson, drama-music editor; Wally Turner, reporter; Jim Ferguson, copy reader; Larry Borber, marine editor; Malcolm Bower, editorial writer; Ted Wagner, farm-home-garden editor; Merlin Blais, business editor; Dick Godfrey, rewrite; Don Blenkinsop, accounting; Hi Showerman, slot man; Mrs. "Tommy" Tomlinson, executive



WORLD'S VISUAL NEWS MEDIUM . . .



secretary, Gretchen Grandahl, clubs and society reporter; Wama Morrison, school editor; Herman Edwards, military-retains reporter; Frank Coffin, director of public relations, EGW; Jack Bracy, retail advertising salesman; Bob Woodruff, dispatch department manager; Ethel Murphy, Neal Durham, Don Hesse, Tom Warner, Ben Bady, dispatch department personnel; John Trotter, Associated Press; Ed Cary, reporter; Marie Grandahl, composing room superintendent; Fred Hainbocher, stereo department; Willard Duncan, engraving; Francis Murphy, archeologist-columnist, and Tom Mahoney, state senator. A single person, the man standing near post, could not be identified by any of 50 Oregonian staff members.



SANDRA MAYER REPRESENTS KPTV . . .

"Oh, It Was Thrilling!"



SANDRA MAYER, 14, daughter of KPTV's founder, Herbert Mayer, president of Empire Coil company, is shown speaking these words in her reaction to the rapid construction of the station on Council Crest.

TELEVISION DIGEST

October 4, 1952

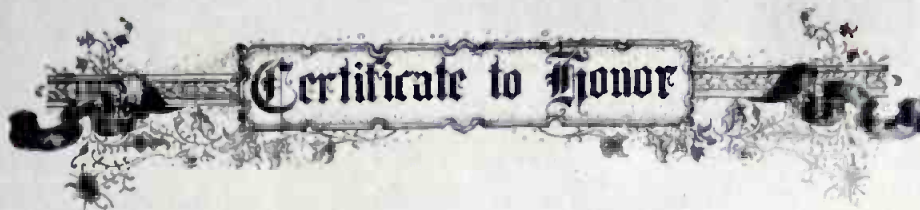
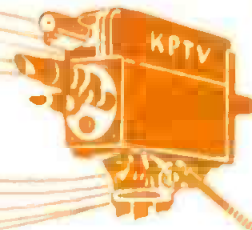
Portland's KPTV, which as the pioneer uhf station is becoming a sort of petted darling of the industry, got an exceptional sendoff Oct. 1 when, just prior to the opening World Series telecast, owner Herbert Mayer's very telegenic 14-year-old daughter Sandra went before NBC-TV cameras to present scroll to RCA's Gen. Sarnoff.

Portland and rest of network first saw and heard FCC chairman Paul Walker welcome KPTV as "a harbinger of the more abundant TV to come." Sarnoff referred to Mayer's effort as being "in the traditional pioneer spirit of the great Northwest," and likened the opening of "new uhf frontiers" to the Lewis & Clark expedition.

KPTV is now operating from noon to 11 p.m. daily, taking all 4 networks.



IN APPRECIATION TO RCA . . .



## Radio Corporation of America

**Whereas,** the Radio Corporation of America has in the past made outstanding contributions to the development and growth of television, both in the Very High Frequencies and in the Ultra High Frequencies; and

**Whereas,** their splendid contributions of planning, research, and genius have made it possible for television station KPTV to begin broadcasting at this time on Channel 27 in the City of Portland, Oregon; and

**Whereas,** KPTV is the first commercial UHF television station to go on the air, and as such, desires to honor RCA for its exceptional service to the American public in furthering the progress of UHF;

**Now Therefore,** in appreciative recognition of the manifold benefits which the Radio Corporation of America has contributed as aforementioned, and in further recognition of the many ways in which RCA has assisted KPTV in its efforts to bring television to the Portland area at the earliest possible date, we tender this Certificate to honor the Radio Corporation of America as the sponsor of "Success Hill," the first commercial program to be broadcast on UHF in history.

Presented this 1st day of  
October, 1952,  
to David Sarnoff,  
Chairman of the Board,  
Radio Corporation of America

Empire Coil Company, Inc.

*Hubert Meyer* President







FURTHER TESTS OKEH UHF . . .

# Television Digest

October 4, 1952

**REPORTS ON PORTLAND UHF CONTINUE 'SOLID':** No question at all about adequacy of uhf signal in Portland, now that another week of measuring and testing new KPTV's signal has elapsed. Nor is there any question about ability of most receiving units to extract good picture from signal within about 20 miles. Nonetheless, there's spirited competition among proponents of each type of receiving device.

Quite solid coverage out to 25 miles is reported by KPTV consultant Ben Adler who spent considerable time studying reception throughout area. Results are much better than in Bridgeport, he says, largely because of more antenna height.

Enhancing coverage, Adler adds, is fact antenna is tilted down (electrically) 1 degree in all directions, additional 1 degree (mechanically) to east over city. However, signal is still weak at foot of hill on which antenna is located.

Carefully mentioning no brand names, Adler says that some tuners aren't much good where signals are below 1000-2000 uv/m, compared with vhf's lower limit of 100-200 uv/m. But he's quick to point out that 2000 uv/m signal goes out 25-30 miles.

Curiously, simplest receiving antennas seem best, according to Adler. Some, made by companies with excellent reputations, actually produce less gain than simple dipole. Adler attributes this to efforts to cover too many channels.

Another interesting phenomenon is caused by fir trees, no less. Adler reports that firs, in weak signal areas, can completely block signals. Since firs retain needles year around, problem isn't seasonal. Adler says, however, that satisfactory echo or "ghost" can sometimes be found when direct signal is blocked out.

Dr. Allen DuMont is quite pleased with his on-the-spot inspection, finding "reasonably satisfactory service" throughout area. He told us he's satisfied that the few "shadows" behind hills can be licked.

One problem that did arise, Dr. Dumont says, is interference from police and taxi radio. This is being eliminated in new strips supplied by Standard Coil for DuMont's turret tuners.

\* \* \* \*

RCA has pulled out all the stops, now that some of its best engineers have completed intensive field strength surveys in Portland.

"Uhf looks better every day," company says in official statement that's as enthusiastic as last week's was guarded (Vol. 8:39). "First optimistic reports from Portland -- which to many seemed almost too good to believe -- are being solidly confirmed as more evidence comes in."

Nearly every street in Portland and main roads 25 miles in every direction were covered, RCA reports, and technicians concluded that primary coverage extends about 20 miles. Secondary coverage runs 30-40 miles north and south, but mountains limit east-west coverage to about 25 miles. Only a few small shadows were found.

RCA is completing report which, it says, "will confirm in every way the early enthusiastic reports of the phenomenal operation of KPTV."

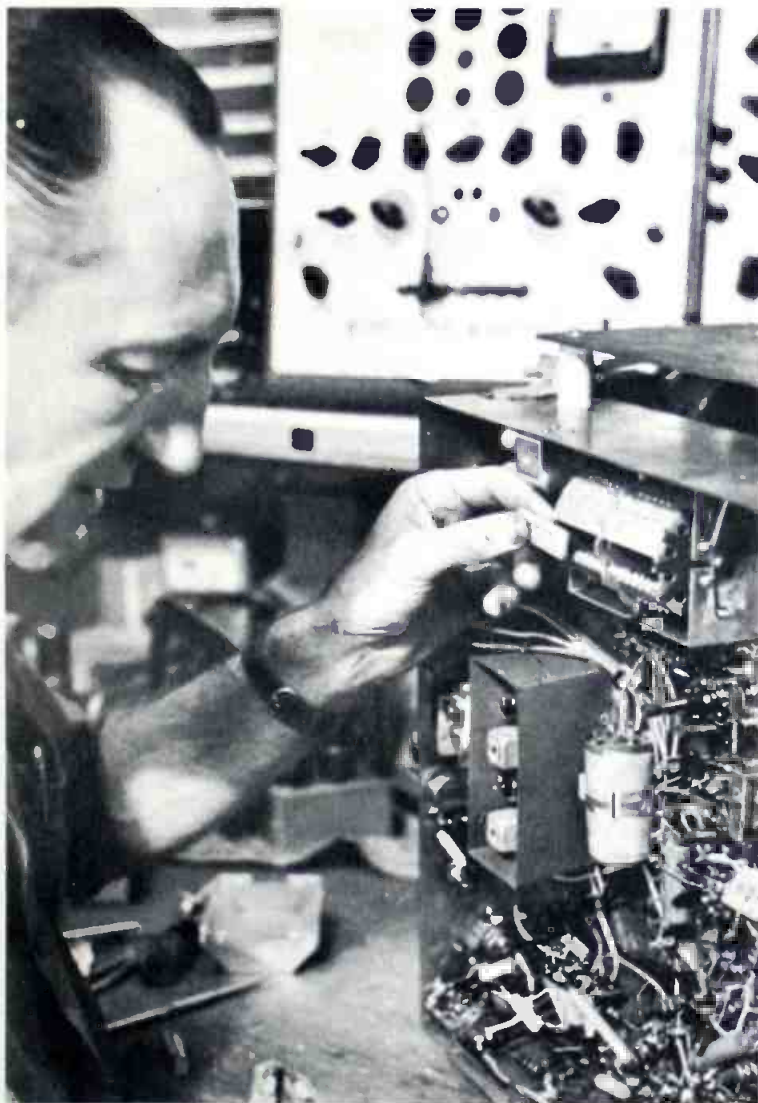
FCC is also considering field strength survey in Portland, may work with Bureau of Standards on project. Commission is anxious for advent of WHUM-TV, Reading, Pa., for high-powered "test tube" nearer Washington.

# KPTV BRINGS BUSINESS BOOM . . .



BUSINESS WEEK • Oct. 4, 1952

## COMMUNICATIONS



**TROUBLE** is one byproduct of the first ultra high frequency TV station in the U. S. Conventional sets must be re-tuned. Customers howl for service as . . .

## TV Hits Portland with a Bang

Take any fair-sized U. S. city. Give all its neighbors television, but make this one city do without until it's seething with impatience. Then, suddenly, open up a station and start broadcasting.

That's about as good a formula as any for bringing the city's business to a boil.

To make it boil even faster, rig your station with a UHF (ultra high fre-

quency) transmitter. Since almost all TV sets now on the market are geared to receive only VHF (very high frequency) signals, this will send distributors, retailers, and customers scurrying for frequency converters as well as for the sets themselves.

All this is happening in Portland, Ore. TV-less longer than any other big city in the country, Portland finally

watched broadcasts from its own station last week. Though it was last to get TV, it was first in another respect: Its station—KPTV—is the first in the country to operate commercially on UHF.

• Where It Came From—KPTV is owned and operated by Empire Coil Co., a television parts maker with headquarters in New Rochelle, N. Y. Its president, Herbert Mayer, is an executive with a shrewd eye for opportunity. When he opened his Portland station last week, he added a surprise ending to a story that the television industry had been following for some time.

VHF was more popular than UHF when, last April, the Federal Communications Commission thawed out its freeze on TV and began allocating channels to prospective station builders (BW—Apr. 19'52, p. 27). But some bidders—among them Mayer—decided to take a chance on UHF. Their reasons were that (1) UHF channels were easier to get, since fewer people wanted them, and (2) UHF television, engineers think, comes through more clearly; it's less subject to interference and produces fewer "ghosts."

After FCC began handing out the channel permits, eyes of the industry turned to Reading, Pa. Up there, a radio executive named John Greig was working on what he figured would be the first commercial UHF station (BW—Aug. 9'52, p. 42). Working with him was General Electric Co. GE had developed a gadget called a Klystron, which put out a powerful UHF signal.

Meantime, up in Connecticut, Radio Corp. of America and National Broadcasting Corp. were field-testing a UHF transmitter of their own. Development work on it was about finished. It was actually operating.

This was where Mayer came in with his surprise ending. He wanted to be first in Portland with a station, first in the country with UHF. He knew he'd better hurry. So he went up to Connecticut, bought RCA's and NBC's transmitter outright, and shipped the whole works to Portland. Experts figured it would be three to five months before Mayer could get it rigged up again. But his technicians had it on the air with a test signal in three weeks.

• Surprise—This knocked Portland for a loop. Previously, Mayer had announced that he hoped to get KPTV on the air around Thanksgiving. Suppliers and retailers geared their operations accordingly, ordered TV merchandise for delivery in October. Then Mayer moved the date up to Armistice Day, then Nov. 1. Early customers began coming into the stores, bought sets and antennas before the probable



## TELEVISION 'GOLD RUSH' . . .

**"... they're running their plants overtime, shipping adapters via air freight . . ."**

**COMMUNICATIONS** starts on p. 170

rush started. Dealers were already nervous about the supply situation when, on Sept. 16, Mayer calmly announced that KPTV's first commercial broadcast would hit the air in four days. It did—on the evening of Sept. 20.

• **Converters and Adapters**—Before long, dealers were scraping the bottom of the barrel for TV sets. The supply situation was made even worse by the fact that KPTV was on UHF. A customer's set could no more pick up KPTV's signal than could his electric toaster, unless he had a converter or adapter strip to go with it.

A converter is an electronic gadget about the size of a small radio, which can be plugged into a VHF set to make it bring in UHF channels. It costs anywhere from \$40 to \$50. An adapter strip, costing from \$10 to \$25, fits into the receiver and brings in one specific UHF channel—in Portland's case, Channel 27.

Both converters and strips—as well as the television sets themselves—are in woefully short supply right now in Portland. Makers of the gadgets, such as Standard Coil Co., Los Angeles, had scheduled shipments starting around Oct. 1. Now they're running their plants overtime, bundling the adapters off to Portland via air freight. TV set makers are going full blast, too. RCA, for one, has set up a special assembly line to put built-in converters into sets destined for Portland.

• **Size of the Market**—Portland businessmen think it will be months now before the supply of sets and converters finally catches up to the present demand.

Prior to the time KPTV went on the air, Portlanders were able to get fairly good reception from Seattle's KING-TV. Retailers figure this sold some 3,000 sets in Portland. They originally estimated that KPTV would sell up to 150,000 more—mostly in the metropolitan area. But now it turns out that UHF signals go farther than had been expected. KPTV is operating at only one-fifth its full rated power.

But at Salem, a town some 50 mi. away from KPTV's transmitter, the station's first broadcasts came in so brightly that the few available sets in town went like hotcakes. Portland retailers have now added a good 25% to their original estimates of the approximate number of potential buyers of television sets.

• **The Denver Story**—A situation like this—tremendous demand and low sup-

ply—can lead to all sorts of unhappy results. Portland businessmen know this. They remember what happened in Denver, Colo., earlier this year.

Like Portland, Denver was one of the last big cities to get a TV station (BW—May 3 '52, p. 72). When it did, pent-up demand came out of its cage like a tiger. Consumers were ready to buy anything that had a TV screen on it—for any price. The result was that truckloads of obsolete, spavined, and otherwise unwanted sets from all over the country were rushed to Denver and unloaded there. These inferior sets commanded premium prices. New sets sold for 20% to 30% more than in other cities. According to W. Dan Bell, director of Denver's Better Business Bureau, there are still 500 individuals or companies trying to sell TV in Denver—including a mortuary, a florist, an antique shop, and a gas station. Denver businessmen call it the "1952 gold rush."

• **Policing Job**—Denver's Better Business Bureau got things fairly well under control after a while. Portland's BBB, taking a tip from Denver, is setting up safeguards to prevent another version of the gold rush in its own city.

Among other things, the Portland bureau has started a file of distributor-authorized TV dealers in the city. In newspaper ads, the bureau is inviting citizens to query on doubtful merchants, warning prospective customers of the dangers of hasty buying.

• **Orderly Rush**—Even though Portland has avoided a gold rush so far, plenty of money is being made. A major bank estimates that TV sales will hit \$12-million by this time next year. Meier & Frank Co., big Portland department store, is said to have sold 150 sets the first day after it began full-scale advertising. Now it averages 100 sets a day.

Newspaper advertising, according to one newspaper executive, is "turning into a bonanza." Total TV advertising outlay for the first six months of KPTV's operation is expected to come near \$500,000.

KPTV itself is doing all right, too. Advertising spots in its first shows have sold fast. The station expects advertising from both local and national business to increase as the number of KPTV viewers goes up.

• **Station Operation**—Right now, the station's equipment consists mainly of a transmitter on a hilltop in Portland's city park. Its 41-ft. antenna stands atop a 210-ft. tower. KPTV engineers think this is plenty high enough, since the major population areas around Portland are on low and fairly flat territory.

KPTV has no studios of its own as yet. In about three months it expects to finish remodeling a factory building. Network shows and films will be its major fare until the studios are ready.

BUSINESS WEEK • Oct. 4, 1952

cont.



## KPTV TRANSMITTER 'HISTORY-MAKER' . . .



RADIO AGE 9

# KPTV, Portland, First Commercial UHF Television Station on Air

*Transmitter that Made Television History at Bridgeport, Conn.,  
Used in Oregon to Speed TV Programs to the Northwest*

**I**N a surprise move made possible by round-the-clock labors of engineers and construction crews, station KPTV, pioneer commercial UHF station, went on the air in Portland, Oregon, at midnight on September 18. Since that time, an increasing flow of TV receivers and UHF Selectors into the Oregon city has made it possible for the station's images to be viewed by thousands of residents. Reports of reception have been enthusiastic in their appraisal of the picture clarity and signal strength throughout the city and in some instances as far as 40 miles from the transmitter site on Council Crest, a 1,000 foot hill near Portland. The speed with which KPTV was put into operation brought praise from a large segment of the industry and from the citizens of Portland.

Regular programming by the station began on October 1 with a special pick-up from New York during which FCC Commissioner Paul A. Walker and Brig. General David Sarnoff extended their congratulations to the station and its owner.

Speaking from Washington, D. C., Chairman Walker referred to KPTV as the "harbinger" of a new era of expansion for American television. He commented upon the speed with which the station was installed at Portland by its owner, Herbert Mayer, President of The Empire Coil Company, Inc.

Upon completion of Commissioner Walker's remarks, the program switched to New York where Miss Sandra Mayer, on behalf of her father, presented to General Sarnoff a citation in appreciative recognition of the manifold benefits which the Radio Corporation of America has contributed to the development and growth of television as well as to the planning and research that made it possible for KPTV to begin broadcasting at that time on UHF.

"In bringing television to Portland, Mr. Mayer and his associates have acted in the traditional pioneering spirit of the great Northwest," General Sarnoff said. "They are blazing a new trail which leads to and from all parts of the country.

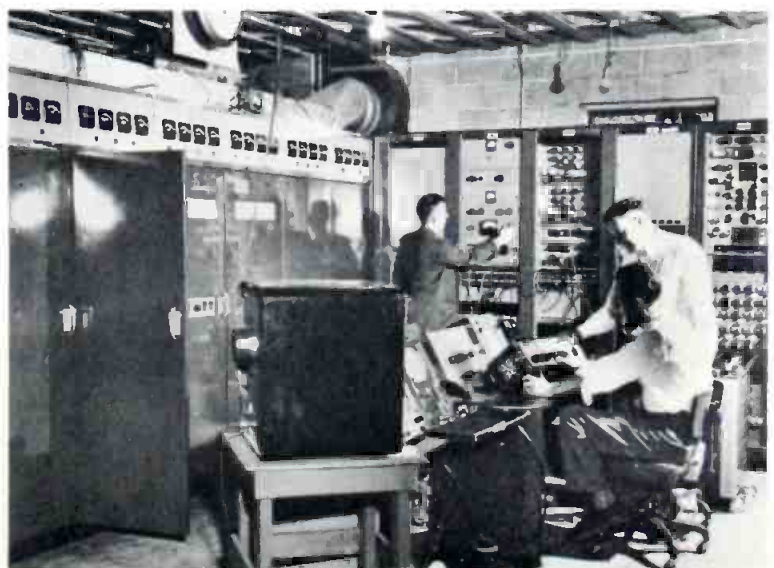
"As a triumph in radio exploration," he said, "the opening of the UHF spectrum may well be compared with the historic Lewis and Clark expedition that opened

up the northwest wilderness and made valuable scientific collections and observations. As those famous explorers pushed westward overland through forests, over rivers and mountains, so RCA research scientists and engineers for more than 25 years have conducted an expedition in the wilderness of space. To reach the goal of UHF they had to develop new electronic tools, new types of electron tubes and other equipment. . . . Indeed, it may be said of UHF, as it was said of the Lewis and Clark expedition, 'Few feats of exploration excel this in romantic interest.'

"These ultra-high frequencies are of great significance to the future of television," General Sarnoff said. "Hundreds of new channels bring additional millions of Americans into range of television programs, not only for entertainment and news but for education.

"Chairman Walker and his associates on the Federal Communications Commission are to be highly commended for their great interest in bringing the new trails of UHF into service. By licensing new stations they now encourage the television broadcasters to make

*(Continued on page 30)*



Engineers in control room of KPTV making final adjustments as station prepared to go on air.



## KPTV 'BLAZING TRAIL' . . .

### KPTV—First Commercial UHF Station on Air

*(Continued from page 9)*

use of these new pathways through the air by filling them with program traffic.

"We are happy to have had a part in blazing this trail across the continent, and are pleased to have KPTV affiliated with the National Broadcasting Company's TV network. I know NBC will do its best to bring you entertainment, news, education and sports from all parts of our great country, and from places beyond its borders. And we look forward to seeing programs and events from Oregon which you will send to us."

The construction permit for the station was received by The Empire Coil Company on July 11, 1952, soon after the lifting of the FCC "freeze." Then, the firm bought the transmitter and associated equipment which had been operating for more than two years in the RCA-NBC experimental UHF station, KC2XAK, near Bridgeport, Conn. This station had provided the industry with the opportunity to unravel the secrets of UHF broadcasting, and manufacturers with the means for developing and testing UHF receiving equipment. During this same period the RCA Service Company conducted field tests with various types of receiving antennas, transmission lines, UHF tuners, and selectors for TV sets.

On August 25, engineers from NBC, RCA, Adler Communication Laboratory, and Empire Coil Company began dismantling the 1-kw station for shipment, via truck and fast freight, to Portland. Some of the NBC engineering staff went along to help KPTV engineers assemble and install it in its new location.

On September 9, construction was started on a 250-foot tower atop Council Crest. A special RCA broadcast antenna, which left Camden by express on September 6, arrived in Portland September 11, and was installed the same day on the tower, which had already been completed.

By that same date, all the transmitting and related equipment had arrived from Bridgeport, and engineers and technicians were working around the clock to re-assemble it.

Two and one-half days later, a cinder-block building had been completed to house the transmitter, which was then ready for operation.

The high quality of the initial test pattern on September 18 was matched in subsequent tests. The newspapers carried test pattern pictures on page one, congratulating KPTV on their clarity. The excellence of the reception made it abundantly clear that although the engineers and technicians had worked long, hard, and fast to put KPTV on the air, there had been no compromise with engineering standards. The station stood securely on its performance.

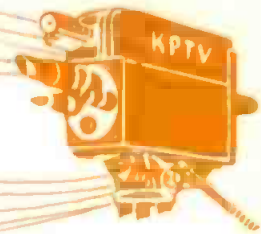
At 4:30 P.M. on Saturday, September 20—only two days after the initial test—the station offered its first commercial program. It was a televised showing of a film, sponsored by RCA Victor, depicting the growth and development of UHF television, and was titled "Success Hill." Commercial UHF television was a reality. This was followed by "live" programs picked up from the NBC network.

In the incredibly short space of three weeks, the country's first UHF station had been constructed and put on the air with sponsored programs.

The station is spreading a strong signal over the city of Portland with its present 1-kw transmitter, and 14-section antenna, providing effective radiated power of 17.6 kw. It is also putting a Grade A signal into the adjacent cities of Vancouver, Wash., and St. Helens and Oregon City, Ore. One of the first to report on the test pattern was a dealer in Salem, Ore., 42 air miles from Portland, who described the picture as "very good."

KPTV eventually will operate with a 5-kw transmitter, providing effective radiated power of 87.9 kw. For the present, the station will air network programs and local film shows only, but when studios in downtown Portland are completed, it will be able to originate "live" programs locally.

MAYER AND BABY 'DOING FINE' . . .



## Newsweek

October 6, 1952

### 'Upstairs' TV

When the Federal Communications Commission lifted its freeze on television station building in April, it allocated 1,945 new outlets that could blanket the country. But only 511 were in the very high frequencies (channels 2-13), where all TV had been up to then. The rest of the allocations—three-fourths of the total—would utilize the untried ultra-high frequencies (channels 14-83).

Many broadcasters were less than elated at the prospect of "upstairs" telecasting. By last week only 285 applications for UHF stations had been received by the commission, while 458 companies had asked for the tried and true (and very lucrative) VHF channels. The reason: UHF is full of problems. Transmitters, antennas, and sets all cost more; and the "upstairs" signal often does not travel as far or as well.

But last week the first UHF station in the world was on the air and doing fine. KPTV in Portland, Ore., is the testing ground for UHF because of one man, Herbert Mayer, president of the Empire Coil Co. of New Rochelle, N.Y. The 44-year-old Mayer, who owns one VHF station (WXEL in Cleveland), received his Portland grant in mid-July only because no one who lived in the TV-less city wanted channel 27. In August he bought RCA's experimental UHF station in Bridgeport, Conn., and started shipping it piecemeal to Oregon on planes, trucks, and freight cars. This week KPTV, although still without a studio, is picking up NBC programs. As one resident put it: "They kept telling us it would be Thanksgiving or at least election before we would have anything. Then suddenly it was here."

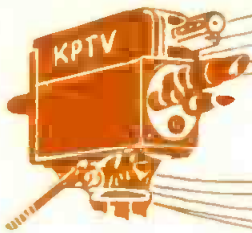
**Kush:** Mayer hurried his transmitter to Portland because, he says, "we wanted to bring the wonderful advantage television has to offer at the earliest possible date." One RCA representative had a simpler reason: "The first one gets the gravy. The second gets nothing."

It looked, last week, as though the gravy was on its way. The biggest retailer in Portland sold his entire stock of sets in one day. RCA was flying in receivers, loading Flying Tiger planes with from 35 to 42 sets. Last week the demand far exceeded the supply. The extra cost attached to UHF sets apparently makes no difference to a video-hungry town.

Mayer had two problems left. Reception—which is much trickier than with

VHF—was spotty. And the set manufacturers and dealers, caught by surprise with Mayer's hurry, needed more UHF receivers and converters; and they needed them quickly. When these problems are solved, however, UHF will be accepted. According to the reliable *Television Digest*: "If Mayer puts this one over, he will go down in the annals of telecasting as one of its most venturesome pioneers."





SCHEDULE 'BEATEN BY MONTHS' . . .

# FIRST COMMERCIAL UHF

By EARL B. ABRAMS  
MONTHS ahead of all expectations, the first commercial uhf TV signal was scheduled to go out into the ether Saturday from KPTV (TV) Portland, Ore.

This also will be the first TV service in that northwest city.

Station put its Channel 27 transmitter on the air within minutes after it received word Thursday that the FCC had granted its request for permission to operate commercially on an interim basis.

KPTV is owned by Empire Coil Co., New Rochelle, N. Y., electronics parts manufacturer. Herbert Mayer is president. Empire Coil



Mr. Mayer

is the licensee of WXEL (TV) Cleveland (which began operation in 1949) and holds a construction permit for a uhf station in Denver.

The company also applied for St. Petersburg-Tampa, Fla., and for San Juan,

P. R. Those applications were withdrawn recently.

Ability to get on the air so quickly—station received its CP July 11—is attributed to the purchase of the 2½-year-old RCA Bridgeport experimental uhf TV station last month [B•T, Sept. 1].

Bridgeport 1-kw station was dismantled Aug. 25, shipped by fast freight and truck to Portland, and reassembled by the same RCA engineers who operated the plant in the East. All parts were coded and a day and night shift of workers aided in its installation which was completed Sept. 11.

Special RCA Victor 21-gain antenna was expressed from Camden Sept. 6, arrived in Portland Sept. 11 and was installed that evening. Two hundred-and-fifty ft. tower was begun Sept. 9 and completed Sept. 11, in time to receive the antenna.

## KPTV (TV) Portland, Ore., on Air

### Claims Viewers' Calls

Although Mr. Mayer admitted that he had no idea of the number of TV sets in Portland capable of picking up his 17.6 kw signal, he said that calls from viewers began to come in last Thursday.

A special BROADCASTING • TELECASTING check of major receiver manufacturers indicated that all were rushing complete TV sets to the Portland market. Most were also sending in uhf strips so that turret tuners could be adapted for the uhf channel.

Only sponsor signed for the KPTV inauguration was RCA, Mr. Mayer acknowledged. He reported that he had "a stack" of requests for time and spot sales, but that as of Thursday he had no idea of schedule or availabilities.

Opening day's gala program was due to begin with a reception and luncheon at Portland's Multnomah Hotel, to be followed by a visit to the city-owned Council Crest Park site in the western hills of the Columbia River metropolis. First regular program was due to start at 4:30 p.m., with guests viewing the telecasts at the Benson Hotel. Notables were to include state and city officials.

Mr. Mayer was scheduled to lead off the first telecast. He was to be followed by the RCA-sponsored film of the Bridgeport experimental uhf operation. Following the film, KPTV was scheduled to be hooked into the NBC-TV network for *All Star Revue* and *Show of Shows*. First day on the air was due to end at 7:30 p.m.

Regular, full-scale programming is scheduled to begin Oct. 1 with the World Series, Mr. Mayer said. Until then the station will be on a test basis, although programs will be telecast one or two hours each night, he said.

Station is putting an 87 dbu signal over the entire city of Portland, Mr. Mayer reported, with the 1-kw transmitter and 17.6 kw effective radiated power. It is also putting a Grade A signal (74 dbu) into the adjacent cities of Vancouver, Wash.; St. Helens and

Oregon City, Ore.; and a Grade B signal (64 dbu) into Salem, Ore., and Longview, Wash.

KPTV's CP calls for an effective radiated power of 87.9 kw. In his request for the STA, Mr. Mayer reported that delivery of a 5-kw uhf transmitter was not promised until November 1953. He also stated that the visual modulation monitor was promised for February 1953, but that aural modulation monitor and visual and aural frequency monitors were due to be delivered in 30 days.

In his application for the STA, Mr. Mayer stated he intended to operate for an interim period with network feeds and local film shows only, pending completion of studio facilities in downtown Portland at 735 S. W. 20th Place.

AT&T coaxial cable runs from Sacramento to Portland, where TV signals are transposed to microwave facilities for the 150-mile hop to Seattle.

Transmitter is at the north end of Council Crest Park, located in the western hills of Portland. The 14-bay antenna is 1,023 ft. above average terrain and more than 1,300 ft. above sea level.

There has been some talk in Portland of the city erecting a 700-ft. tower at the KPTV site so that all TV stations can be located at that point, but nothing definite has yet taken place.

The site is near the KOIN antenna and field measurements were necessary to insure that no interference would be caused to that station's directional radiation pattern.

### Work Continues

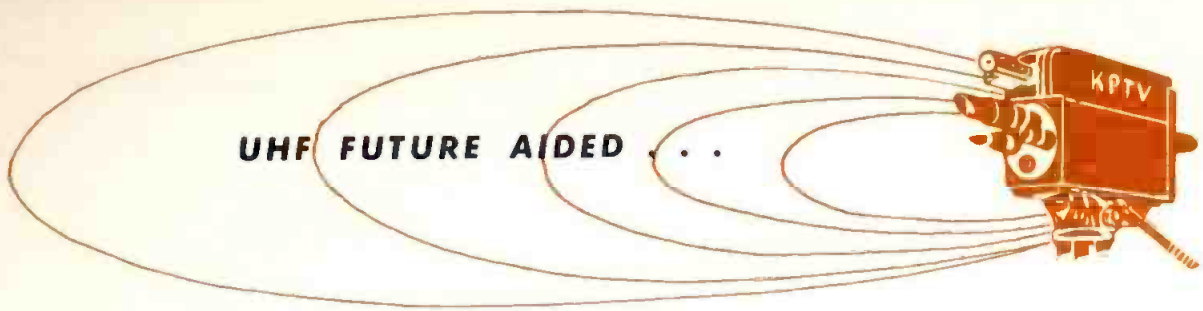
Transmitter went into the shell of the transmitter building when it arrived earlier this month. Work is continuing to finish the cinder-block housing, both structurally and with power and water facilities.

As to uhf TV receivers, most manufacturers were humping to get enough stock in the hands of their distributors and dealers. Only problem seems to be that upswing in TV sales in recent months has necessitated quotas for all distributors, and set makers are unsure they can get enough sets into Portland to meet demand.

RCA Victor planned to have

BROADCASTING • Telecasting

September 29, 1952



## First Commercial Uhf

*(Continued from page 25)*

from 500 to 750 sets, equipped for uhf reception, in the hands of its dealers in time for the opening.

Philco has sufficient sets in the city to take care of demand, it reported. It has been carrying on a sales and service training program there ever since the CP was issued.

Admiral has rushed a shipment of sets to Portland, with uhf strips to convert one of its turret tuner channels to the uhf band. It has also ordered extra strips shipped to the city from Standard Coil Co., Los Angeles tuner maker. Admiral officials doubted that they could have enough receivers in the market to take care of demand.

Emerson reported it was making "a particular effort" to get sets into the area, with some shipments already made. Emerson also reported that special field engineers have been conducting training sessions for service men and helping dealers set up service departments.

### DuMont Meeting

DuMont scheduled a special dealers' meeting to be conducted by the DuMont distributor in the area, Nash-Kelvinator Sales. Dr. Allen B. DuMont is scheduled to address the group. Details on current and projected DuMont shipments into the market could not be immediately ascertained.

Zenith has been sending strips to the Portland area since the CP was issued. It has not been able to send more than the original allotment of sets due to the tightness of its inventory.

Motorola is sending sets into the market, with uhf strips ordered from Standard Coil in Los Angeles.

Hallcrafters reported it was shipping receivers with uhf tuners and vhf sets with converters.

Sentinel reported that it was sending sets, with strips to come from Standard Coil Co. in Los Angeles.

editorial



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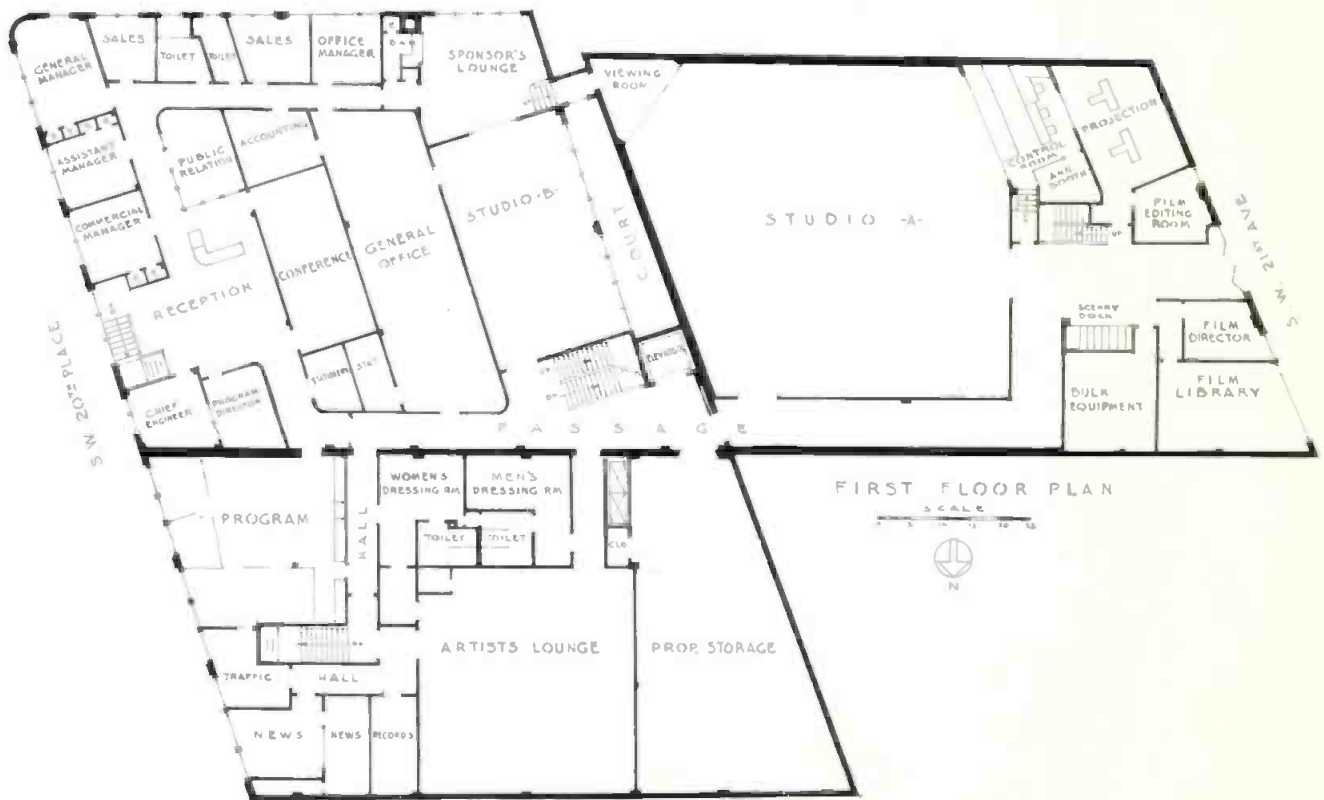
## Pioneer in Portland

THE WAY of future uhf operations will be made easier by the enterprise of Herbert Mayer, president of Empire Coil Co., who over last weekend was to put the nation's first commercial uhf station on the air in Portland, Ore.

It was fortunate for uhf development that the first station should go into operation in an important market which until then had been without TV. The uhf interest thus stimulated in Portland cannot help but spread elsewhere. Mr. Mayer and RCA, whose engineers moved the transmitting equipment from Bridgeport, Conn., to Portland in what must be a record of efficiency and speed, are to be commended for their resourcefulness. Their work will do much for the general expansion of uhf service.

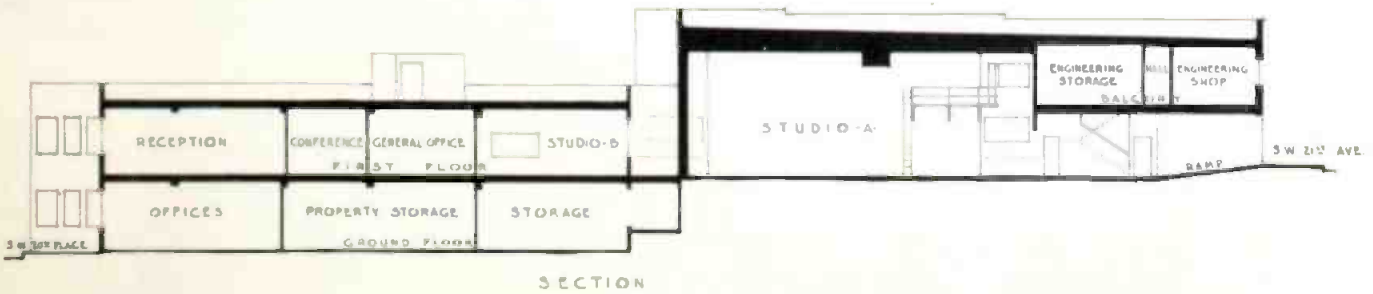
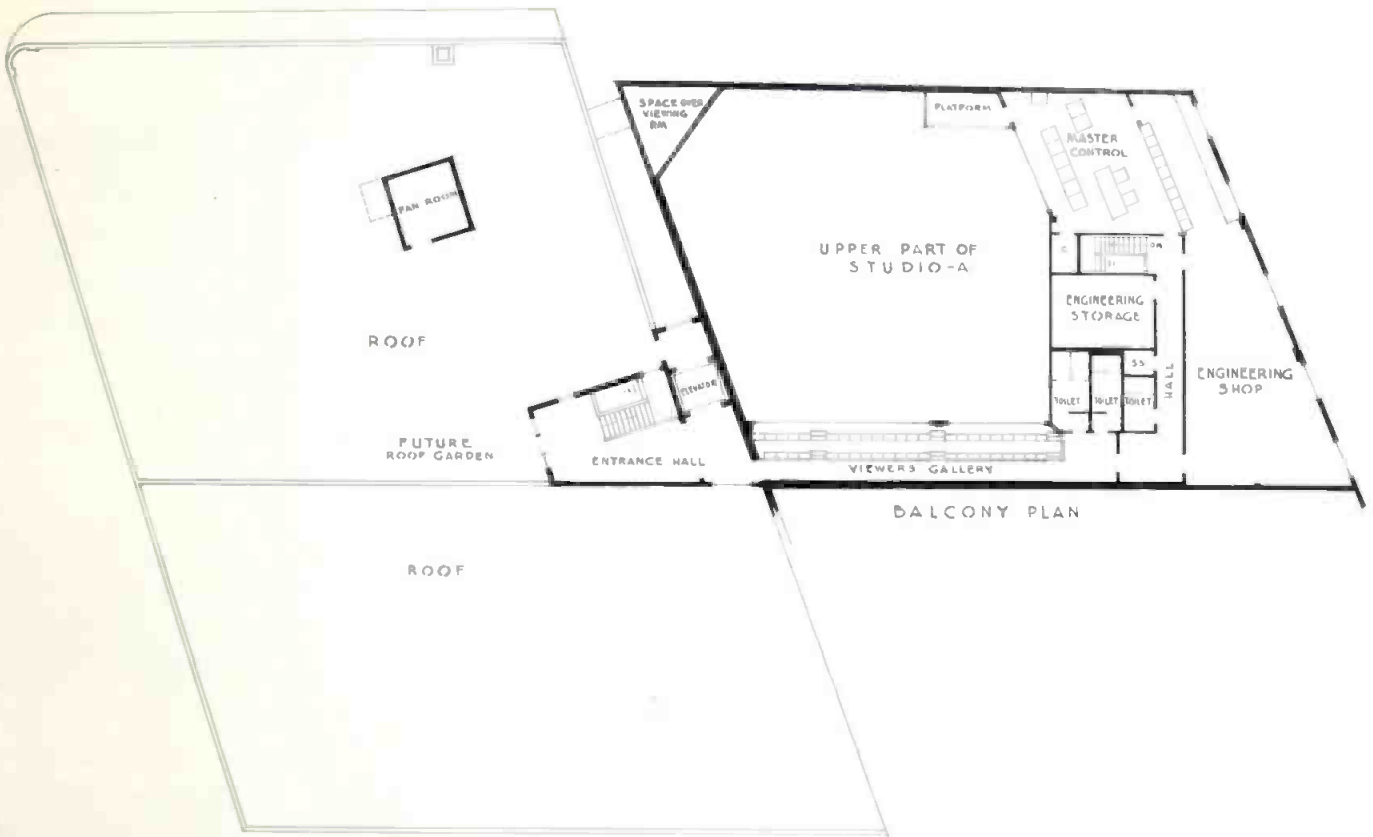


# OPERATIONAL LAYOUT . . .





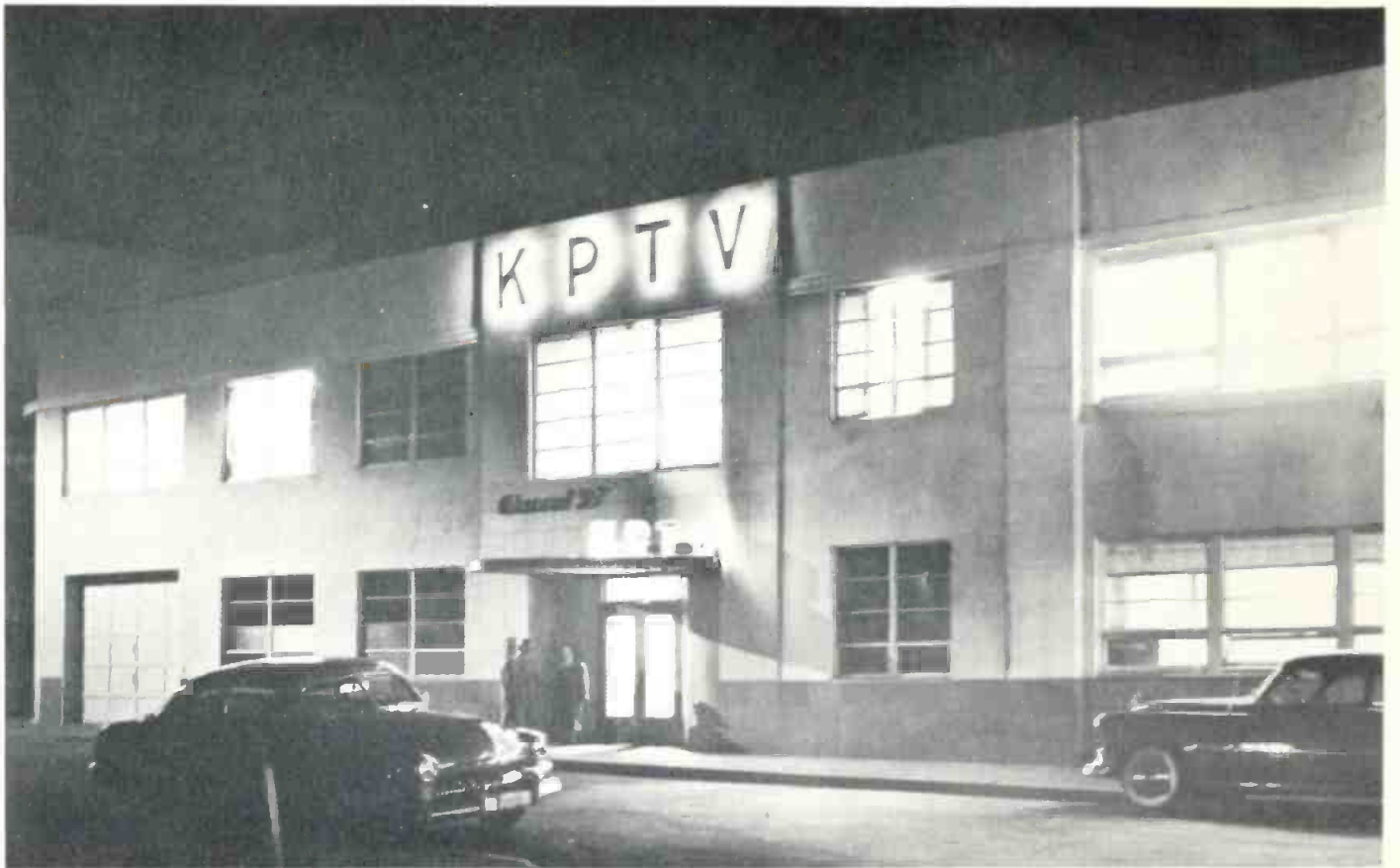
'FOR YOUR VIEWING PLEASURE' . . .



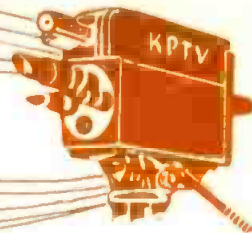
SECTION



'NIGHT WORK AT KPTV' . . .



## BARRISTER'S BONANZA . . .



 our respects to:



HERBERT MAYER

**T**HE WAY Herbert Mayer got into electronics may not be biographically logical but judging by his successful career the transition was commercially sound.

Nine years of law practice in New York were suddenly abandoned early in World War II when this successful barrister started worrying because he learned that a shortage of coil-winding facilities was seriously delaying war production and anyhow he'd always nursed a desire to enter business.

Electronics looked like an industry with a tremendous future so Herbert Mayer decided to get into it via the coil-winding route. He not only wanted to be a good businessman, but he really was. By the end of the war Empire Coil Co. was the leading supplier to Westinghouse of intricate radar coils. Mr. Mayer is president of Empire.

With arrival of V-J Day, the company converted from radar to the manufacture of radio coils and transformers. The postwar electronics industry provided a good market for these products and the manufacturing plant thrived.

Two years later—1947 to be specific—Mr. Mayer was deeply moved by a speech Brig. Gen. David Sarnoff delivered to a meeting of Radio Mfrs. Assn. In his speech, Gen. Sarnoff looked into the electronics future and extolled the coming era of television.

Herbert Mayer was impressed, just as he had been impressed by the coil-winding shortage early in the war. With his customary enthusiasm and his desire to create, he applied for and received a grant to construct a television station in Cleveland. At the same time he turned Empire's energies toward development of television components with the result that the company now is the leading outside supplier of these parts to RCA and numbers among customers such manufacturers as Philco, DuMont, Capehart-Farnsworth and Hallcrafters.

Simultaneously, the manufacturing division and embryo television station proceeded under forced draft and WXEL (TV) Cleveland went on the air Dec. 17, 1949 from suburban Parma, assigned to Channel 9. At that time some video experts were uttering snide comments about the upper half of the vhf television band and its economic possibilities.

Despite the dire predictions, WXEL was an immediate success. It has telecast Cleveland Indians baseball games for the past three seasons. Within two years the volume of business

and desire to provide better programming facilities had brought about an expansion of the Parma plant to nearly three times its original size. This culminated in the opening of downtown offices and studios in Esquire Theatre, newly renovated and converted into WXEL Studio D.

Mr. Mayer's electronic appetite wasn't whetted by the two major enterprises, however, so he decided to expand his television empire by acquiring two uhf grants—Channel 27 in Portland, Ore., and Channel 26 in Denver. The two cities were major video-less areas because of the drawn-out FCC freeze.

The Portland project is an epic in television's exciting history. Last July 11 Mr. Mayer got the Portland and Denver grants. There weren't any commercial uhf transmitters available so he bought the experimental equipment that RCA has operated at Bridgeport, Conn., for several years. The gear was boxed and shipped by fast freight and truck to Portland and reassembled by RCA.

All the while, building crews were working around the clock, seven days a week, and by Sept. 15 the building was complete and all equipment in place. RCA had hustled out a 21-gain antenna and it was installed within five days. A 250-foot tower that arrived Sept. 9 was completed Sept. 11 just as the antenna arrived.

The 17.6 kw signal went on the air at 12:01 a.m. Sept. 18, giving Portland its first television service.

The commercial career of this ex-lawyer thus has been marked by a series of high-pressure projects, enough to wreck the carcass of an average executive. Herbert Mayer is quite aware of the hazards of pressure, and therefore is successful in avoiding them. First, his work is both a vocation and an avocation. He loves it, and goes to work at 8:30 a.m. He's a night owl, and frequently works beyond midnight.

Next step to avoid ulcers and related business ills consists of close adherence to a series of admonitions on his desk. They are simple, though numerous—avoid worry, tension, overwork, over-fatigue, over-eating, over-haste, constant deadlines, too little relaxation, too few vacations, sorrow.

### Available to Employes.

That's a lot of avoiding, but Mr. Mayer is an efficient avoider. He backstops this knack with a genial, disarming smile—a smile that's an important factor in his business and personal life. Though he has a private office, it's almost unused because he prefers a desk in the general office where he is available to employes at all times. His inspirational leadership has built up employe loyalty. As one employe put it, "Being around Herbert Mayer is exhilarating and exciting and a liberal education on how to conduct a business operation. He is a tremendous force."

Mr. Mayer has an active social conscience and is quick to employ handicapped workers as well as some who need rehabilitation. He doesn't like to talk about these things, dismissing them as "part of our responsibility as employers to give a man a chance."

Herbert Mayer was born in 1908 in New York City, son of a successful builder. At Colgate he led the debating team and was a track star. He got his legal education at the U. of Wisconsin. In 1936 he married the former Frances Leaper, of Green Bay, Wis., a commercial artist. Her artistic talents are found, incidentally, in many phases of Empire's activities including plant decoration, trademarks and letterheads. The Mayers have five children—"a basketball team" as their father puts it, two boys and three girls. They live in Larchmont, N. Y. His hobbies include skiing and mountain climbing.

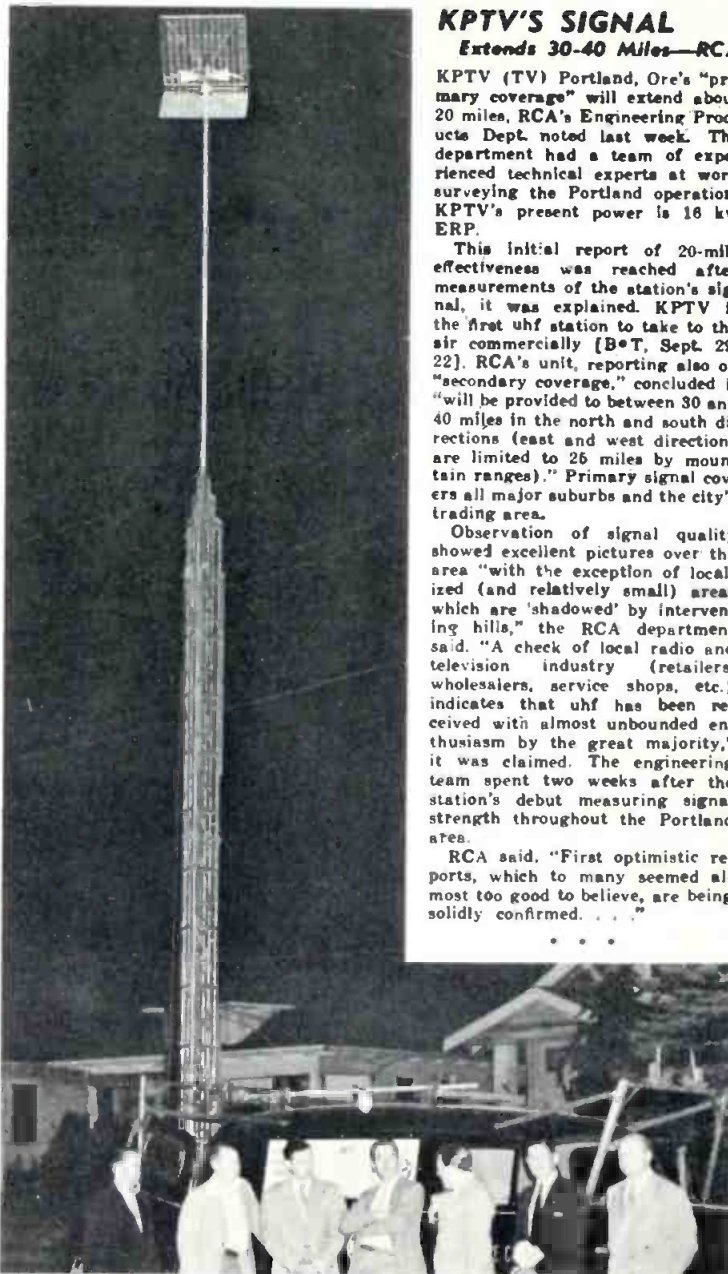
The philosophy that led to his electronics progress is summed up by Mr. Mayer in a quotation from Rabindranath Tagore, voiced at the WXEL opening in 1949: "Faith is the bird that feels the light and sings, while the dawn is still dark."

BROADCASTING • Telecasting October 6, 1952





## SIGNAL EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS . . .



FIRST TV signals transmitted by KPTV (TV) Portland, Ore., were measured by an RCA Service Co. testing truck when nation's first uhf station took the air last month [B•T, Sept. 29, 22]. Participating in tests are (l to r): Arnold I. Kothe, RCA Service Co. engineering department; Ernest C. Bottomley, TV technician; Bernard C. Chicaine, West Coast district sales coordinator, RCA Victor; J. David Callaghan, RCA Service Co. engineering department; John P. Baksenbom, vice president in charge of service firm's consumer prod-

### KPTV'S SIGNAL Extends 30-40 Miles—RCA

KPTV (TV) Portland, Ore.'s "primary coverage" will extend about 20 miles, RCA's Engineering Products Dept. noted last week. The department had a team of experienced technical experts at work surveying the Portland operation. KPTV's present power is 18 kw ERP.

This initial report of 20-mile effectiveness was reached after measurements of the station's signal, it was explained. KPTV is the first uhf station to take to the air commercially [B•T, Sept. 29, 22]. RCA's unit, reporting also on "secondary coverage," concluded it "will be provided to between 30 and 40 miles in the north and south directions (east and west directions are limited to 25 miles by mountain ranges)." Primary signal covers all major suburbs and the city's trading area.

Observation of signal quality showed excellent pictures over the area "with the exception of localized (and relatively small) areas which are 'shadowed' by intervening hills," the RCA department said. "A check of local radio and television industry (retailers, wholesalers, service shops, etc.) indicates that uhf has been received with almost unbounded enthusiasm by the great majority," it was claimed. The engineering team spent two weeks after the station's debut measuring signal strength throughout the Portland area.

RCA said, "First optimistic reports, which to many seemed almost too good to believe, are being solidly confirmed. . . ."

. . .

### UHF PROGRESS

BRIG. GEN. David Sarnoff, RCA board chairman, last Tuesday compared the growth of uhf and the opening of KPTV (TV) Portland, Ore., nation's first commercial uhf station, to the Lewis and Clark pioneering explorations of the American Northwest.

In a 15-minute telecast shared with FCC Chairman Paul A. Walker and which was carried by KPTV as the station began regular programming with the first game of the World Series, Gen. Sarnoff praised Herbert Mayer, president of Empire Coil Co. Inc., which installed in Portland the dismantled equipment from the RCA experimental uhf station at Bridgeport, Conn., to be the first uhf commercial station on the air [B•T, Sept. 22].

Speaking from New York, where Sandra Mayer, daughter of Mr. Mayer, presented the RCA board chairman a citation in recognition of RCA's contribution to the development of television, Gen. Sarnoff said:

"In bringing television to Portland, Mr. Herbert Mayer . . . and his associates have acted in the traditional pioneering spirit of the great Northwest.

"As a triumph in radio exploration the opening of the uhf spectrum may well be compared with the historic Lewis and Clark expedition that opened up the Northwest wilderness.

"These ultra high frequencies are of great significance to the future of television. Hundreds of new channels bring additional millions of Americans into range of television programs."

Gen. Sarnoff praised Chairman Walker and his associates on the FCC "for their great interest in bringing the new trails of uhf into service.

"By licensing new stations they now encourage the television broadcasters to make use of these new pathways through the air by filling them with program traffic.

"We are happy to have had a part in blazing this trail across the continent and are pleased to have KPTV affiliated with the NBC's television network."

Speaking from Washington, D. C., Chairman Walker greeted KPTV as the "harbinger" of a new era of expansion for American television. He remarked:

"This takes television into a

### Sarnoff, Walker Laud KPTV

\* new frontier of the ether. We can now have upwards of 2,000 stations. Thirteen hundred communities can have their own stations. More communities can have their own television station than now have a daily newspaper of their own.

"In due time other uhf stations will be built all over the nation," Chairman Walker said.

KPTV put the country's first commercial uhf program on the air Sept. 20, but regular programming did not begin until last Tuesday.

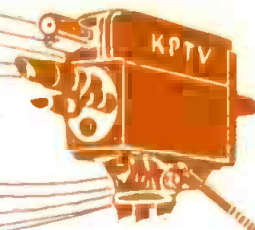
### BROADCASTING

#### Telecasting

October 6, 1952

acts, who supervised tests; Harold E. Dasfers, manager of press division, RCA Victor; Lawrence G. Borgeson, West Coast television service district manager, RCA Service Co. Initial survey, taken during early morning tour of city Sept. 18, showed a sharp, steady signal with resulting excellent coverage, RCA reported. Further reports were more enthusiastic (see story above). Antenna tower at rear of truck can be raised to 70 feet above street level.

TV INDUSTRY 'GREATLY INTERESTED' . . .



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FIRST UHF-TV TRANSMITTER

## First UHF-TV Station on Air

KPTV, Portland, Oregon began video transmission on September 18th

What is believed to have been the first commercial uhf telecast began with the airing of a test pattern from KPTV, Portland, Oregon at 12:01 a.m. on September 18th. Initial reception was reported clear and steady by Herbert Mayer, president of the Empire Coil Company of New York, owner of KPTV. He toured the streets of downtown Portland and out through suburban areas in a RCA Service Company truck that was specially equipped for testing.

A major part of the television industry is reported to have been greatly interested in the strength and quality

of the uhf signal from KPTV, including the 48 grantees and 291 applicants for other uhf channels and many more who are prospective applicants. The FCC's allocation plan, which has been in the making for more than three years provides a blue print for 2053 similar transmitters throughout the nation.

Mr. Mayer purchased the transmitter and associated equipment, which had been operating as the RCA-NBC experimental uhf transmitter, KC2XAK, located near Bridgeport, Connecticut. Dismantling of KC2XAK began on August 25th by engineers from NBC, RCA, Adler Communication Laboratory and the Empire Coil Company. The 1 kw equipment was shipped to Portland, Oregon by truck and fast freight. Construction of a 250-foot tower on Council Crest, more than 1000 feet above Port-

land was begun on September 9th. Two days later a special RCA broadcast antenna was installed on the completed tower.

Two days after the initial test the station aired its first commercial program which as a film showing development and growth of uhf television sponsored by RCA Victor. "Live" programs from the NBC network followed.

### Official Opening

KPTV is now spreading a good signal over the city of Portland and a Grade A signal over Vancouver, Washington and St. Helens and Oregon City, Oregon. Operating a 1 kw transmitter with a 14-section antenna it provides 17.6 kw of effective radiated power. One of the first reports on its test pattern was re-

(Continued on page 24)



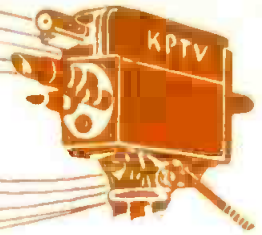


## FIRST VISITORS . . .



**EARLY CALLERS** at KPTV studio headquarters. In its first half year of life numbered an estimated 200, and included television engineers, researchers, industry leaders and network officials from nearly every state and several foreign countries. One was Harold Page, British Broadcasting Corporation, in these United States on a United Kingdom Scientific mission. Due to visit in April was Dr. Tatsuo Hayashi, Japanese world television consultant and S. Jujiki, assistant chief, Radio Regulatory bureau, Ministry of Post Service, for the Japanese government. Celebrities came, too—as did Neva Langley, Miss America of 1953. International, national and state government officials dropped by, also—but it fell to Portland's 1953-56 mayor, Fred L. Peterson, to be first viewer of the new KPTV offices. His tour of inspection was guided by Charles D. Richardson, KPTV purchasing agent. Scores of eager students, too, sought to view the world's first UHF commercial station. First of these were radio-television students of Multnomah College, Portland, accompanied by A. E. Richmond, instructor. According to Albert Bishop, director, Multnomah College had taken its television students on a 400-mile trip to Seattle and back to inspect a television station, prior to opening of KPTV.





Herbert Mayer, head of KPTV, smiles and keeps busy. His aide, Dorothy Bingham, is Portlander.

## Portland's New Mayer

By JOE STEIN

**B**ESIDES being a resting place for an ancient trolley car, Council Crest now is the site of Portland's first television tower, a bulb symbol of tomorrow.

It isn't enough to say, though we've heard it enough recently, that here is the first TV outlet in town. (It's the new ultra high frequencies or the first commercial UHF station in the world. Adds Owner Herbert Mayer: "First in existence and the only one of its kind.") He smiles broadly when he says that. If another UHF opens anywhere before next year he'll be surprised. The same young (age 44) high-powered lawyer-industrialist-showman just might turn up in command of UHF No. 2. He has such a license for Denver.

Quick-witted and ruddy of face, Mayer habitually breaks into a grin, but the habit seems only one reason for the pleasure displayed here.

Despite or maybe just because of, Portland's exaggeratedly long wait for video, this "first-of-its-kind" opened with vastly greater prospects than any other business in recent history. Results, customers, profits all but guaranteed.

The 750,000 population hereabouts is the new medium's largest frontier conquest. And no argument that ultra-high is something new under the electronic sun. Where else, without another station for six months or more, can the customers go?

Trade wisacres think the Mayer smile wouldn't be so ready if Portland set buyers had had a VHF station first. You can't buy a set that isn't equipped to receive VHF, whereas UHF on all but a few models entails "converters," "strips" or other extras.

Mayer, Mr. UHF himself, cautions buyers: "There are good and bad stripp, good and bad converters, good and bad antennas. . . . We'd rather see Portland take it easy . . . get good reception."

Talking of his unique transmitter, which was built and used as a UHF laboratory for 2½ years, the Mayer grin is broad. To him, the transmitter is a piece of perfection that won't be duplicated or matched in any future models. But quality isn't all-important now. Not long before TV-day, a Pacific Power & Light survey counted 400 sets in woody Portland—estimates today run upwards of 10,000.

Meanwhile, Mayer's future rivals are bogged down in battle for licenses. But he knows UHF competition lies ahead. On VHF. Naturally he welcomes into solo period for his UHF baby, but he said, "I'll welcome competition. It creates more interest."

**H**E should know. Four years ago in Cleveland his WKEL-TV opened as that city's third station in 8 year that took gallons of red ink to record. He met the challenge with heavy promotion and program emphasis on youngsters and baseball fans. Today, WKEL boasts as good a Homer as any in Cleveland.

It also boasts a new studio (which he dedicated with ballyhoo on his way to fire up KPTV), a remodeled downtown theatre worth close to \$1 million. Looked at another way, WKEL sells a spot announcement—right beautiful seconds or VHF time—for \$30.

Portland advertisers pay \$17.50 for the same deal. An advertising executive told the writer his list of KPTV prospects is long and eager to pay such rates as \$35 each for one-minute commercials on a string of 250. Or \$127.50 per lot 32 half-hour programs. Not bad rates, he called these, remarking that half hours sell for \$308 in Seattle.

The emphasis on local sponsors is as direct as it is successful. Three weeks of operation and the KPTV clock was sold out. Said its master: "We want to give Portland the advantage. We're not taking

any national spot business for the time being."

Program-wise, the story is all non-local. The fans can expect nothing more than films or network fare before next January. Local programming will run inward, man-in-the-street shows, kid stuff and sports, of which last he'd like nothing better than football. "If NCAA would permit."

Without local stuff, he'll pick over the offerings of four networks for "the best quality programs across the board." Mayer has no permanent network commitment now but admits a liking for NBC.

This newcomer doesn't hide a taste for the role he's playing, though he professes a dislike for the limelight. Trade circles that couldn't even recognize his name last June when he applied for channel 27 today watch every move he makes. They were just as stunned as the rest of the industry when he rushed KPTV into operation to confound the experts and make him out of the "informed" columnists.

So fast was KPTV erected—85 days from time of license grant—that it fiberfagged a whole industry and left Mayer himself a little breathless. "Gee, isn't this all exciting?" he chortled.

**R**IGHT how the Mayer enterprise is mostly temporary. The Council Crest layout may be moved if the city's telecasters settle somewhere else for their broadcast center. KPTV won't have a studio until the office at 735 SW 20th Place is remodeled. Transmitter power is a fraction of the 91.8 kilowatts authorized.

There's no denying the startling quality of Mayer's business background. A lawyer of nine years' practice in New York, he built a war-baby electronics parts business, the Empire Coil company in New Rochelle, N. Y., into a profitable concern with 500 employees and \$7 million in yearly sales. Production naturally all goes to television sets. In addition, his family-controlled firm owns a wire mill in Danbury, Conn., and is building a branch plant in Puerto Rico. He recently abandoned an application for a TV station in Tampa, Fla., but hints of another impending big deal.

Asked why he branches out in so many directions, he said, "I just have to be doing something all the time." To rumors that he'll eventually sell the Portland station for a handy profit he answered: "They said the same thing in Cleveland and rumors were strong, too. But the talk died when I turned down \$7½ million for WKEL. No, KPTV is not for sale. We're here to stay."

Of KPTV's 33 employees, he pointed out that all but four were hired locally. The Cleveland station's staff numbers 110, including 60 technicians, incidentally, as an example of television's heavy demand on manpower, he said that coverage of the Cleveland Indians' ball games required a full-time staff of 22 men.

None of Mayer's employees is covered by a union contract. An attempt by the AFL American Federation of Radio Artists to organize WKEL failed to snag up a single member of the staff. Portland's Central Labor council has raised any attempt to televisize wrestling matches from the Labor Temple as long as KPTV remains non-union.

A brewery was ready to sponsor TV wrestling each Monday night but the council vetoed the plan after the electrical workers and the theatrical union protested that the station refused to deal with them. But not very much of the nation's television industry so far has been unionized.

Mayer's policy is to select his employees with great care. He says he is not afraid unions. His factory payroll (which includes quite a few of the physically handicapped) was kept on the job during a business slump last year. During a six-month period of no production, due to a drop in sales of TV sets, he kept his people to work on a complete factory maintenance program.

When we asked one of the Portland staffers his little he said: "There are no titles around here. Last week a man who called himself a 'program director' promptly got fired." Mayer himself likes to work his people in a variety of jobs.

A hard worker whose daily routine lasts from 8:30 a. m. to late evening and occasionally to midnight, he nevertheless professes moderation. He resists high pressure in a business (famous for ulcers, shies away from tension, worry, overwork and over-indulgence. Above all, he hates deadlines.

Herbert Mayer is a native of New York city. He was educated at Colgate and the University of Wisconsin. He is the father of five children, three girls, two boys, ranging in age from 20 months to 14 years.

Mrs. Mayer, a former commercial artist, designs the letterheads, labels, trademarks and decorations for all of her husband's enterprises. She illustrated a book he wrote for small fry, the story of a baby elephant. "Little Ajax" sparks a children's program, "Castles in the Air." Ajax is in the works here, too, but not until the political significance of the elephant—even the small one—dies down.

The Mayers make their home in Larchmont, N. Y., but the master of the household sees less and less of it as his world expands. He said wryly, "I'm really trying to live four places at once." But he is a home-loving sort of man who watches his own children's reaction to the master of television with some misgivings.

Said he: "Some of the programs are downright improper for children. I don't let my own watch it too much. Sometimes I have to shut off the set and chase them out of the house on Saturday afternoon."



NEW YORK PAPERS ANNOUNCE . . .

TUESDAY

NEW YORK Herald Tribune

JULY 15, 1952

# 18 New TV Outlets Authorized In 11 More Cities in F. C. C. Rule

By Gene Smith

Eleven cities spread from the New England coast to the Pacific northwest will soon have their first regular look-see at TV. The go-ahead on station permits was issued Saturday by the Federal Communications Commission and includes eighteen new stations in eleven cities.

The exact date when the nation's 109th TV station takes to the air remains somewhat of a mystery but it could be any day from now through year end.

tailers for selling home TV receivers.

Julian Gross, president of New Britain Broadcasting Co., Channel 30, said his current schedule calls for actual broadcasts to start between Nov. 30 and Jan. 1. All equipment has been on order from R. C. A. for several months, he added, and this is the only delaying factor.

He estimates it company

# TV Outlets

(Continued from page twenty-eight)

the entire package to be shipped by air express as soon as it is ready," he said, adding: "At present we're shooting for Dec. 17. That would be the anniversary of WXEL, our TV station in Cleveland, so we plan a coast-to-coast hook-up direct from factory to three TV stations."

Empire

tainly going to intensify our efforts through our existing dealers and distributors."

"We're ready when the stations are," said a spokesman.

## Denver First on List

R. C. A. engineers confirm the prediction of Denver being the first new TV city. A check of deliveries of equipment disclosed that Mr. O'Fallon's station has received enough equipment from R. C. A. to go on the air at once.

"It all depends on when he can set it up," said a spokesman.

"The possibility exists that some whom we have shipped partial sets have picked them up from other manufacturers and thus are as ready as Mr. O'Fallon," he added.

Among the permit winners added yesterday was Symons Broadcasting Co., doing business as KXLW-TV, Spokane, Wash., Channel 4, Bing Crosby is one of the owners of the station.

Other station permits follow (all channels above 13 are UHF stations):

Denver — Colorado Television Corp., Channel 26.

Springfield - Holyoke Mass.—Hampden-Hampshire Corp., Channel 55; Springfield Television Broadcasting Corp., Channel 61.

Youngstown, Ohio—Vindicator Printing Co., Channel 73; WBKN Broadcasting Corp., Channel 27.

Flint, Mich. — Trans-America Television Corp., Channel 28.

Bridgeport, Conn. — Southern Connecticut & Long Island Television Co., Channel 43.

New Bedford, Mass.—E. Anthony & Sons, Inc., Channel 28.

York, Pa.—Helm Coal Co., Channel 49; Susquehanna Broadcasting Co., Channel 43.

Spokane, Wash.—KHQ, Inc., Channel 6.

Austin, Tex.—Texas Broadcasting Corp., Channel 7; Capital City Television Co., Channel 18.

THE STANDARD-STAR, NEW ROCHELLE, N. Y., MONDAY, JULY 14, 1952

# Empire Coil Receives 2 TV Station Permits

outlet of which h 2, will be industry a pany's pre. put in an a early Sept proceedings.

Group Officials of reached by p they had nott at this time, bu thoritatively th of Radio Corp. gone to Denver rangements for ment and to prep

Empire Coil Company of New Rochelle, which owns and operates Station WXEL in Cleveland, has received Federal Communications Commission approval of construction permits among the first new television stations authorized since the three-year TV "freeze" was lifted last April. It was announced today. Fourteen applicants won FCC approvals.

Empire C.A. had applied through its president, Herbert Mayer, for station grants in Portland, Ore., and Denver, Col., the two largest cities in the country still unserved by television. Portland, with a population of 701,000, and Denver, population 561,000, are the 21st and 27th markets in the country.

The FCC awarded to Empire Coil the first two grants in history issued for ultra high frequency stations, Channel 26 in Denver and Channel 27 in Port-

land. The Portland construction permit was the only grant issued there. The remaining four channels assigned to that city are tied up in hearings between competing local applicants.

in Portland, president, pre- art telecasting delivery of antenna equip- agements for column 1)

ere are seek- in Portland, tersburg, Fla.; Mich.; Can- Pa.; Water- rg, Pa., and tmas tely should and Port- tr. Mayer s means ew stal- xceeded efforts of themselves. R. C. A.'s eration groundwork" is al- ready swinging into operation with several staff members al- ready to "build the markets for R. C. A. as they raise their heads." Allen B. Du Mont Laboratories, Inc., reports it has receiver distributors in all but the Austin, Tex., area and is ready to supply sets for all new TV markets as soon as they open. Regional sales managers have been visiting the bigger non-TV cities and including many distributors in closed-circuit demonstrations. Crosley division of Avco Manufacturing Corp. admits it is "cer-

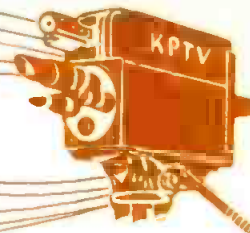








MAP TELLS RECEPTION STORY . . .



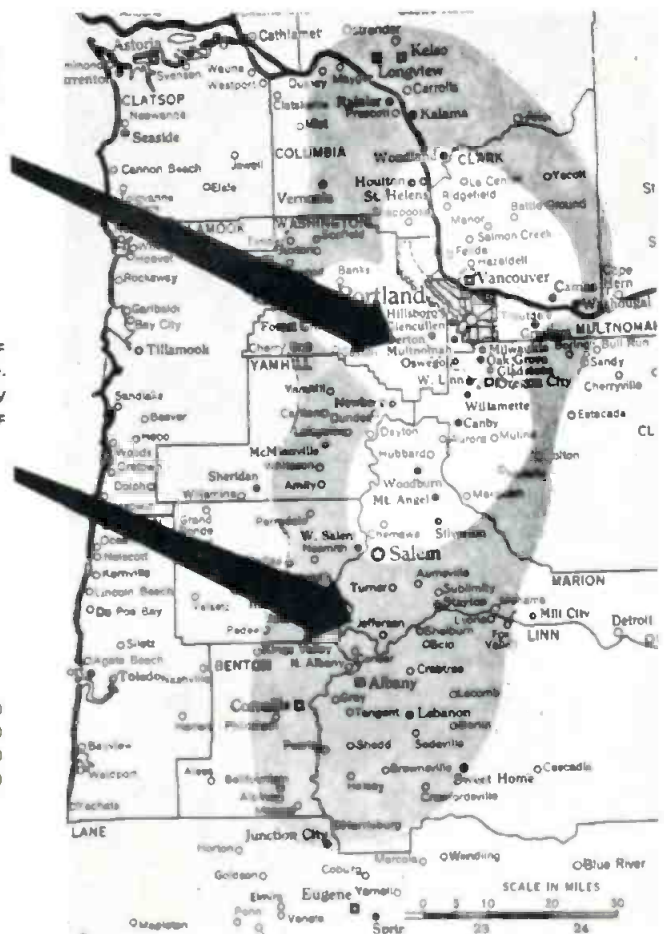
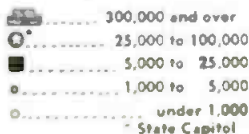
MORE THAN 680,000 PEOPLE LIVING WITHIN THIS BASIC TRADING AREA ARE COVERED BY KPTV'S SIGNAL.

**RICH PORTLAND MARKET  
BLANKETED BY KPTV'S  
UHF SIGNAL . . .**



ANTENNA HEIGHT:  
1023' Above Average Terrain  
Power—17.6 KW (STA.)

THIS "BONUS AREA" OF REPORTED SIGNAL RECEPTION BOOSTS THE KPTV POTENTIAL TO A TOTAL OF OVER 1,000,000 PERSONS.



*Television Digest*

November 15, 1952

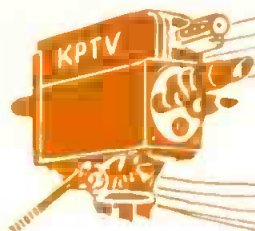
**UHF WORKING WELL—COVERS 95% OF PORTLAND:** Unrestrained enthusiasm for uhf and its potentialities runs all through RCA's report on its exhaustive field tests of first commercial uhf station -- KPTV, Portland, Ore., which began operations Sept. 18.

Report is significant in that it's first comprehensive survey of how uhf is covering Portland -- and as such is useful guide to what can be expected in other uhf cities. On basis of Portland tests, RCA engineers concluded that uhf stations can provide good service to nearly as large audiences -- in terms of percentage of total population served -- as vhf stations with same transmitter power.

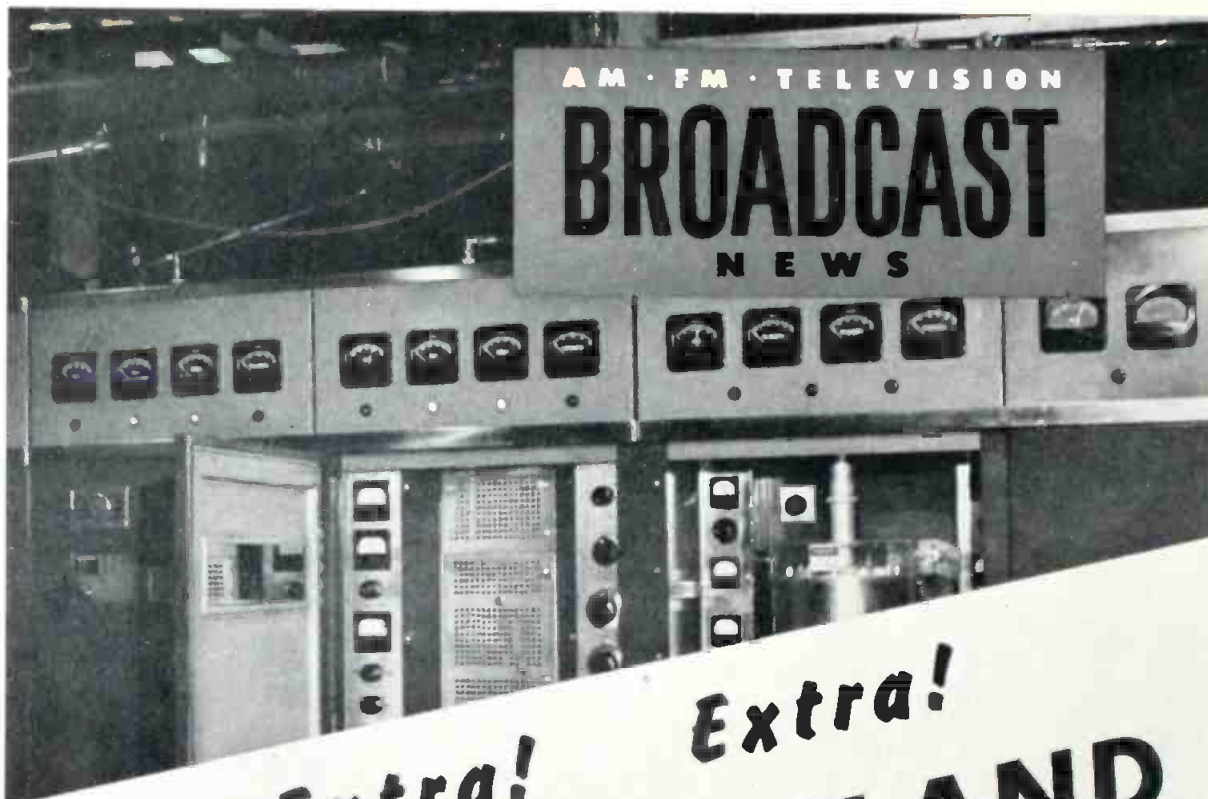
Survey team was headed by engineer John P. Taylor, RCA engineering products advertising mgr., whose previous attitude toward uhf might best be described as skeptical. But in Portland report he says "the performance of KPTV has been such as to startle the industry," and adds: "Most of the experienced radio men investigating it in person have agreed that it is 'much better than expected.'"

We urge you to read the full report, printed by RCA as special edition of its Broadcast News, and illustrated with maps, graphs and aerial photos. It's available on request from RCA Engineering Products Dept., Camden, N.J.





SPECIAL ISSUE HONORS KPTV . . .



*Extra! Extra!*

# UHF in PORTLAND

KPTV First commercial UHF Station "on-the-air"  
20KW ERP gives good coverage-report inside

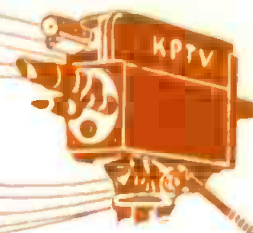


UHF TV TRANSMITTER AT KPTV, PORTLAND, OREGON





KPTV's THANKSGIVING . . .



**KPTV** *Portland*



TELEVISION — CHANNEL 27

OWNED AND OPERATED BY EMPIRE COIL COMPANY, INC.

735 S. W. 20<sup>TH</sup> PLACE · PORTLAND 5, OREGON

CAPITOL 9921

THANKSGIVING DAY

TO OUR TELEVISION AUDIENCE:

THANKSGIVING DAY is a good time for KPTV to express gratitude for the welcome given television. This eager response is a fine reward to us for the great effort which was involved in so rapidly establishing the world's pioneer, ultra high frequency station.

THANKSGIVING is when we Americans traditionally take note of our bounty. And television, as Portland now knows, is a wonderful blessing--a boon of education, religious guidance, news, sports and entertainment, dedicated to the building of a better world.

ONLY YESTERDAY families living at a distance from cities had to travel hours to see products they wanted to buy, or enjoy great performances. Now, both product and performance come to their television sets, and the families need not leave their living rooms to see them.

AND TODAY, perhaps at this very moment, if you have already joined the KPTV viewing family, the great Thanksgiving Day Festival is bringing you a new way of life. If so, if this is your first Thanksgiving with television, you know well the enrichment of which we speak.

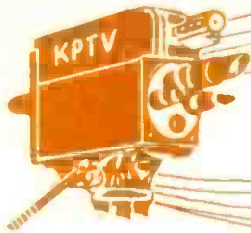
ALL OVER AMERICA, when Christmas comes, television will be bringing the breath-taking beauty of the Nativity, the joy of carols, the spirit of love. All that America has lost with the passing of horse-drawn sleighs bedecked with sleighbells, television has returned to us. Later, there'll be the tomfoolery of New Years, followed by the old-world gaiety of New Orleans' Mardi Gras, and then the spring freshness of Easter, for television is a year 'round joy.

TELEVISION'S A JOY to the viewer, and it's a joy to the station bringing it to the viewer.

THEREFORE, THIS THANKSGIVING, the staff of KPTV extends to all of you our warmest holiday greetings.

Sincerely,

Herbert Mayer



AFTER FIVE MONTHS' TELECASTING . . .

OREGON STATE SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION  
PORTLAND STATE EXTENSION CENTER  
PORTLAND 1, OREGON

March 11, 1953


Mr. Herbert Mayer  
Television Station KPTV  
735 S. W. 20th Place  
Portland 5, Oregon

Dear Mr. Mayer:

The total figure of 72,839 represents the sales figures obtained from the distributors of the following brands of television receiving sets as of February 28, 1953.

Admiral	Motorola
Airline	Packard Bell
Arvin	Philmore
Bendix	Philco
CBS Columbia	Raetheon
Capehart	RCA
Crosley	Sentinel
Dumont	Silvertone
Emerson	Spartan
General Electric	Stewart Warner
Hallicrafter	Stromberg Carlson
Hoffman	Sylvania
Kaye-Halbert	Tele-King
Magnavox	Traveler
Mercury	Westinghouse
	Zenith

Very truly yours,

  
John F. Jenkins

JFJ:bjs

The rise of sets in Portland from the first official count, shortly after opening of Oregon's first television station—KPTV, eloquently bespoke the long wait, the whetted appetites, for electronic scientists' latest gift in communication.

Everyone had expected swift acceptance, of course. But as one observer commented, "Termining the people's eagerness

'swift' isn't enough. It was the most dramatic, the most exciting, the television industry has seen. Setting the KPTV transmitter into that pool of video-hungry producers and consumers was like putting a refrigerator thermometer in a pan of hot water. The red column of response shot skyward."



On the next page appear photographs of some of the pioneer members of Empire Coil Company's manufacturing plant in New Rochelle, N.Y., and its television station WXEL in Cleveland, Ohio. Among these people are some who have wound coils, built transformers, administered our manufacturing business and conducted operations in the engineering, programming, sales and administration departments of WXEL. It is to these people and to the others in our family team that this book has been dedicated.





## STAFF PIONEERS . . .

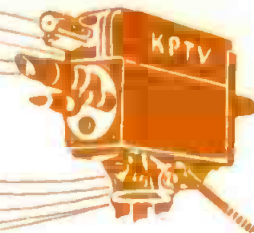


**EMPIRE COIL STAFFERS:** Top, left: Emil Forst, Ernest Krooke, Martin Kramer, Richard G. Freeman, Henry Golden, Peter DiBenedetto, Edgor Bradshaw, Richard Forst, George Cunningham, Clarence Rogers, Joseph Mullen, Halsey Flora, Joseph J. Herold, Walter Stoudt, Joseph Ranca. Bottom, left: Margaret F. Barrett, Elizabeth Santaromita, Frances Lambert, Rita DiBenedetto, Alma Schmidt, Marguerite Forst, Clara Zaffino, Herbert Mayer, Catherine Northrup, Ellen Jackson, Sonya Stensan, Susie Silva, Margaret Clark.



**WXEL STAFFERS:** Top, left: Helen Celke, John Kinsella, Edwin Abbott, Gilbert Anderson, George Washeim, Clyde Freeman, Paul Baughman, Fred Blechschmid, Mel Horace. Bottom row, left: Tracy Anderson, Irene Kafer, Harold Brinkman, Richard Wright, Barbara Snyder, Franklin Snyder, Harry Black, Howard Hoffman and Lucille Schroeder.

STAFF OF THE 'PETTED DARLING' . . .

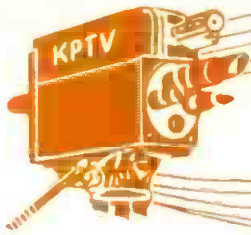


**ORIGINAL KPTV STAFFERS:** The above photograph was taken October 20, 1952, on the first month birthday of KPTV. Shown are: Front row, left: Dorothy Bingham, Marie Steed, Sally Savan, Olive Hart-rampf, Herbert Mayer (station founder), Pat Swanson, Jan Webster, Norma Schierholz, Merry Ann Douglass; center row, left: Russell Olsen, John Ettelson, Lawrence Hunt, Richard Norman, Norman Wallace, Wayne Rose, Bernard Crane, Bill McAllister, Robert Schufeldt, Frank Opra; back row, left: Gilbert Fall, Charles White, Tom Myers, Holt Cookingham, William Stout, Gene Phelps, Dan Martin, Bill Achatz, Charles Richardson and Andrew Kuernvik.

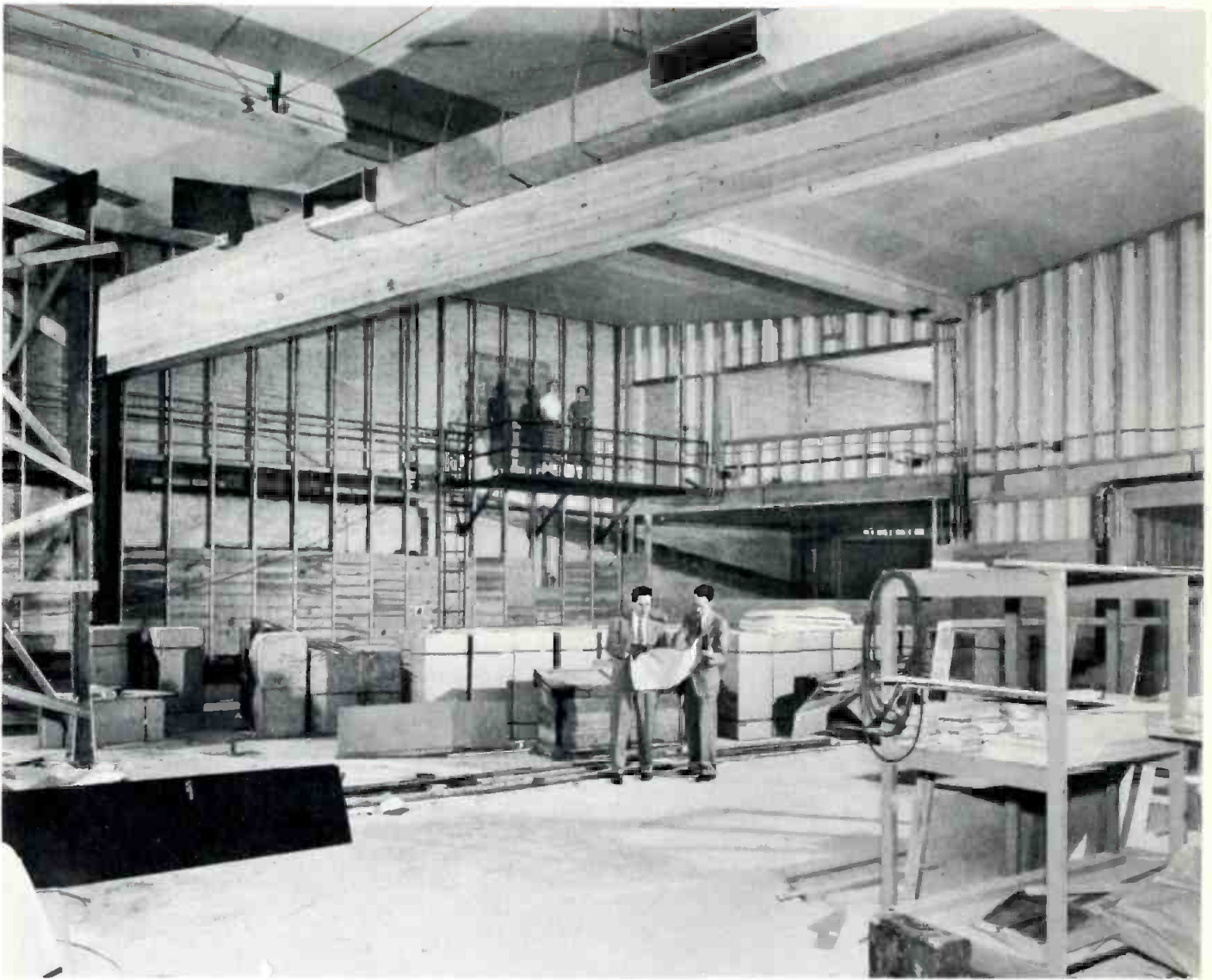


**KPTV STAFF ADDITIONS—**Following the photographing of KPTV's month-old staff of 28 persons—20 men, 8 women—an additional 12 were employed, during the station's second month of life. A total of 7 men and 5 women composed this group. Photographed on the last day of KPTV's historic portion of 1952—December 31—they are: Front row, left: Ruth Simpson, Anne Anderson, Elaine Smith, Lorraine Gould, Lois Hennessy; back row: John Harms, Jim Hains, Bill Norman, Bill Swing, Wayne Bartholemey, Bill Clayton and John Iwakiri.





## HEART OF A TV STATION . . .



**BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE**—Thomas Friedman, consulting engineer, and Russell Olsen, acting KPTV station manager, study plans for Studio A. Shown overhead is the big Douglas fir beam supporting the building roof—12½' x 53½' by 64'—said to be the largest wooden beam in cross-section to have been constructed to date. Studio di-

mensions are 55' x 60', with a ceiling height of 22'. To right of lighting control balcony, on which stand Marie Steed and Patricia Opra, secretaries, is the master control room; below is the studio control room. Overlooking the studio (but not shown) are a sponsors' viewing room and an audience gallery to accommodate 50 persons.





**KPTV expresses appreciation to the following companies,  
listed in groups alphabetically:**

**Radio Corporation of America;**

**Networks:** American Broadcasting Company, Columbia Broadcasting System, Du Mont Television Network, National Broadcasting Company;

**Magazines:** Broadcast News, Broadcasting and Telecasting, Business Week, Newsweek, RCA Trade News, RCA Victor News, Radio Age, Service Management, Television Digest;

**Portland Newspapers:** The Oregonian and the Oregon Journal;

**New York Newspapers:** New York Herald Tribune and The Standard-Star, New Rochelle;

**The City of Portland and the Portland Chamber of Commerce;**

**Oregon firms:** Ackroyd Photography, Barrett and Logan, Architects; Multnomah Hotel, Portland General Electric, Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company, all of Portland; Ralph Johnson Appliances and McEwan Photo Shop, both of Salem; Fletcher and Smartt Appliances, Eugene;

**Milone Photo Studio, New Rochelle;**

**KPTV**

**also expresses appreciation to the following persons:**

**Brig. Gen. David Sarnoff**, chairman of the board, Radio Corporation of America; **Paul A. Walker**, chairman, Federal Communications Commission; **Dorothy McCullough Lee**, mayor, City of Portland, 1949-1953; **Commissioners William A. Bowes**, **Ormond R. Bean**, **Nathan A. Boody** and **Fred L. Peterson**, elected mayor, 1953-1957; **Dr. Edgar W. Smith**, president, Portland Chamber of Commerce, 1949-1953;

**Morgan Beatty**, news analyst, National Broadcasting Company;

**Magazine editors:** **Martin Codell**, Television Digest; **Art King**, Broadcasting and Telecasting; **Kenneth Kramer**, Business Week; **E. C. Thompson**, Service Management; **Chet Shaw**, Newsweek; **Harold D. Desfor**, director, press division, and **John P. Taylor**, writer, Radio Corporation of America; **E. L. Bragdon**, Radio Age;

**Newspaper editors:** **Whitelaw Reid**, New York Herald Tribune; **Elmer H. Miller**, The Standard-Star, New Rochelle; **David W. Eyre**, Oregon Journal, and **Robert C. Notson**, The Oregonian, both of Portland;

**Editorial writers:** **Tom Humphrey** and **Dick Fagan**, Oregon Journal; **Malcolm Bauer** and **Jalmar Johnson**, The Oregonian;

**Columnists:** **Bill Moyes**, Oregon Journal and **Francis Murphy**, The Oregonian;

**Newswriters:** **Gene Smith**, New York Herald Tribune; **Herb**

**Penny**, **Bill Lambert**, **Paul Ewing**, **Helen Hoover**, **Wallace Turner**, **Phyllis Lauritz** and **Keith Hansen**, The Oregonian; **Joe Stein**, **Don Sterling Jr.**, **Bob Fassett**, **Jim Irvine**, **Jack Ostergren**, **Jack Roberts**, **Bud Crick** and **Jim Running**, Oregon Journal;

**Photographers:** **Mel Junghans**, **Les Ordeman**, **Al Monner**, **Herb Alden** and **Edmund G. Lee**, Oregon Journal; **Frank Sterrett**, **Kirk Braun**, **Carl Vermilya** and **Allan de Lay**, The Oregonian; **Cook Goodwin**, Station WXEL, Cleveland; **Hugh Ackroyd** and **Everett Chandler**, Ackroyd Photography; **Lois Hennessy**, freelance writer-photographer;

**Contributors:** **H. C. Smartt**, Eugene, and **Ralph Johnson**, Salem;

**Martin W. Kramer**, general counsel; **Lyon**, **Wilner** and **Bergson**, Washington counsel; **Pendergras**, **Spackman** and **Bullivant**, Portland counsel;

**John F. Jenkins**, instructor in mathematics, Portland State College;

**Adler Communications Laboratories**, engineering consultants; **Thomas B. Friedman**, engineering consultant;

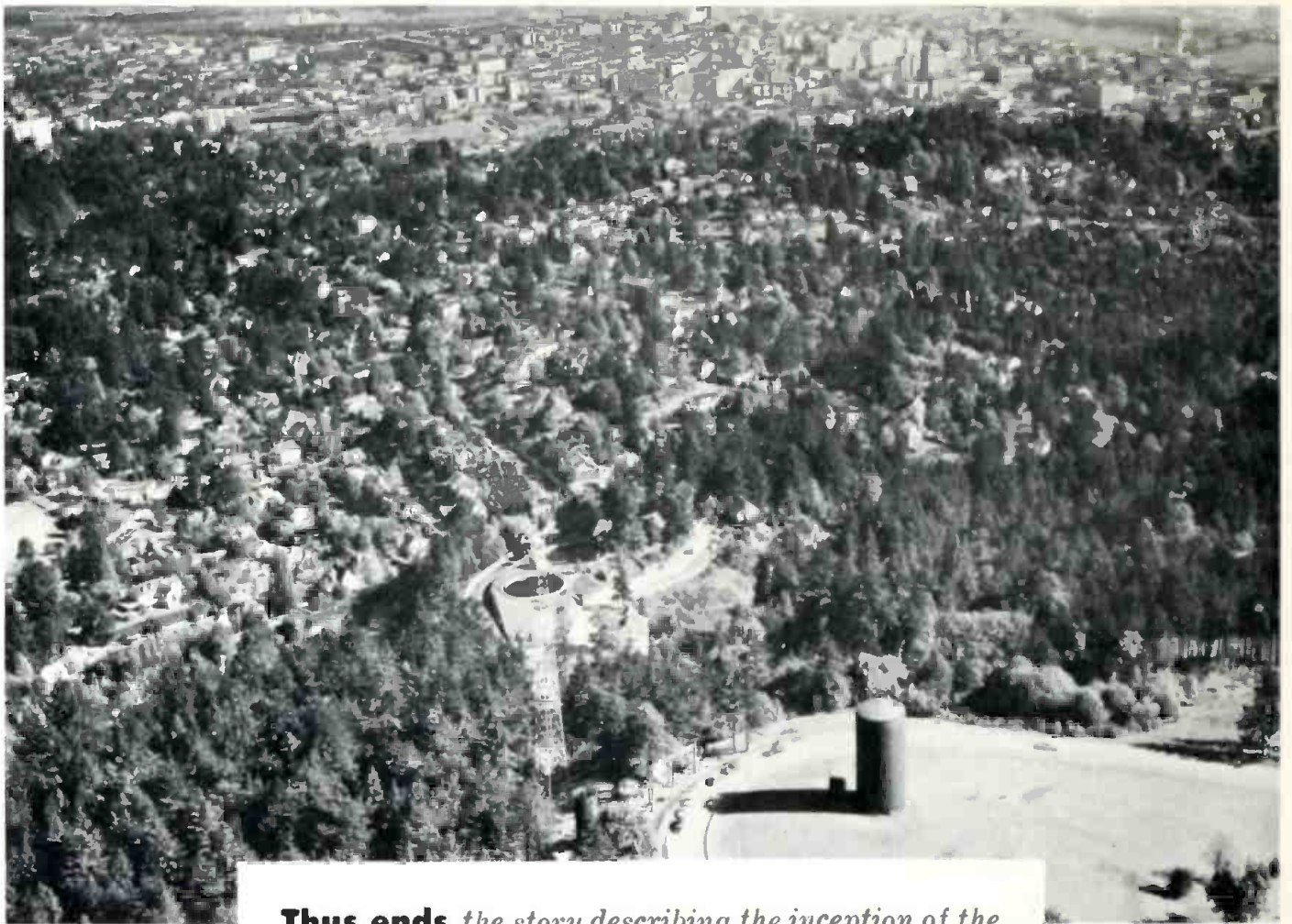
**Franklin Snyder**, management consultant;

**Gordon Bass**, manager, Multnomah Hotel;

**Frances Mayer**, artist, and

**Sandra Mayer**.

**KPTV, finally and especially, expresses deep appreciation to its spot and program sponsors of 1952, its audience and its well-wishers.**



**Thus ends** *the story describing the inception of the first UHF station in history. Many interesting, exciting and enjoyable days lie ahead for the men and women who now compose the staff of KPTV. By their dreams and deeds will its future be shaped.*



KPTV SALESMEN and sponsors' representatives are at home in the smoke-and-rust-hued sponsors' lounge. Shown are, left: Gil Fall, KPTV salesman, viewing film with Larry Davidson, KPTV salesman, viewing film with Larry Davidson, account executive, Botsford, Constantine and Gardner; Jess Shlnn, account executive, Richard Montgomery and Associates, discussing copy with Wayne Bartholemy, KPTV salesman; and Dick Norman, KPTV film editor, with Lorraine Gould, secretary.



REHEARSAL SCENE in KPTV's Studio B brings Bill Clayton and Lorraine Gould to the microphone, while Merry Ann Douglass and Elaine Smith await their turn. Bill Stout, kneeling, signals, while Bill Swing, news editor, mans the camera. On background camera is Dick Norman; manning the boom, Tom Myers. Clayton Sheldon, editor of TV Life, watches the play from the sponsors' lounge.



# KPTV

PORTLAND, OREGON

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*World's First  
Commercial UHF  
Television Station*

SEPTEMBER 20, 1952

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PRESENTED TO

HERBERT MAYER

*by KPTV's first advertiser*



RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA