


25th Anniversary

EARLY BIRD ALBUM

WFAA - Dallas, Texas

THE WFAA EARLY BIRDS



Oldest breakfast-time variety show in the nation,
was originated March 31, 1930. The show has been broadcast continuously
since that date on station WFAA, a radio service of
The Dallas Morning News.



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WFAA Radio, 1122 Jackson Street, Dallas, Texas



THE EARLY BIRDS OF 1955

*Oldest breakfast-time
variety show in the nation*





"Little Willie" at age two.



Ben at Crozier Tech, old Bryan High School, age 15.



Ben's dog "Snazzy."

Ben's favorite picture of "Mayonnaise." She was 17 when this was made — courtin' age.



Four generations of McCleskey's. Ben, daughter Betty, grandson Robin, and grandmother McCleskey.

LITTLE WILLIE BOTTS

Ben McCleskey originated the character of "Little Willie" on WRR, February 2, 1931. He joined the staff of WFAA in 1940. McCleskey recently completed twenty-four years of writing, producing and portraying the part of a fourteen-year-old youngster. As "Little Willie" his favorite remark is "I'm the only fourteen-year-old grandpa in radio today."

The character "Mayonnaise" girl friend of "Little Willie" is in real life, Elizabeth McCleskey, Ben's wife. The McCleskey's have been married twenty-nine years. They have two children, Mrs. Betty McCleskey Read and Charles Arthur McCleskey. There are five grandchildren: Robin, Becky and Randy Read, Charles Arthur III and Ben Michael McCleskey.

Ben has had many partners as "Little Willie" on radio shows. Among them, Uncle Ed Bryant, Norvell Slater and Jimmie Jefferies. The longest association is that with Elmer Baughman, the "Hack Berry" of the present day Early Birds.

The team of "Hack and Willie" began in 1943, when the pair originated "Hackberry Hotel," a quarter-hour sketch that was broadcast on WFAA-570 for more than six years. As operators of Peaceful Valley's one and only hotel (fourteen rooms and a path), "Hack and Willie" brought to life through telephone con-

versations many local characters of the village. The imaginary cast included Genevieve Peachblossom, Ephus Skaggs, Jim Dingle, Wallace Overtree, John Henry, Mayonnaise, Eppenslipper Outenback, Eaf Shornoff, Hercules and Louie Gopotz.

"Hack and Willie" became the emcee comedy team on the Early Birds in January of 1949. The Hackberry Hotel setting is now secondary to the present fun and foolishness of the Early Birds, but listeners are occasionally reminded of their former freinds through telephone conversations and mix-ups during the show.

Ben McCleskey was born in Cleburne, Texas, January 14, 1905. His mother, Mrs. Charles A. (Eva Matthews) McCleskey is still living and active at the age of eighty-one. Ben is five feet and eleven inches tall, he has grey hair, brown eyes and weighs in at 220 pounds. He attended grammar school in Cleburne, high school in Fort Worth and graduated in 1922 from Bryan High School, now Crozier Tech of Dallas.

McCleskey attended Southern Methodist University for three years, majoring in journalism.

He began his career in radio in 1931 as "Little Willie" and has been in the entertainment field ever since.

His favorite sports are golf, fishing and baseball.



Willie and the Indian Orphans at Huga, Oklahoma.



Willie's grandsons, Mike and Charles McCleskey.



Ben is a duffer, but he wins tournaments.

MISTUH HACK BERRY



"Mistuh Hack" himself.



Hack, age three.



The comedy team, "Hack and Willie," Elmer Baughman and Ben McCleskey.

Elmer Baughman, "Mistuh Hack" of the Early Birds, sometimes grumpy proprietor of the "Hackberry Hotel" is also a lot of other people.

Baughman is a tricky-voice genius. He can do animal characters, Chinese laundrymen, a Japanese soldier, an Italian immigrant, and Irish janitor, and many other voices if the occasion demands.

Elmer is one of those rare actors who lives a part. As himself he is a genial, slow-talking kind of fellow. When a chance to be witty gets into the conversation, you are apt to find yourself suddenly talking to "Mr. Hack," and the witticism is more "Mr. Hack's" than Elmer Baughman's.

Baughman is a native of Indiana. He was born July 7, 1905, in Franklin County, near Harrison, Ohio. He attended the Scuster-Martin School of the Drama in Cincinnati, Ohio. While attending dramatic school he was making Model T's for Henry Ford. He also worked as an automobile mechanic, service manager, and a bank clerk. Elmer got to know all kinds of people.

He entered radio via the acting route, playing leading and supporting roles on NBC Shows originating in Cincinnati, such as "Ma Perkins," "The Life of Mary Southern," "True Detective Mysteries," and "Famous Jury Trials." In addition, he had been a staff announcer on stations WCKY and WLW before he came to WFAA.

"Mr. Hack" was created for Elmer. When he came to work at WFAA ten years ago, he brought with him a rural character he had played in "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch." "Little Willie" Botts was already at WFAA. So Elmer's new character was given a new name by Ben McCleskey (Little Willie Botts), and a new comedy team came into being.

Outside the studios, Elmer is the kind of man who rebels at getting into a tux or tails for the opera, or for anything else, even when

requested by the very attractive Mrs. Baughman. His wife is the former Mary Constance Hollen. They were married August 9, 1941. Mrs. Baughman is a noted stylist for a Dallas department store.

Baughman's secret ambition is to collect antique automobiles. His most unusual experience was the day he left his bank job (by request). Elmer ran a big stack of checks through the bank's cancelling machine before they had been paid. That's when he decided to become an actor.

Elmer Baughman is five-foot-eleven inches tall. He has black hair and brown eyes and weighs 167 pounds.



The Baughman's, Connie, Elmer and their dog.

WILBUR 'DEACON' ARD



Wilbur "Deacon" Ard.

The "Deacon" is a two-time loser to show business. He did his first "stretch" with the Early Birds as musical director from 1934 until 1946. He left radio to become a successful business man and the owner and operator of the family lumber business in Seagoville, Texas. Wilbur was born in Seagoville, September 1, 1908. As he modestly puts it, "The two communities, Dallas and Seagoville, have been fighting for years to keep from claiming me."

Wilbur Ard received his Bachelor of Science degree from Southern Methodist University, June 5, 1930. Twelve days later he married Peggy Jane Cockrell. They have two children, J. Wilbur Ard, II, born May 12, 1934, and Carolyn Anne Ard, May 21, 1937.

While a student at SMU, Ard played in the school band and was a member of the Delta Chi fraternity. His first job after school was

with a traveling band. He has played with Ligon Smith, Henry Busse, Jack Crawford, and is proud of a two-day engagement with John Philip Sousa's band.

He came to WFAA with Ligon Smith, following a band engagement at the St. Anthony Hotel, San Antonio. Another unknown who auditioned for a WFAA staff band job at the time was not hired because he "played flat." The inept musician who "lost his big chance" was Harry James.

"The Deacon" got his nickname by doing a pinaologue type program consisting of home-spun philosophy, original verse and deep-throated singing in the early days of broadcasting on WFAA.

No one is a stranger for more than a few moments with "The Deacon." He can out-talk Terry Lea and his mother-in-law (by his own admission). A versatile musician, specializing in the reeds, Ard plays acceptable piano, and has numerous compositions, ditties, jingles and songs to his credit. He is an excellent raconteur and is never at a loss for a story or a few words to fill a dead spot in a program or social gathering.

He is six feet two inches tall, weighs 182 pounds, has brown-grey departing hair, hazel eyes and a healthy suntan.

His favorite sport is golf and his secret ambition is to write and see the world.

Wilbur's most unusual experience happened during the depression of the early thirties. He and five other musicians had organized a "Starvation Band" and worked many times for two dollars a night. On the day he was fired from this lucrative job, he was called by "Angel" Ligon Smith and hired to play in his band at fifty-five dollars a week!

Ard sold the family lumber business in 1952 and returned to his first love, music on the air with the Early Birds of WFAA.



Peggy and pet Bessie. Peggy has been married to the Deacon for 25 years.



Daughter Carolyn, a lovely young lady.



Deacon at the age of two with his best friend.



While Wilbur was a lumberman he had time to relax, now that he is back in radio (—?).



Wilbur's son, J. Wilbur III, he plays a horn, too.



Some of Bob Shelton's cousins come over to spend the day with the Wilbur Ard family.

JOHN ALLEN



He was a beautiful baby! Allen age two years with his mother.

The best commercial announcer in the Southwest is fully satisfied to let the network big time go its crazy mixed-up way. John Allen is an individualist. He built his own home, enjoys photography as a hobby and has a way of snapping a picture that gets his work published nationally. His dry wit, unexpected song introductions, parodies, strange vocal noises, imitations of both man and beast, keep the cast and listeners to the Early Birds chuckling.

Born in Winfield, Texas, August 3, 1919, John Allen has lived in twenty-seven different towns and cities in Texas and New Mexico. He paused long enough at East Texas State Teacher's College to get a Bachelor of Arts degree. He worked in a double major in speech and music.

While with a Houston radio station before his association with WFAA, Allen prepared and gave on the air more than 4,000 newscasts in two years. He is equally at home with the spoken, written and lyrical word. He has been associated with WFAA radio since 1946.

Allen is married to the former Frances Venita White and they have one child, Sheila Kay, born July 27, 1951. John is six feet and one inch tall, weighs 197 pounds, has blue eyes, brown hair thinning a bit in front, and a fair complexion. His favorite sport is to take a western safari with a camera handy.

John's answer to questions: How did you get into radio? "That's what my boss would like to know." What is your ambition? Most unusual, "get rich and retire." Your past musical affiliations? "Announcer for the Bob Shelton Symphonic Orchestra."



John Allen in private study.



The Indians of the Southwest (In colorful garb), are always eager to pose.



Enjoying the fine coffee Frances always makes when we vacation.



Daughter Sheila and wife Frances.



Camp equipment is so simple to erect—camping out is a joy.



Sheila has her dad's sense of humor.



"The Hopkins County Firecracker"

When the "Hopkins County Firecracker" gives out with his homespun comedy and perfect timing with a song, everyone from six to sixty clamor for an encore. You cannot name a Texas town where Shelton has not played a personal appearance.

Born Robert Shelton Attlesley in Riley Springs (Hopkins County), Texas, July 4, 1909, his birthdate gave him the idea for the "firecracker" in his billing. Bob's father is still living and operates a grocery store in Riley Springs.

Shelton attended school in Riley Springs and lists as his activities, "cotton picking and corn planting." He served a hitch in the Navy during World War II and his first job was with a pipe line crew in the oil fields.

Bob and the former Eva Idell Maxwell were married February 19, 1936. They have three children, Charlotte Ann, Bobbie Elizabeth and Tommie Dell.

Shelton started in radio over station KTHS in Hot Springs, Arkansas. He graduated to an "Amateur Show" in 1931 on Tyler's KGKB, with brother Joe Shelton. Then the brothers organized their successful traveling unit "The Sunshine Boys Band." This band kept the country folk in the Southwest smiling and dancing during the thirties whether they had shoes or not. In 1936 Bob and Joe Shelton signed up with WFAA radio. Bob has been with the station ever since. During the nineteen-year span he has been a star on other shows as well as the Early Birds.

He took a leave of absence to tour the USA with the Jimmie Davis Show and made one movie "Riders of the Dawn."

Shelton lists as his most unusual experience playing a one-nighter in Arkansas when a tornado blew the school house roof away. The band was playing "The Breeze and I."

Kids love Shelton. He plays numerous benefits for youngsters every year.

BOB SHELTON



The Sunshine Boys Band, circa 1941. In those days country music bands dressed like city slickers.



We're on the air!



Miss Charlotte, Bob's eldest daughter.



Daughters Tommie and Bobbie Shelton.



Dick Cole, age two years.



Left to right: Dick, Jr., Sandra, Mrs. Cole, and Terry.



The Cole twins, Tam and Timmy.



Papa Dick Cole.

DICK COLE

The crooner on the Early Birds who has earned the tag of family man is Richard Bennett Cole. Dick and his wife, the former Marion Elizabeth Fuch were married in 1939. They have five children: Richard B. Cole, Jr., Sandra Joan, Terry James, and twins, Thomas John and Timothy Paul.

Papa Cole is a native New Yorker. He was born in Poughkeepsie, May 13, 1920. He graduated from Patchogue High School on Long Island and attended Southern Methodist University. His first job after finishing school was in a textile factory, according to Dick, "the lowest!"

When asked how he got into radio, Cole replied: "Came up on the elevator and applied."

Dick also plays the trombone and has been associated with Ralph Flanagan and Art Mooney on unit presentations.

He weighs one-hundred and thirty pounds, stands five-feet and six-inches tall, has brown eyes, black hair (departing) and an olive complexion.

During World War II, Dick was a musician third class with the United States Navy. His favorite hobby is watching football. His secret ambition?—to once again enjoy a savings account and see all his boys graduate from college!

Most unusual experience—the time he had a savings account.



Janet King — she's sweet sixteen.

JANET KING

The youngest member of the Early Bird cast is petite, quiet and charming, Janet King. A little girl with a big voice, she was born March 23, 1938, and christened Janet Lola Keehan.

The daughter of Dr. and Mrs. K. E. Guy of Dallas, Janet attends Woodrow Wilson High School where she is a junior. Weekdays she goes immediately from the morning Early Bird show and rehearsal for the following day, to school. She also makes personal appearances with the Early Birds and other Dallas orchestras.

She is a new personality in radio, but has done professional singing with musical groups playing book-

ings in Dallas and the area.

Her favorite sport (Janet's answer), "football players." She likes to ride horseback and experiments at cooking.

Her secret ambition is to join a small vocal group and make the big time.

Janet's most unusual experience happened her first day with the Early Birds. Her mother helped her dress, cooked her breakfast, kissed her goodbye and wished her good luck. She jumped into the car and discovered that it had a flat tire. She made it on time for her first broadcast with forty-five seconds to spare!



Janet was a sunshine girl and musical, at the age of three.



Her habits haven't changed much, she suns herself in a tree — like any self-respecting bird.



She hops around on the grass, too — and pauses for a bit of cheese cake.

Early Bird fans look forward to hearing the tenor voice of David Taylor, three-time winner of the Horace Heidt National Talent Contest.

David's great singing voice was discovered while he was a student at North Texas State Teacher's College. The young man with a future in music sang leading roles in "Romeo and Juliet," and "Daughter of the Regiment." He was also a soloist in the A Capella Choir. He was active in the Glee Club, Opera Work Shop, and other musical activities of the school.

Taylor enjoyed sports and lists as his favorites football, basketball and track.

He has a degree in music from North Texas State Teacher's College, although his studies were interrupted by a two-year hitch in the Army. David served in the Corps of Engineers as a corporal.

Taylor comments that his most unusual experience was when assigned to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. While on bivouac guard duty, he and a number of other service men tried to eat the fuel

pill in their ration kit. They thought the pill wrapped in tin foil was candy. When daylight came they discovered the error. All felt warmer but nobody got sick.

During his service at Camp Wolters with SCARWAF, he served as minister of music for the Mineral Wells Baptist Church. He is now serving in this capacity at the Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas.

Taylor is married to the former Sherry Nello Walker. They have two children, Phillip Eugene, born May 28, 1952, and Karen Marie, June 20, 1953. Mrs. Taylor is also a musician.

A native of Mexia, David was born October 8, 1929. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. N. Taylor are living, and reside in Mexia, Texas.

David is five-feet and nine and one-half inches tall, weighs 190 pounds. He has dark hair, brown eyes and a ready smile.

His ambition is to make a good living for his family.



David Taylor.



Mrs. Taylor and son Phillip. The boy was eight months old.



David in his courtin' days with his pet "Stubby."

DAVID TAYLOR



Geniol George Kent.

GEORGE KENT

George Kent of the mellow baritone voice, was born in Little Falls, Minnesota, January 10, 1920, and christened George Alfred Kuesel.

George came to WFAA in 1943 as a member of the Plainsmen Quartet. Prior to his association with WFAA he sang with the Interstate Theater Quartet and was booked throughout the area for club performances. Twelve years ago he became a soloist for the First Presbyterian Church of Dallas.

Kent is a graduate of the Northwestern Missouri State Teacher's College, with a degree in music. His favorite sports are football and basketball. His favorite hobby is cooking. That is how he got the nickname "Porky."

He is married to the former Jessie Maurine George and they have one son, George Kent Kuesel, born January 25, 1950.

George is five-feet and seven-inches tall, weighs 195 pounds and has blond hair, fair complexion and sparkling blue eyes.

A good natured fellow, Kent is also head of the WFAA Transcription Library when not singing on the air.

Kent lists as his most unusual experience the time he was watching a plumber and got too close to the work area. The plumber asked George to step back—he did, down a flight of stairs into the cellar. That is how George got his second nickname, "Snowball."



George stalking Junior.



Lucky No. 41 — that's Junior.



Enjoying the Texas sun — Jessie and Porky.



Mrs. George Kent.



For Whom The Bell Tolls

Jack Maseley has been waking up the Early Bird cast far over twelve years. Who would dare go back to sleep after Jack calls on the telephone and says "Git up!"

Maseley is stern but gaad-natured, when the boys in the band ask him about the weather or palitics, he says, "What diffrence does it make? You have ta get up anyway!"

Jack is the night guard at WFAA — and it is needless to say that he takes his respansibilities seriously.

THE EARLY BIRD BAND

Oldest breakfast-time variety show in the nation

Left to right: Bert Noyd (novochord), Jahnnny Kauffman (bass vialin), Chuck Carrel (drums), Wilbur Ard (clarinet-and band director), Dick Cole (trombone), Bob Kornegay (trumpet), Curtis Hurt (trumpet), Bill Binford (saxophone), Guy Anderson (soxaphone), Charles Kemp (saxophone), Ray Hurst (guitar), Janet King, vocalist.





Guy and Grace Anderson.

“COLONEL”

GUY ANDERSON

Guy Terrell Anderson was born in Memphis, Tennessee, March 9, 1911. He graduated from Messick High School in Memphis as valedictorian of his class. Guy attended West Tennessee State Teacher's College where he was president of the freshman class and a cheer leader. He was also in the school band and on the debating team.

Later when he came to Texas, Anderson attended the Conservatory of Music in Houston and Southern Methodist University.

He played saxophone and clarinet in a number of bands, including the orchestras of “Blue” Steel, Larry Lee, Frank Trumbuar, Ligon Smith, Herman Waldman, and Hugh Fowler.

In radio, before his association with WFAA, he played with the WNDR Station band in Memphis, Station WREC, and WRR in Dallas.

During the Texas Centennial in 1936, Guy played at the China City—eleven days for eleven dollars.

The “Colonel’s” most unusual experience dates back to the day the banks closed in 1933. He was in Danville, Illinois, with a small band, broke. It was seventeen below zero. The band pooled its resources of one dollar and forty-nine cents. Then took the capital, bought a percolator, and existed on soft-boiled eggs, coffee, soup, weiners and kraut at eleven cents a day per man—all food cooked in the percolator!

Anderson’s secret ambition is to throw away his clocks and forget what time it is.

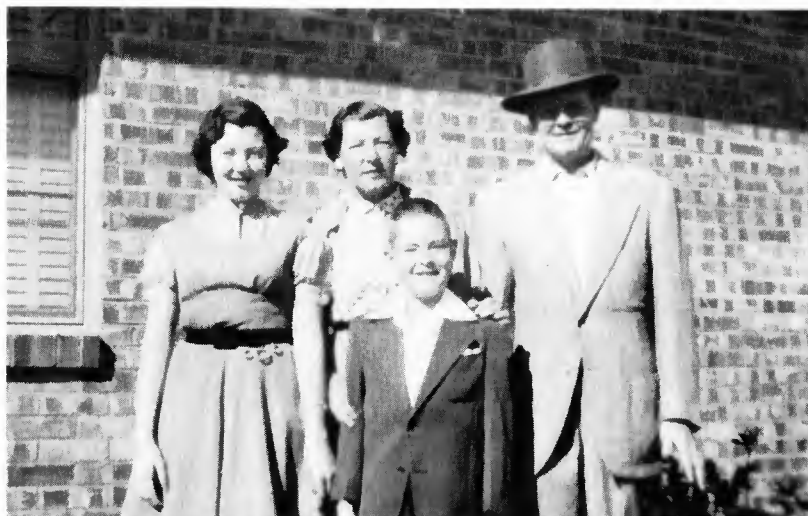
He is married to the former Grace Lockwood and they have two children, Martha Frances, born July 7, 1941, and Guy Terrell, Jr., born August 8, 1945.

The “Colonel” is five-feet ten-inches tall, weighs 150 pounds, and has brown eyes and hair. He got the nickname “Colonel” from a character developed for him by Jimmie Jefferies.

Guy Anderson came to WFAA in 1941 and is assistant musical director and assistant music librarian, when he is not busy playing in the Early Bird orchestra.



The Anderson children when they were at a very cute age.



The Anderson's today — daughter Martha, Mrs. Anderson, Guy, and Guy, Jr.



Guy and his pals enjoy a meal in the open.

BILLY BINFORD

William R. Binford who plays saxophone and clarinet in the Early Bird orchestra was born in Corsicana, Texas, July 10, 1914. Billy's mother is Mrs. Grace Binford, one of the Early Bird's most ardent fans.

Binford is married to the former Marie Tyson and they have three children, Susan, born November 28, 1944, Larry, October 7, 1951, and Robin, December 26, 1952.

He is a graduate of Corsicana High School, San Antonio Junior College, Allen Military Academy, and attended Southern Methodist University.

Billy's first job after finishing school was with the road

show company of "Heads Up." He started in radio in 1938 as a member of the WRR staff band.

Binford has played with the following orchestras: Ran Wilde, Leighton Noble, Tony De Pardo, Herbie Holmes and Phil Levant.

During World War II, he was an Air Force Primary Instructor in the Air Force Transport Service.

Binford is a baseball fan, and his secret ambition is to own a house in Colorado to escape Texas' summer heat. He may realize his ambition. Billy is in the real estate business when not playing on the Early Birds.



Billy Binford at eight years of age. He was a bat-boy for the Corsicana Oilers.



A happy couple — Bill and Marie.



Bill and his children, Susan, Robin and Larry.



Family portrait—Bill, Larry, Robin and Marie.



Chuck at the age of nine with his first set of drums.

“CHUCK” CARREL

Charles Elwood Carrel was born in Fostoria, Ohio, January 21, 1914. He began playing the drums at a very early age. The big year for Chuck during his childhood was in 1923, when at the age of nine, he played a drum solo in Chicago at the first high school band competition ever held. His high school band, with “Chuck” the fifth grader in it, won the championship.

Chuck’s first job was with Paul Decker’s orchestra in Columbus, Ohio. His most unusual experience has been that when he wished to play with a certain band it would come true. First he wanted to be a drummer for Paul Decker, then he heard Coon Sanders Orchestra and got his wish again. While listening to the radio he heard Ben Bernie and the

next thing Chuck knew he was the drummer for that famous band.

During World War II, Chuck served eleven months in France and Germany with an air force band. Then he was with the 5th Ferrying Command stationed at Love Field. It was during this period that he became the drummer on the Early Birds.

Carrel is married to the former Marjorie Elaine Rayner. They have no children, but their pet dog “Tiny,” a pedigree Pomeranian, keeps them busy.

Chuck is five-feet and five-inches tall, weighs 155 pounds and has blond hair, a fair complexion and grey eyes. His favorite sports are baseball and football. His secret ambition is to live comfortably and make an honest living.



Chuck and his dogs.



Chuck played football in 1928.



Chuck playing the drums in Cannes, France. This was in February of 1946 at the Mimosa Festival.



Chuck and his wife, Marjorie.



Somebody hit a sour note!



Roy looking very dangerous. This was made in the Philippines, in 1945.



It's chow time for Mike, Roy and Minnie.

RAY HURST

Raymond W. Hurst, born October 30, 1919, in Middlesboro, Kentucky, is a versatile musician. He plays vibraphone, guitar, banjo, and drums. Ray went to high school in his home town of Middlesboro, then continued his schooling at SMU.

His first job was working as an elastic weaver in a factory. He decided that playing melodies would be a more enjoyable way to make a living.

Hurst joined the Dude Ranch Buckaroos, a traveling unit, in 1946. That year the act played Dallas and Ray auditioned for the Early Bird band.

During his four years in military service he spent thirty months in the South Pacific with the 13th Air Force. He was a bandsman and airplane mechanic. He had many unusual experiences during this period. Many of the experiences read like a page from the notebook of Lowell Thomas. In one instance Ray had been serving in the jungle for two years without seeing a white woman. Then Christmas night 1944 he found himself in a foxhole with five nurses while Jap planes bombed Morotai all night long.

He was also in the New Hebrides during an earthquake and learned what it was like to have the sky rain coconuts on his head.

When he was twelve he had to run for his life in the Kentucky hills to escape from the bullets of a fugitive murderer hiding in the area. When Ray tells this one other members of the band are a bit skeptical and ask, "Are you sure it wasn't the *revenooers*?"

Ray is married to the former Minnie Gertrude Rogers. They have one son, Michael Wylie Leverett.

When Ray is not playing on the Early Birds, he will likely be swimming, listening to records, dancing or working on his car.

His secret ambition is to be a good talker, (he already is).

CURTIS HURT

Calvin Curtis Hurt, the newcomer who plays trumpet in the Early Bird band, was born in Kosciusko, Mississippi, July 1, 1906.

While in high school at McKinney he played in the school band and his first job after school was one every young boy dreams of doing. He joined the circus. Young Curtis played in the Christie Bros. and Sells-Floto circus bands. The band director was none other than Everett James, father of the famous Harry James.

The circus was good experience. From there he went to the big time playing with such hands as Phil Harris and Ted Fio Rito.

In traveling around the country he enjoyed playing in Texas cities most and decided to make his home here. He signed up with the Early Bird band a year ago.

Curtis is married to the former Helen Elizabeth Josephine McLain. He is five-feet and eleven-inches tall, weighs 165 pounds, has grey hair and eyes. His complexion is ruddy. His favorite sports are boxing and football and his secret ambition is to retire and fish.

Curtis tells as his most unusual experience of the plight in which he found himself during World War II. He was stationed in Iceland. During a very bad blizzard he stepped through the thin crust of ice covering a foxhole. The temperature was so low the clothing on one leg froze to the ice before he could get out. The howling wind kept anyone from hearing his call for help for some time. Finally a buddy came to his rescue. Curtis says, "I was scared."



Helen, Curtis Hurt's wife.



Making music for the Starlight Operetta "Shawbaat," standing at attention from left Curtis Hurt, Captain Henry, center, and to his right, Bob Kornegoy.

Curtis Hurt in uniform. This was before he fell in the foxhole and nearly fraze ta death in Iceland.

JOHNNY KAUFFMAN



Jahnnny at oge of four, his aunt Anna and sister, Therressa. Jahnnny's mather died when he was very small and his aunt Anna was a mather to him and his sister.

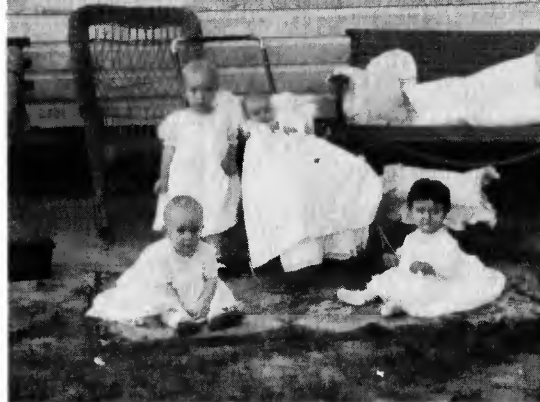
That expert on the bass violin, John H. Kauffman, was born in Bernice, Louisiana, June 9, 1909.

Kauffman attended innumerable schools, in his opinion the least said about that part of his early life the better. He will admit to playing in the high school band, football, golf, and raising horses as a hobby, also collecting small firearms.

Johnny is an accomplished musician that likes to talk about anything but himself. A most unusual characteristic in the entertainment world. He plays in dance bands, brass bands, with symphony orchestras, presentation units, operettas, and musical comedies.

He plays all these side jobs and still makes it on time for the Early Birds every morning.

Johnny served in World War II as a Staff Sargeant and supply technician. His wife is the former Kay Lyon. They were married in 1935. The Kauffman's have two sons, John H. III and James A. Kauffman.



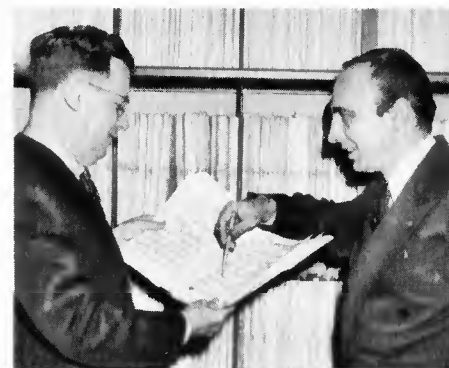
Jahnnny holds court surrounded by ladies-in-waiting. Naturally he is the "Prince in the Carriage."



John Kauffman at the age of twelve.



This is the Onion County Band of El Darada, Arkansas. Jahnnny's father was the director of the band, this picture is circa 1907. It was the Fourth of July.



Arthur Kuehn and Johnny Kauffman discuss an arrangement in the WFAA Music Library.



A bedtime story is read by Jahnnny to his sons with wife Kay enjoying it, too.



Charles LoMar Kemp.

"SKEEZIX" KEMP

The only hachelor in the Early Bird band. Charles LaMar Kemp, is a native Dallasite, son of Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Kemp. He was born June 28, 1922, when everybody had plenty of money.

Skeezix attended St. Edward's Academy and Crozier Tech High School in Dallas.

His first job after finishing his schooling was as a sales clerk in his father's variety store. His first musical job in radio was with the staff band at WRR. He has played with a number of orchestras. Ted Parrino. Lester Harris, the State Fair Band, Durward Cline, Harry Jennings and Herman Waldman.

A versatile musician, Kemp plays saxophone, clarinet and flute. He joined the Early Bird band as a regular member in 1953.

His secret ambition is to be a saxophone virtuoso. His hobby is building and flying radio controlled model airplanes.

Under most unusual experiences, Kemp lists playing "one nighters" with the "Gotch" Cline Orchestra.

Skeezix is five-feet and three-inches tall, weighs 135 pounds, has light-brown hair and eyes.

Good husband material, girls!



"Off we go, into the wild blue yander—"



Skeezix of seven months of age — standing squarely on his awn two feet.



Skeezix at twelve playing with his dog. The dog has just made hash of mama's petunia bed.

BOB

KORNEGAY



Bob Kornegay.



Bob's wife, Reba Little Kornegay.



Son Bobby Kornegay, featuring the "executive laak."

Robert William Kornegay was born in Hubbard, Texas, May 8, 1912. He is five-feet and ten-inches tall, weighs 160 pounds and has brown eyes and hair.

Bob had a time getting out of high school. He went to Forest in Dallas, Central High in Fort Worth and finally wound up in Lubbock High School. There book learning is not so important as knowing how to keep a hat on in a sandstorm and "roll your own" at the same time.

They let him hang around in the corridors at Texas Tech for awhile. The Red Raiders enjoyed hearing him play hot trumpet after a tough day on the gridiron.

Kornegay played in all the school bands. He entered radio as a staff musician at WRR. Then played with the orchestras of Murray Lambert, Ted Parrino, Ligon Smith and Leighton Noble. He joined the Early Birds in 1941.

Bob is married to the former Reba Little. He has one son, Robert Pitt Kornegay, born January 11, 1950.

During World War II he was in the Air Corps on the West Coast for three years. He played in the band and did photographic work.

Kornegay enjoys playing golf and started photography as a hobby, but now he is an expert and people pay him to make their pictures.

He has one of the most complete home photographic workshops in the Southwest. His secret ambition is to have all the equipment necessary for a full-time commercial photographic service.



Kornegay making like a fisherman.



Taps for former President Franklin D. Roosevelt, April 12, 1945.



The thirties with Bob and Hank Gadeke fixing a flat tire.



Garner Clark and Kornegay in New York, the year 1947, after a fifteen-mile parade.



The next morning.



Bob posing at 315 Masten Street, now the site of the Medical Arts.



Kornegay, four months old.



Kornegay in costume.



Bert playing in his study.

BERT A. NOYD

Bert, that genius on the piano, was born in Chicago, November 14, 1901. His family moved to Texas when Noyd was a small child. He attended El Campo High School and Bethany College, in Lindsborg, Kentucky.

During his school days Bert was active in school orchestras and Glee Club work. His first job of consequence was with the Texas Hotel Orchestra in Fort Worth. He began in radio at WBAP, Fort Worth, as a charter member of the first staff band at that station. Bert joined the Early Bird Orchestra October 1, 1942.

Noyd is five-feet eleven inches tall, weighs 201 pounds and has grey eyes, hair, and a blond complexion.

He is married to the former Margaret Elizabeth Templeton and they have one son, Martin, and a grandson, Paul Allison Noyd, born January 11, 1953.

Bert is the quiet type of performer, very capable and cooperative. He usually has one joke or story for the gang each morning. Noyd is something very rare in this busy age. He is a good listener.

Noyd had a hard time recalling the necessary information for this biography. He couldn't remember how to spell Marilyn Monroe.



Bert's daughter-in-law, son, and grandson, Jean, Martin and Paul.

EARLY BIRD ALUMNI

FORMER EMCEE'S

JIMMIE JEFFERIES

The genial Jimmie, a born emcee and showman, who never needed a script and got his ideas for the show and comedy routines literally "on mike," was head man of the Early Bird Show during 1930-1933, 1936-1938, and 1940-1946. Jefferies is now in New York doing radio and television work.

JIMMY CROCKER

An emcee on the Early Birds during 1933, Crocker left the cast for an executive position with the Texas Centennial Exposition. He is now Assistant Manager of Radio Station KRLD.

BUNNY BIGGS

Bunny was a lovable character, shown here in blackface. Biggs was an emcee of the Early Bird Show in 1934.



RALPH W. NIMMONS

"Pappy" Nimmons came to WFAA as an announcer in 1935 and then became the emcee on the Early Bird Show. That was in the days when the studios were located in the Baker Hotel. Nimmons got in the habit of being "head man" early in his career. He is now Manager of WFAA-TV.



EDDIE DUNN

Friendly, personable, Eddie Dunn was an emcee on the Early Bird Show from 1938 to 1940. He left the coast to take on assignment in Chicago, from there he went to New York and is now very successful in network radio and television as an announcer-emcee. Eddie is a Texan, born and reared in Waco.



BOB STANFORD

Stanford came to WFAA as an announcer, but his ability as a master-of-ceremonies made a spot for him on the Early Birds in 1946. Since that time Stanford has done television and film work. He is now Radio-TV Director for the Southland Ice Company of Dallas.



NORVELL SLATER

Slater was an emcee of the Early Bird Show in 1948. He is the senior announcer with WFAA and can always be depended upon to do a professional, top-notch job, whether acting as a master-of-ceremonies, announcing, or as a musician.

KEN SIBSON

Hoppy-Go-Lucky Ken Sibson was an emcee on the Early Birds in 1947. He was versatile, made friends on and off the air easily, and always had a good joke for the boys in the band.



FORMER CONDUCTORS



ALEXANDER KEESE

Alex Keese originated the Early Bird Show in 1930, and was the conductor of its first orchestra. He was for many years one of the top conductors for Publix Theaters. He is now manager of Radio Station WFAA.



EDWARD CRAMER

Eddie Cramer had a zany way with the boton and his music swept along like the wind, punctuating the comedy and other nonsense on the show. He was director of the Early Bird Orchestra in 1932. Cramer is now a successful realtor in Glendale, Colifornia.



KARL LAMBERTZ

Thirteen is a lucky number for conductor Karl Lambertz. He was the leader of the Early Bird Orchestra, off and on, for thirteen years, from 1933 to 1946. He returned to the station in 1952 as Assistant Manager and Program Director.



LAWRENCE (SHANTY) MORRELL

Shanty was a conductor of the Early Bird Orchestra in 1933. He came in for a time while Karl Lambertz was on a leave of absence. Shanty could sell with his music the way he does now in the Advertising business.

HYMAN CHARNINSKY

The name Charninsky has been associated with music for many years. Hyman was conductor of the Early Bird Orchestra for a time in 1934. Music is his life, and he is now conducting his own orchestra in Dallas.

LIGON SMITH

"The Champion of Jazz" made the air jump when he was director of the Early Bird Orchestra in 1935. A versatile musician and businessman, Smith had his own band for years, but is now Sales Manager for the Baker Hotel of Dallas.

BILLY MAYO

Mayo and his smooth rhythms took over the Early Bird Orchestra in 1946. He conducted the band until 1952, when he resigned to pursue a business career. He is now associated with the Ex-Cel Steel Corporation.

WILBUR (DEACON) ARD

Wilbur was director of the Early Bird Orchestra from 1937 until 1945, when he resigned to manage the family lumber business. He returned in 1952 and picked up the baton again.



EARLY BIRD CANARIES



DALE EVANS

Miss Evans sang on the Early Birds in the middle thirties. She is now in network radio, television and the movies with her husband, the famous cowboy star, Roy Rogers.



CATHERINE (KATY) PRINCE

During the late thirties and early forties, Katy Prince was the girl vocalist on the Early Bird Show. She is now Mrs. Duvall Williams, a Dallas housewife.



EVELYN HONEYCUTT

Evelyn left the Early Birds in the middle thirties to join Don McNeill's Breakfast Club on the ABC Network. She sang on the Breakfast Club under the name of Evelyn Lynn. Evelyn is now Mrs. Edward Koontz and is living with her husband on the West Coast.



FRANCES BEASLEY

Good-natured, gay, Frances Beasley sang with the Early Bird Orchestra during the late thirties. She is now a housewife, married to newspaperman Johnny Riddle.



FREDDIE TERRY

Vivacious, pert, Freddie Terry kept radio listeners in a cheerful mood during the forties. She resigned from the Early Bird cast to marry Phil Gord. They now live in Garland, Texas.



LOUISE MACKEY

Lovely Louise had remarkable poise and a beautiful soprano voice. She sang on the Early Birds during the late forties. Louise is now Mrs. John Boynton, a Dallas housewife.

BARBARA LANE

Barbara sang as a replacement on the Early Birds during the summer of 1951. Her association with the show was brief, but a pleasant one for the cast and fans.



LYNN HOYT

Her wonderful singing style, cheerful disposition, and friendly giggle were shared by the Early Birds and WFAA listeners in 1953. Lynn is now Mrs. James E. Moroney, Jr., of Dallas, and the proud mother of Mory Molly Moroney, born January 3, 1955.

TERRY LEA

Terry is the veteran. She has sung with the Early Birds, off and on, for nine years. She made another "forewell" appearance in November of 1954. Terry has made more "forewell" appearances with the Birds than did Sir Harry Louder in his years as a showman. A wonderful person, versatile, and never at a loss for words or a note, she has a special spot in the hearts of the cast and Early Bird fans. In private life, Terry is Mrs. James Edward Jenkins of Dallas, and the mother of two children, a son and a daughter, James Jr., and Joan Elizabeth.



CLAIRE STEWART

Claire is the singer with flair. She has an unusual voice and excellent stage presence. She sang on the Early Birds in 1950 and 1951. Claire is now a personality on WFAA-TV, and has appeared in Margo Jones stage productions. In private life she is Mrs. Richard Williamson of Dallas.

FEATURES



FRED LOWERY AND HIS DOG

Fred got his start in show business on the Early Birds. He is now in the big time and one of the best whistlers in the business.



RUSSELL KOCH

One of the old-time Early Birds. Russell was a drummer on the show from 1930-1940. He was always in the midst of the fun.



CRAIG BARTON

Craig Barton, a brilliant pianist, played with the Early Birds in the 1930's. He is now in the decorating business.



CECIL HALE

A first rate announcer of the late thirties who took the unmerciful ribbing of the Early Bird gang. Hale was also a writer and producer.



VIN LINDHE

Pianist, writer, and producer. She also was "Olga" of the "Olga and Gus" skits heard on the Early Birds in 1930.



SLO & EZY

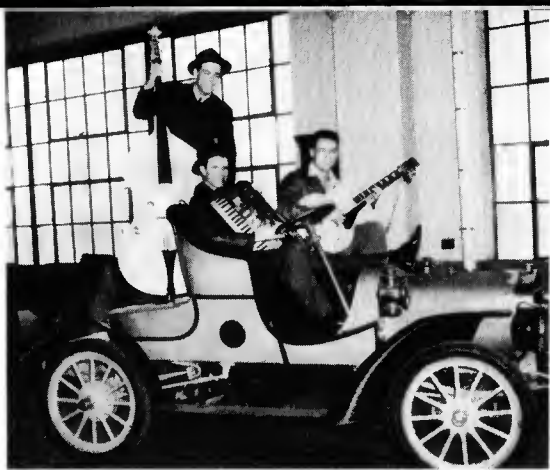
Bunny Biggs and Harry LeVan, a Southwestern version of Amos 'n Andy, heard on the Early Birds during the 1930's.



FIRST EARLY BIRD BAND

Left to right:

Alex Keese, Ted Parrina, Paul Whiteacre, Lea Lambertz, George Eagen, Russell Kach, Fidencio Mendaza, Jerry Jarnagan, Ole Oatman, Emil Martin, Jimmie Jeffries.



CASS COUNTY BOYS

Now famous in Hollywood, the act originated on the Early Bird show. In the jolopy, standing, Bert Dodson, Freddie Martin and Jerry Scoggins.



THE BIG FOUR

An announcing team heard on the Early Birds during the thirties, left to right: Gene Heard, now an advertising executive in Houston, Texas, Jimmy McClain, formerly Dr. I. Q. Seated left to right, Hal Thompson, executive of the Texas State network, and Ralph Nimmans, manager, WFAA-TV.



RUTH SALTER

Ruth was a whistler on the Early Birds in the thirties. She also did production and sound effects for other WFAA studio shows.



Left to right, front row:

Ole Oatman, Dalbey Crites, Eddie Cramer (standing), Emil Martin, Fidencia Mendoza, Jimmie Jefferies.

Back row:

Gus Levine, Russell Kach, Shanty Marrell, Joe Cinquemani, Pem Davenport, Paul Whiteacre.



Left to right, frant raw:

George Eagen, Russell Koch, Fred Lowery, Jerry Jornogan, Emil Martin.

Back raw:

Eddie Dunn, Karl Lambertz, Gus Levine, Vin Lindhe, Paul Whiteacre, Ole Oatman, Fidencia Mendaza.



PEG MORELAND

The "King of the Ditty Singers," right, an Early Bird entertainer from 1935 to 1946. Others in picture are: Jefferies with cigar and baw, Narvell Slater, and Karl Lambertz.



CHARLES GODWIN

Top-notch accordianist who now has his own school of the accordion. He played on the Early Birds from 1948 until 1953.



A BIT OF HORSEPLAY

Father time in the person of Freddie Martin catches up with Jimmie Jefferies at a most uncomfortable moment.



IVAN WAYNE

A versatile vocalist, an Early Bird soloist and member of several WFAA singing groups in 1949.



HUGH WADDILL

One of the most talented organists in the Southwest, featured with WFAA and the Early Birds from 1940-1950. He now has his own school of music in Dallas.



Left to right, front row:

Jimmie Jefferies (seated); Eddie Dunn (seated); Karl Lombertz (standing); Harold Eltrich (standing).

Back row:

Ed Holick, E. C. Wahrmond, Russell Koch, Paul Whiteacre, Fidencia Mendoza, Emil Martin, Jerry Jarnagan, Bill Kuehn, Bernae Clements.



JACK PRIGMORE

Tenor singer in the late thirties on the Early Birds. He is now in radio and television in New York.



Left to right, front row:

Jerry Scaggins, Freddie Martin, Bert Dadson, Jimmie Jefferies (standing); Narvell Slater (standing); Karl Lambertz (standing).

Second row:

Bob Ernst, Guy Anderson, Wilbur Ard, Bert Nayd.

Back row:

Art Lewis, Talmadge Naylor, Jimmie Tharnhill, Roger Bayd.

Rear standing: Lais Lee, Harold Brown.



JEANNIE McDONALD

The female "Bob Shelton." Jeannie is an all time favorite with Southwest listeners. She put the "hill" in hillbilly songs. She sang with the Early Birds in early 1940.



JOHNNY NOLTAN

The rich, baritone voice of Johnny Noltan was popular with Early Bird listeners in 1950 and 1951.



MOLLIE ANNE AND SLIM

Slim Harbert and his daughter Mollie Anne, sang gospel songs on the Early Birds in 1953. The Harberts are now with the Country Roadshow on WBAP in Fort Worth.

CANDID SHOTS



THE "COLONEL" AND LEWIS LIVE IT UP

The slide trombone technique of Arthur Lewis and smooth saxophoning of Guy "Colonel" Anderson kept things rolling along in 1943.



JOHNNY AND "RUGHEAD" ARE

Johnny Thompson and Wilbur Ard billed themselves as "Two Loose Nuts" on the air and in your hair back in the middle thirties.



NAMESAKES

Mrs. Jewel Jett of Arlington, who coined WFAA's slogan, "Yaur Neighbar of the Air," is being interviewed with her son, Jimmy Edward Jett, named for Jimmy Jefferies and Eddie Dunn. Pop Myres, laaking on, use ta be on the Early Birds. He is now in the odvertising business. George Stevens was never on the Early Birds, but he wishes he hod been. Pop is the one with the bold head.



Standing, left to right:

Frances Beasley, Norvell Slater, Hugh Woddill, Jimmie Jefferies, Karl Lambertz, Peg Moreland, Harry Blocker, Elmer Baughman, Austin Watson, Art Lewis, Alvin Bean, Roger Boyd, Fergus Gardner, Jim Burdette, Jerry Scoggins, Bab Ernst, Tolmage Naylor, Bert Dodson.

Araund piano:

Bert Noyd, Guy Anderson, Freddie Martin, Clarence Mook, Wilbur Ard, Lamar Kemp.



A PRODUCTION CONFERENCE

Hugh Waddill, organist; Bert Mitchell, former production director of WFAA, who worked behind the scenes on the Early Birds; Don Valentine, also an Early Bird producer, and announcer-producer Norvell Slater. No one can remember exactly what this huddle was all about.



LES LESTER

A former trambanist on the Early Birds from 1940 until 1950. He is now an insurance mon. And what's simple about that?



BACK IN THE DAYS OF TELEVISION

It's 1950 and a camera Billy Mayo and Johnny Mock steal a kiss from Claire Stewart. The show, "Early Birds Night Out," on WFAA-TV.



HAPPY CHRISTMAS

Lynn Hoyt sings the Christmas Seal Song on the WFAA Early Birds while Wilbur directs.



EARLY BIRDS ORCHESTRA

Left to right, standing at mikes:

Billy Maya, Narvell Slotter.

Front row (seated):

Clint Davis, William Binford, Guy Anderson, Johnny Mock.

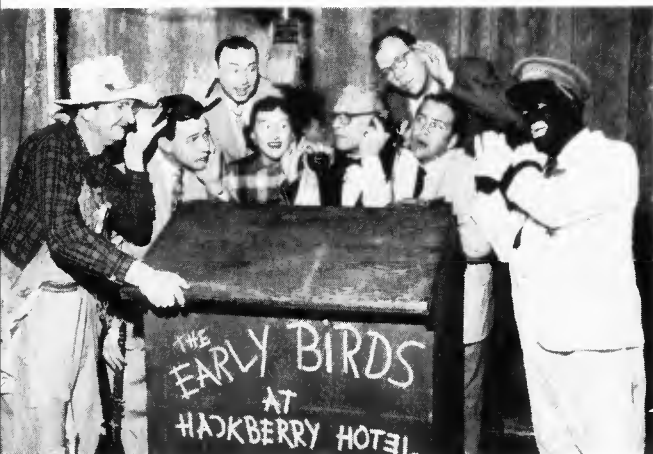
Back row:

Chuck Carrell, Bob Kornegay, Leray Millican, Harace Rallins, Bert Nayd, Raymond Hurst.



HACKBERRY HOTEL ON TV

This was before the days of the idiot sheet, "Little Willie" had to furnish his own. Hack is having trouble with the props. Nothing new about that.



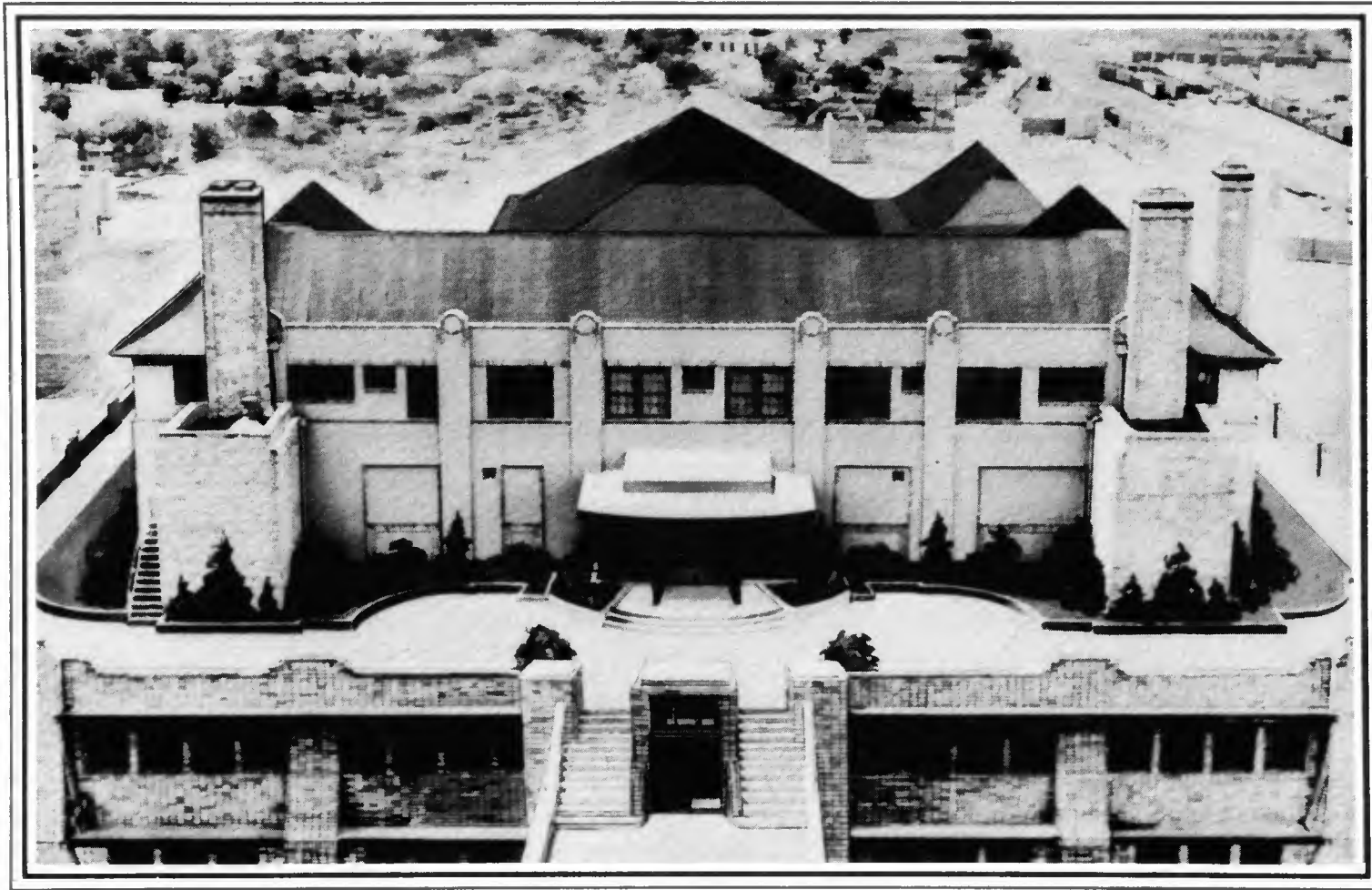
THE EARLY BIRD GANG

Here's how they looked back in 1950.



COMING AND GOING

The Early Birds always end up in the music library at WFAA. Here Terry Lea helps newcomer David Taylor get acquainted with the stacks.



Home of the WFAA Early Birds

This is your invitation to visit
the show anytime you are in Dallas.
Those mornings you cannot be
with us in person, let us perch on
your radio dial, wherever you may be!