

20TH

ANNIVERSARY

WGN
TELEVISION

CHICAGO'S COLORFUL STATION



April 5, 1968

20TH ANNIVERSARY GREETINGS

As we observe the 20th anniversary of WGN Television, I am most mindful of the contributions which each one of you has made to our current success.

Our 20th "birthday" coincides with the annual convention of the National Association of Broadcasters. I cannot begin to tell you of the countless remarks that have been made and are being made daily at this conclave about the respect and admiration for that which is known as the "finest television station in all the land".

It is one thing for us to think that we have an outstanding instrument of public service in our Channel 9, but it is far more meaningful when our contemporaries, including our competitors, hold us in this high esteem.

In the 12 years during which I have had the opportunity to work with you, I have been able to see the development of a "team spirit" that is unparalleled and indeed unique in the broadcasting industry from coast to coast. As people in broadcasting across the nation say, "WGN does more because it cares more". Please be assured, good friends and colleagues, that it will always be this way! We are determined to operate here the finest television station in America just as our great radio property is without a peer in the standard broadcast band.

Each of you has had an opportunity to see over the years the importance that we place upon our "hallmark" in the industry, that of "quality, integrity, responsibility and performance." We will never move one inch from that posture!

Much has happened since Channel 9 introduced its service on April 5, 1948. We have been "pioneers" in many respects, and of this we are proud, but at this time we are not about to sit back and relax as we savor past successes and innovations. We are moving ahead to newer, bigger and better things,

and long before our 30th anniversary manifests itself, this great company will not only be much bigger but much better! The day we don't feel we can improve is the day we should step aside, whether in broadcast management or any other place of business. I am proud of each one of you who has contributed so much to make this 20th anniversary truly meaningful! It is not the date that is important, it is what has been accomplished for two decades with this precious license from the Federal Government; and you and I know that government is the people, our "constituency", those persons we are privileged to serve with a "family-type" of operation that has no parallel in the video art today.

My warmest wishes and heartiest congratulations to each one of you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Ward L. Quaal". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Ward L. Quaal



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO US!

Friday, April the 5th is the Day

The luncheon special in our cafeteria
marking our 20th Anniversary will cost 20¢

MENU

Choice of: Fried Chicken or Halibut
Choice of 2: Salad - Potatoes - Vegetable
Beverage
Dessert: 20th Anniversary Cake

The 20th Anniversary special will be served
between the hours of 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

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WGN TELEVISION CHICAGO'S OWN STATION

MARKS 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF SERVICE

Twenty years of service to Chicago and the surrounding area will be celebrated by WGN Television, Channel 9, Friday, April 5.

"Throughout these past two decades WGN Television has been dedicated to serving the vast Chicagoland television audience," said J. Howard Wood, Chairman of the Tribune Company. "We intend to continue this policy."

"We deem it a privilege as a Chicago owned, operated and programmed station to serve the community and will continue to do so with integrity, courage and leadership," said Ward L. Quaal, President of WGN Continental Broadcasting Company.

Headlines greeted the birth of WGN Television which was the first of the post-war television installations in this city and the second commercial television operation to go into effect in Chicago.

On April 5th, 1948, the two-hour premiere marking WGN-Television's first formal studio program, with Lee Bennett as master of ceremonies, was a gala which originated from the main studio theatre then adjoining Tribune Tower on Michigan Avenue and was relayed by a mobile truck (called "The Blue Goose") to master control and antenna atop the Daily News building (now known as Riverside Plaza).

Chicago residents who saw the inaugural on the 16,000 television sets then in operation in the entire Chicago area learned that the new installation cost a million dollars and then some, and that the premiere represented a high adventure they were cordially invited to share.

Television wasn't exactly a new idea at WGN. Station engineers had kept in touch with technical developments since 1927, and receiving equipment had been available at WGN since 1931. The station ordered transmitting gear in 1944.

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ADD-1 WGN TELEVISION'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Test transmissions had begun early in 1948. The first telecast, as a test, was a remote from the Chicago Stadium in March with Jack Brickhouse at the microphone covering the Golden Gloves tournament.

On April 6 WGN Television's new regular schedule began, with programs being telecast from rented quarters atop the Daily News building and an auditorium in a Loop department store.

The new Channel 9 presented afternoon and evening schedules beginning at 2:00 p.m. The first daily program began with a half-hour newsreel. Thereafter Barbara Barclay presided over a homemakers' program from Goldblatt's department store. Then came test patterns from 3 to 5 p.m. Dick "Two Ton" Baker and the Art Nelson puppets kicked it around in "Wonder House." From 7:30 until 8:30 p.m. the "WGN Scrap Book," weather and "Sportsman's Corner". At 8:30 p.m. a feature film catered to the late audience in the first late, late shows.

Twenty years ago when Channel 9 began operation in Chicago, the venture had been prudently planned and adequately financed. Sixty men and women were behind the scenes and at the cameras and controls when the first switch was thrown. A reserve of studio and radio skill, program and commercial, was at the disposal of the parent Tribune Company.

Expansion, development and exploration were pushed as rapidly as possible. A generation earlier radio had groped its way toward unprecedented concepts and approaches. But the basic television formulas and the essentials of the television thrust were pretty well envisioned at the beginning. The radio problem was the development of materials to suit a new medium of communication. The television problem of adding telecast pictures to broadcast sound was essentially one of fresh techniques and painstaking execution. The radio audience and the range of stage and spectacle were plainly available to television. With some exceptions, the long established radio performers were soon on camera.

Within weeks of its first official telecast, Channel 9 had expanded its range and increased its time on the air. Chicagoland Newsreel was a brilliant and costly feature from the beginning, a first in Chicago and one of the first regular filmed newscasts in the nation.

Pioneering sportscasts had already begun with the Golden Gloves bouts tested in March at the Chicago Stadium. In April, the International Golden Gloves finals were telecast. When WGN Television began broadcasting 154 baseball games with Jack Brickhouse covering the action that year, the station pioneered in this effort, and set the pattern for telecasts around the nation. WGN Television was also the first station in the nation (in 1960) to cover a complete baseball schedule in color.

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ADD-2 WGN TELEVISION'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY

The first year of Channel 9's existence also brought viewers All-Star football, the Chicagoland Music Festival, and college football. Public spectacle and pageantry were highlighted.

WGN Television also established a pattern for excellent remote control coverage and President Truman made his first Chicago television appearance on Channel 9.

"When you consider what happened on Channel 9 the weekend of March 22, 23 and 24, it was appropriate and most prophetic that 20 years ago our first telecasts were remote originations," said Daniel T. Pecaro, vice president and general manager, WGN Television.

"On this recent weekend," said Pecaro, "viewers were offered more than 16 hours of sports coverage, plus Chicagoland Church Hour, via remote origination in color, and all but four hours of this programming was handled by our own Channel 9 crews. This schedule involved a total of eight basketball games.

"It has been this aspect of our television operation that has enabled us to be distinctive and outstanding in the highly competitive field that includes three networks as our major rivals," Pecaro further stated.

"As an example, for 17 years we have been televising via remote the fabulous, complex Chicago Auto Show. In 1957 we introduced remote originations from Chicagoland area churches. On March 22nd, for the 4th consecutive year, we moved men and equipment to Champaign for the annual two-day IHSA basketball tournament, a monumental achievement in sports telecasting," Pecaro said.

"In reviewing the official engineering logs recording our first few months of operation, it is interesting to note that the schedule included remotes from Soldier's Field for a centennial observance; from a Loop department store for a daily, five-times-a-week program; from Wrigley Field and White Sox Park for baseball; from the Illinois Athletic Club for a water polo match; from the Pump Room of the Ambassador East for a weekly interview-type program, and from Chicago Stadium for the annual Golden Gloves tournament," said Pecaro.

"Have Remote Trucks, Will Travel," has been a by-word for Channel 9 from the beginning and represents our answer to the public demand for exciting, different, on-the-scene action television," Pecaro concluded.

By July 1949 a new antenna adorned Tribune Tower and the station moved to the WGN building on Michigan Avenue. Six of the 14 radio studios in the WGN building were converted to television that year.

A new WGN Television tower (dedicated on January 15, 1956) rose 915 feet above ground level crowning the Prudential Building. Color transmission equipment (ordered in 1952) went into operation in January 1958.

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ADD-3 WGN TELEVISION'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY

WGN Television's new transmitting antenna will top the 100-story John Hancock Building early in 1969.

WGN Continental Broadcasting Company's president, Ward L. Quaal, began his career at WGN as an announcer in 1941. He returned to the station as vice president and general manager in 1956.

Under Quaal's leadership the broadcast properties have been elevated to a position of national prominence for quality programming, integrity in its business relations, and relations with the communities they are licensed to serve.

"The original corporation has experienced an almost incredible growth," said Quaal. "WGN Continental is one of the strongest group owners of broadcast properties in the United States and more properties will be added shortly."

On August 17, 1960, WGN purchased station KDAL and KDAL-TV, Duluth-Superior and five years later (September 7, 1965) acquired KCTO-TV (now KWGN-TV) in Denver, Colorado.

The rapid expansion of properties throughout the United States necessitated the change of the corporate title from WGN, Inc., in March of 1966, to the WGN Continental Broadcasting Company, which today embraces WGN Radio, WGN Television, WGN Continental Productions, Chicago; KDAL Radio and KDAL Television (CBS network affiliates), Duluth-Superior; WGN Televents, Inc., community antenna systems in Michigan and California; KWGN Television, Denver; and the WGN Continental Sales Company, a station representative firm with offices in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles.

WGN Continental Productions Company, which was established as a subsidiary in 1960, has produced television programs for stations throughout the United States and foreign countries, in addition to WGN Continental Broadcasting properties.

Currently the production company, under the banner of Scripps-Howard/WGN Continental Productions, is producing the "John Gary Show," a 90-minute color series which is being seen throughout the United States. Other television series now in syndication by the company include "Great Music," "The Barn Dance," "An Evening With...", and "Big Bands."

Twenty years ago the syndication of WGN Television products were far in the future, but certain evolutionary developments were predictable.

The WGN Television newsreel in 1948 was the embryo which developed into such award-winning news documentaries as "Babies in the Bread Line," "The Heroes of Viet Nam," "Chicago's Sewer in the Sky," and "Merchants of Menace."

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ADD-4 WGN TELEVISION'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Remote telecasts of such sports events as baseball and the All Star football game at Soldier's Field the first year of operation gave birth to major colorcasting of events which now include basketball, baseball, hockey, and IHSA athletic championships. More than 300 sports features were telecast on Channel 9 this past season.

In the educational and public service realm, the WGN public affairs department from the station's inception has covered a wide variety of cultural, safety and educational subjects -- religious services, discussion programs such as "Your Right to Say It," which is the oldest continuous free speech forum on Chicago television, and "Charlando" which brings news and features to Spanish speaking citizens in their own tongue.

Those who farm the land and raise livestock in this great agricultural midwestern area are apprised of changes and new innovations through WGN farm service department telecasts.

And, youngsters have thrilled to such entertaining programs as the highly praised "Garfield Goose" show with Frazier Thomas which is approaching its 14th year on the station; "Romper Room" with Mary Carol Reilly; and everyone's favorite, "Bozo's Circus."

The finest of operatic and instrumental soloists are seen on "Artists' Showcase" hosted by Louis Sudler; Herb Lyon brings guests before Channel 9 cameras to offer viewers a behind-the-scenes look at the lives of entertainers, artists and politicians; and for toe-tapping music nothing beats "The Barn Dance" and the group's particular brand of country humor; and outstanding feature films and syndicated programs offer viewers of this area a wide choice of programs.

News programs covering the local, national and international happenings are all presented in color by the reporting team of John Drury, Harry Volkman and Wendell Smith, daily as well as Saturday and Sunday. The station is unique in that it has its own news bureaus in Springfield, Illinois and Washington, D. C.

A non-network station, offering sports, news, information and entertainment from make-do studios twenty years ago, WGN Television offers more live shows than any station in the land and overwhelmingly in color. Last year, more than 4,500 hours of programming were color-cast.

The first studios have given way to the present WGN Continental Broadcast Center, dedicated in mid-1961, on Chicago's northwest side, and is staffed by more than 500 men and women.

The Broadcast Center stands as an appropriate symbol of the many achievements of WGN Radio and Television.

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ADD-5 WGN TELEVISION'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Staffed by newsmen, announcers and performers of national reknown, the station stresses creativity and innovations, renewed emphasis on quality program performance, integrity in operation and outstanding management leadership.

Recognition has come to WGN Continental this past year through honors which include the George Foster Peabody Award (the third awarded to WGN Television) for "Artists' Showcase;" the New York International Film Festival Award for "Simple Mathematics of Disaster;" and the Catholic Broadcasters Association Gabriel Award for "Mass for Shut-Ins," to mention a few honors bestowed upon WGN Television programs.

In the two decades of operation of WGN Television, the 16,000 receiving sets of 1948 are now more than two and one-half million.

The WGN Continental Broadcasting Company is established upon the principal of sound, balanced programming, service to the community and the constant striving for quality, integrity, responsibility and performance in all areas of operation.

WGN, Chicago's own television station, today stands for the most respected call letters in broadcasting.

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84 VETS WITNESSED LAUNCHING AND GROWTH OF WGN TELEVISION

The records of the Personnel Department show that the following members of the WGN Family were employed prior to April 5, 1948, the day WGN Television officially began operations, and have been continuously associated with the company up to the present as we observe Channel 9's 20th birthday:

ALFRED G. ALDRIDGE	BRUCE DENNIS
CHARLES V. ALLAN	RAYMOND F. DUMALSKI
ROSE B. ALLEN	HOLLAND E. ENGLE
CARL M. ANDERSON	DALE F. FACKENTHAL
ARTHUR A. AVERY	JAY J. FERREE
ROBERT E. BAIRD	EUGENE C. FILIP
RALPH BATT	EDMUND D. FRECKLETON
GEORGE J. BAUER	CHARLES E. GATES
JOHN A. BOBERA	JOHN GAUSE
JOHN B. BRICKHOUSE	EDWARD R. GERKEN
ROBERT W. BROZ	DONALD A. GETZ
DONALD F. CALLAHAN	ROBERT H. GILL
ELMER F. CAWTHON	JAMES G. HANLON
ROY R. CONE	JOHN B. HAUSLER
WOODROW R. CRANE	MILTON H. HEIDRICH
LESTER A. CRONK	UNDINE HEIDRICH
PAUL C. CRUM	THEODORE C. HJORT
ROBERT A. CURRIER	GEORGE E. HOOKER
JACK E. DAUGHTON	ROBERT P. IRVING

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ADD-1 84 Vets Witnessed Launching and Growth of WGN Television

RALPH C. JACK

JACK P. JACOBSON

HENRY B. JANSSEN

FRED L. KELLER

PAUL KUBIK

GEORGE J. KUDSK

GEORGE W. LANG

JOHN L. MALLOW

JAMES R. MATTHEWS

CHARLES M. MC CONNELL

CARL J. MEYERS

JOHN C. MEYERS

KARL R. MICHAEL

WILLARD MILLER

LE ROY OLLIGER

GEORGE A. PALERMO

ELMER E. PANZKE

ROBERT W. PERKINS

WALTER E. PHILLIPS

ROBERT E. PRESTEGAARD

ESTELLE B. PURNELL

ROBERT J. QUINLAN

ARNOLD C. RAHMEL

HILTON L. REMLEY

WILLIAM C. RIEDEN

VIRGINIA W. ROGERS

PAUL L. RUSDORF

HAROLD L. SHAW

ROBERT L. SIBOLD

JAMES V. STARBUCK

JOHN STEADMAN

ANTHONY M. SULLA

GEORGE A. THIES

ROBERT S. TRENDLER

HAROLD L. TURNER

JAMES A. TURNER

JOHN W. TURNER

JOSEPH TURNER, JR.

ISABELLE VAN HOUGHTON

GLORIA C. WERKMEISTER

CLYDE J. WHITE

CLYDE W. WHITE

GEORGE W. WILLIAMS

DON K. WILLING

PATRICK O. WYMAN

JOSEPH G. ZENKUS

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HIGHLIGHTS

What was 1948-style television really like?

To refresh memory of what was happening on Channel 9 in those days, we dug back into Tribune files and made a study of the television engineering logs for the period April 5 through June 30, 1948. We found:--

Although the log quite simply listed the inaugural telecast on April 5, "WGN-TV Salute to Chicago," Larry Wolters and Rita Fitzpatrick reported the occasion as follows in the Chicago Tribune:

Monday, April 5, 1948 Section 1 - p. 4

WGN-TV MAKES DEBUT TONIGHT W/BIG SHOW

2 HOUR SALUTE BEGINS AT 7:45 P.M.

By Larry Wolters

WGN-TV SALUTE TO CHICAGO

The 2 hour premiere will include a dedicatory ceremony and a preview of the varied video fare WGN-TV plans for televiewers.

At 8 p.m. the cameras will pick up the official opening ceremony from the studio theater. Speakers will be Col. R. R. McCormick, Governor Green and Mayor Kennelly. Lee Bennett, GN singer and M.C., then will lead a parade of stars before WGN-TV cameras. This lineup includes the Dorothy Hild Dancers and Gil Maison and his animal troupe from the Edgewater Beach Hotel show; Tito Guizar, stage and screen tenor, now appearing at the Oriental Theater, McCarthy and Farrell, d-j satirists, and Rosaline Courtright, songstress appearing at the Empire Room.

(more)

ADD-1 -- Highlights

Others to be presented: Dick (2 ton) Baker, Bruce Foote (baritone of Chicago Theater of the Air Co.), Georgie Gobel, rustic comedian of the Bismarck Hotel show, Art Nelson and his marionettes, Bob Hopkins, mimic, The Sensationalists, roller skaters, Maurice and Maripa, dance team, and the WGN Orchestra and Chorus directed by Robert Trendler.

Tuesday, April 6, 1948 p. 1

100,000 SEE GALA DEBUT OF WGN-TV

HAIL TELEVISION ADVENTURE!

By Rita Fitzpatrick

There were plenty of them (celebs), among them such lovelies as Jan Sterling and Fay McKenzie, both appearing as leading ladies in hit comedies here.

Except for the dedicatory service in which tiny Patricia Ann Murray of 830 N. Massasoit Avenue appeared as the Spirit of WGN-TV and promised to "grow and grow," the show could have well been a variety bill of the old days at the Palace. Tito Guizar, handsome troubador, looked and sounded like a natural for television. Two Ton Baker, a great favorite on WGN, looked twice as big on WGN-TV. Best of all, L. Wolters, radio editor of the Tribune, reported that reception of the show had been excellent.

"The Experiment," as Col. Robert R. McCormick had called it, was a success.

Add-2 Highlights

THE 1948 FORERUNNERS ON CHANNEL 9 OF

.....children's program - "Wonder House" (April 6) featuring Dick "Two Ton" Baker and Art Nelson's marionettes.

....."late" movie - "It Happened Tomorrow" (April 6, 8:30 p.m.), starring Dick Powell, Linda Darnell and Jack Oakie.

.....news program - "WGN-TV Newsreel" (April 6).

.....sports interview program - "Sportsmen's Corner" (April 6).

.....sports coverage - water polo from the Illinois Athletic Club (April 10) and baseball from Comiskey Park (April 17).

.....courtroom trial program - "Cross Question" (April 11), later to be titled "They Stand Accused" as a Dumont Television Network feature.

....."yak" show from glamorous setting - "Sunday Night at the Pump Room" (April 11).

.....special events remote telecast - The Swedish Centennial Celebration (April 4).

IT WAS ALSO INTERESTING TO NOTE

June 4, 1948 - Then President Harry S. Truman made his first live television speech in Chicago on Channel 9 ...

June 6, 1948 - The first commercial spot announcement was a 15-minute Bulova time signal ...

June 21-26, 1948 - The Republican Convention was reported via film in special featurettes of three to 20-minute duration.

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WGN TELEVISION ENGINEERING LOG: APRIL 5TH, 1948

<u>TIME</u>	<u>SHOW</u>
7:43:30	Star Spangled Banner - Flag Waving -
7:44:30	WGN-TV Sign On Annct
7:45:00	Sidewalk Interviews
8:00:00	WGN-TV Salute to Chicago
9:45:00	Sign Off

WGN TELEVISION ENGINEERING LOG: APRIL 6TH, 1948

<u>TIME</u>	<u>SHOW</u>
1:58:30	Star Spangled Banner - Waving Flag
1:59:30	WGN-TV Sign On Annct - Call Letter Film
2:00:00	WGN-TV Newsreel
2:09:30	Station Identification
2:10:00	FILM - Woman Speaks
2:19:30	Station Identification
2:20:00	United Press News
2:29:30	Station Identification
2:30:00	At Home - with Barbara Barkley (GOLDBLATT'S)
2:59:30	Intermediate Sign-Off
4:59:30	Intermediate Sign-On
5:00:00	Wonder House - Children's Show
5:59:30	Intermediate Sign-Off
7:29:30	Intermediate Sign-On
7:30:00	WGN-TV Scrapbook FILM: Preamble to Peace
7:59:30	Station Identification
7:59:45	Bulova Time
8:00:00	WGN-TV Newsreel
8:09:30	Station Identifcation

(more)

<u>TIME</u>	<u>SHOW</u>
8:10:00	Weather Predictions
8:14:30	Station Identification
8:15:00	Sportsmen's Corner
8:29:30	Station Identification
8:30:00	FEATURE FILM: "It Happened Tomorrow" Dick Powell, Linda Darnell, Jack Oakie
9:55:00	Sign-Off

CHICAGO'S COLORFUL STATION



