

WOR

R A D I O



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THE FIRST SIXTY YEARS

1982

Harriet Pitch Hewson

WOR

R A D I O



THE FIRST SIXTY YEARS

If you're really going to do a book on WOR, you don't just stress our past. Sure, we have one of the most substantial places in broadcasting history. But the thing that you want to stress is our innovation, then and now. We're the innovators in the industry. We'll continue to be the innovators. Don't just say, "Sixty Years of WOR." What we have now is sixty years of innovation.

John A. Gambling

*We learn from the past. But we don't live in it.
We live in today. And tomorrow.*

Jack Poppele
WOR Chief Engineer, 1922-1955

*Getting to the number one spot is one thing.
Staying there is another.*

Rick Devlin
Vice President and General Manager, WOR

WOR's first studio in the radio department of L. Bamberger & Co., 1922. J.R. Poppele, chief engineer, at telephone, right.



Executive Suite of Bamberger's Department Store, Newark,
New Jersey, April 1923

"Mr. Poppele, it is the consensus of the board of directors that we have received all of the value that we possibly can from WOR at this point. We consider the twenty thousand dollars invested in the station since our starting point one year ago to have been a worthwhile advertising venture for our radio department. It has been an interesting experiment, but we don't see much of a future for WOR and we agree that at this point, the best thing to do is to turn back our license to the government. Is there anything that you would like to say?"



WOR's first control room

I T HAD BEEN A HECTIC FOURTEEN MONTHS FOR THE ENGINEER, AN EX-NAVY WIRELESS OPERATOR

who only was in his twenties. He had walked into Bamberger's Department Store one day in January 1922, just as Walter Mohler, the store's Public Relations Director, had come up with the idea of trying out a radio station as an indirect, but substantial promotional gimmick for the store. It would be an attention-getter to help sell the new wireless radio sets they stocked. Jack Poppele immediately accepted their offer of a job.

The first order of the day was to get the license for the station. Poppele and another man who would be setting up the station with him left Newark on the 8:00 a.m., bound for Washington. At noon, they headed for the Federal Wireless Commission, and by 1:00 p.m. on February 20, 1922, they had the license for WOR to operate on 360 meters, powered by a 250-watt transmitter. This would enable them to broadcast for several hundred miles. It was difficult to pinpoint the station's exact reach because in the country at that time, there were only five to ten thousand receiving sets in use. The call letters were assigned in alphabetical order, so that after Poppele and his partner left, WOS was assigned to a station in St. Joseph, Missouri. WOR has the distinction of being the only station in New York to operate with the same call letters for sixty years. The men were back with the precious piece of paper by early evening. On February 22,

1922, the station went on the air. The first thing ever heard on WOR was a phonograph recording of Al Jolson's "April Showers."

Launching WOR into operation was a full time commitment. The two ex-Marine wireless operators, Orville Orvis and Jack Poppele, and an announcer/manager named Karl Egge, "slept there, ate there, lived there." Lee DeForest, one of the fathers of broadcast invention, came to the station and helped to adjust the transmitter which was located inside Bamberger's department store. Later, Weston Electrical Instruments of Newark sent men over to help. The situation improved, but the engineers found themselves constantly adjusting and nursing the equipment. The staff functioned as engineers and air personalities, and in between (programming wasn't constant in the early years of radio—it ran for a couple of hours in the morning, a break, another couple of hours, and then again in the evening) the staff sold radios.

On April 6, 1922, the transmitter was moved to the roof. Operations improved with the installation of two sixty-five foot masts linked by an eight wire antenna. Reception improved to the extent that calls came in, excitedly reporting pickups in Atlantic City, Brooklyn, and Staten Island.



In the 1920s, families listened to WOR.

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HE EARLY PROGRAMMING consisted of music, singing, talk programming, such as religious material and "educational and informative" talks, storytelling for children, and whatever the creative instincts of the staff could conjure on short notice. WOR's first radio personality was a woman named Jessie F. Koewing, who did a daily program of jokes and anecdotes. Her program and *Sky Pictures by Mr. Radiobug*, a kiddie show that ran in conjunction with a puzzle that appeared in a local paper for the children to fill in following Radiobug's instructions, were two early hits. If all else failed, or in the absence of a guest, there was always the old trick of one piano player with three names.

Toward the end of the first year, WOR tried its wings with its first transatlantic broadcast. This made WOR the first American station to be heard in London, on October 22, 1922, eight months after the station's inception. Paul Whiteman and his band played from the WOR studio in Newark, and were picked up by the British Broadcasting Company.



1922: WOR's first studio at L. Bamberger & Co., Newark, New Jersey



Letter from Mortimer H. Liebman, East Orange, N.J. June 13, 1925

"... the Euclid Trio is playing wonderfully while I write."

Station WOR
 X Bamberger & Co.
 Newark N.J.
 East Orange N.J. 6/13/25

Gentlemen - I am very enjoyed the rebroadcast of the show the battle with Major H.L. McCallum in the Rock Pit of a fair island. Please describing same. It sure was wonderful for I heard every word clearly altho at times I suppose I heard terrific motor sounds.

Of course being so close to WOR one so desired to write in with the opportunity especially on this day was the impetus to thank you for your part in the broadcast.

Watching like your program especially Monday Bradford Theatre night. I am enclosing 10 stamps for an E.K.K. occupation stamp. Kindly tell me where I can obtain pictures for I have quite a few stamps.

Very truly yours,
 Mortimer H. Liebman

216 N. 16th St.
 East Orange
 N.J. The Euclid Trio is playing wonderfully while I write.



Magicians, doctors, lawyers, Indian chiefs ... all came to WOR.



If a guest failed to appear, there was always the trick of one piano player with three names.

Executive Suite, Bamberger's Department Store, Newark, New Jersey,
April 1923

“What am I going to do?” Jack Poppele remembers wondering. “I said, ‘Yes, I think there is something I’d like to say. I think you’re making a great mistake by giving up WOR. I think that WOR, that broadcasting, is going to be a big medium of talking to people. People have indicated an interest in broadcasting to the degree of the number of wireless sets that we’ve sold in the radio department . . .’ I kept explaining to them what I believed was going to be the future of broadcasting, that I had a profound feeling of it because of my previous experiences. Then one of the members of the board began. ‘Mr. Bamberger, I think we ought to consider staying with WOR for some more time. Sure, it’s cost \$20,000, but that money has been well spent. We’ve received a lot of publicity for it. And who knows if what he says about the future of radio is right . . .’ I hardly breathed. Then they voted, and agreed to keep on with WOR for another year or so . . .”

THE YEAR ENDED WITH WOR A CONCLUSIVE

SUCCESS. But Poppele had one more idea. “Mr. Mohler?”

“Yes, Poppele?”

“Friday is Christmas day. You know that we’re selling a lot of radios in the radio department. I think that what we ought to do is to be on the air so that people can hear something on those radios on Christmas day.”

“Well, it’s a good idea, Poppele. But someone would have to be here operating the station. That would mean

giving up Christmas. Who would do a thing like that?”

“There will always be other Christmases. Many, many more Christmases.”

And so, Jack Poppele stayed in the studio on December 25, 1922, playing records of carols all day. When the owners and recipients of radio sets turned them on, there was nothing to be heard except for WOR, breaking the radio silence with the first radio Christmas in the United States.



Alfred J. McCosker

ALFRED J. McCOSKER had worked as a newspaperman, a publicity agent for theater and motion pictures, and as a columnist/editor for a motion picture journal before coming to WOR. His nickname was "Hollywood" McCosker, and he brought that style with him when he came to WOR as head of public relations and publicity. He saw the opportunity to blend show business and public service in broadcasting. His ideas took hold and worked. Whether he was testing a bullet-proof vest on the air, sending Rudolph Valentino out to sea with a radio to "see how far off he could receive WOR," working with the engineers on experimental 1920s broadcasts to Mars or the moon, grabbing any celebrities he could and putting them on the air on WOR, McCosker fascinated and drew listeners to the station.



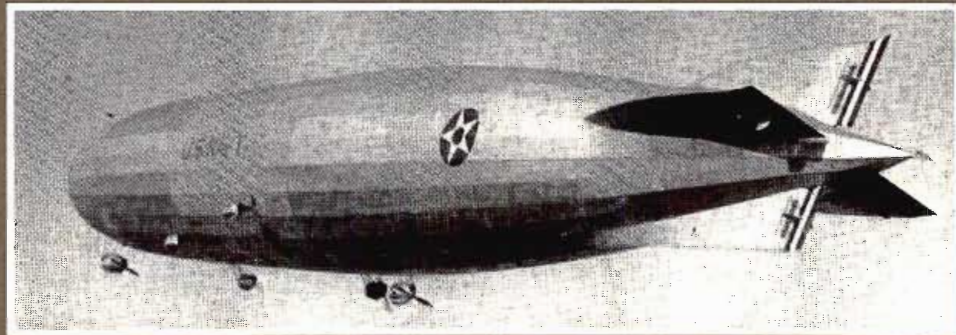
Charlie Chaplin making his first radio appearance on WOR

Harry Houdini
"Secure knots secures not Houdini"



Thomas A. Edison and Gov. A. Harry Moore at ceremonies marking the 50th anniversary of the phonograph's invention. WOR broadcast the event.

SHENANDOAH!



U.S.S. Shenandoah

ON JANUARY 18, 1924, soon after the station was to sign on, an SOS came over the airwaves, an instant signal for the airways to be cleared so as not to interfere with the distress signal and rescue effort. The engineers at WOR signed off but listened to the wireless receiver. A dirigible had broken away from its moorings in Lakehurst, New Jersey, due to a strong southeast wind. There was also a heavy fog obscuring vision. The crew drifted, helpless and blind in the runaway airship.

Suddenly a call came in from a listener in Westfield, New Jersey. "WOR? There is evidently a plane in distress overhead, going around in circles. We can't see it because of the fog, but we can hear it. Can you do something?"

By pure chance, the husband of a guest who was about to go on the air had been listening to the SOS signals coming in from the wireless. He was a Secret Service agent for the United States Navy. "I bet it's the Shenandoah." He requested the use of a telephone, and called the base at Lakehurst, where he confirmed that it was the Shenandoah, that the base was in radio contact with the ship but

had no idea of its location. WOR received permission from the base to go back on the airwaves. "If anyone listening hears what sounds like an airship overhead, we have a missing dirigible that we're trying to track. Call WOR at Market 0001 and tell us your location."

Calls began coming in, and WOR, in conjunction with the Lakehurst base, was able to trace the path of the ship. Lakehurst, following WOR's directives, radioed the Shenandoah with the information, helping to steer its course back. The Shenandoah headed north and came over Springfield, Chatham, Maplewood, and then finally Newark, to Broad and Market Street. The men from WOR rushed to the roof.

Suddenly, the clouds seemed to open and they could see the ship overhead and hear it clearly. "Shenandoah, Shenandoah, you're now over Newark at Broad and Market Streets."

"Thanks old man," radioed back the Shenandoah. And with that, the crew turned the ship around and returned to Lakehurst, safely.



The Witches' Tale, written and produced by Alonzo Dean Cole, was a running ghost story drama. It started out with spooky sound effects and narration by the witch. "100 years old I be," she quavered to Satan, the cat. The story began.

When Wife Hates to Admit Husband Is Right —By Fontaine Fox



(Copyright, 1925, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

Newark Star-Eagle October 31, 1925

IN 1928, WOR's power was raised from 500 to 5,000 watts, extending the coverage to approximately six counties. An increasing number of stations competed for air space at this time. Therefore, the power increase didn't signify a significant increase in listeners. In the next decade, WOR would find itself inventing and applying technology that would give it a signal coverage far ahead of the competition.

In 1929, Bamberger's was taken over by R.H. Macy, which then became WOR's parent company.

As the twenties drew to a close, the eight year old radio station found itself with a nationwide reputation as a broadcasting forerunner. WOR was respectfully regarded in terms of technological advancements and pioneering innovations. The station had broadcast overseas, pioneered picture broadcasting, tried receiving signals from outer space, experimented with numerous programming ideas. WOR was hailed for its contributions in public service broadcasting. The programming had won a devoted following, and already the Gamblings and McCanns, WOR personalities who were to reign for the existence of the station, had established themselves on WOR. The experimental radio station was a success in its own right.

PICTURES BY RADIO



WOR IS FIRST TO BROADCAST IMAGES!

A NUMBER OF TECHNOLOGICAL EXPERIMENTS that proved to be real contributions to broadcasting science and the industry were pioneered by WOR. In 1927, Austin Cooley approached WOR for aid in his experiments with facsimile broadcasting, the first transmitting of a photographic image. This was the precursor to television and satellite image transmission used in space age technology. It was the first time that images were sent from an established broadcasting facility. It was nothing short of miraculous. "WOR TO BROADCAST PICTURES IN MONTH," marveled the *New York Times* in December 1927. "RADIO SENDS PHONOGRAPH PHOTO IN TEST" reported the *New York*

Herald Tribune on February 1, 1928. The experiments were a success. Later WOR experimented with a facsimile newspaper broadcast to their listeners with receiving equipment. The interesting aspect of all this is that WOR actually can be attributed with the first image broadcasting done in the country, an almost forgotten accomplishment that stands in ironic contrast to what the *New York Sun* wrote on September 17, 1927: "WOR is to be commended for its cooperation with the Cooley endeavor. It will prove, we think, to be the finest thing WOR has ever done, and this station will be remembered principally in years to come as the pioneer picture broadcaster."

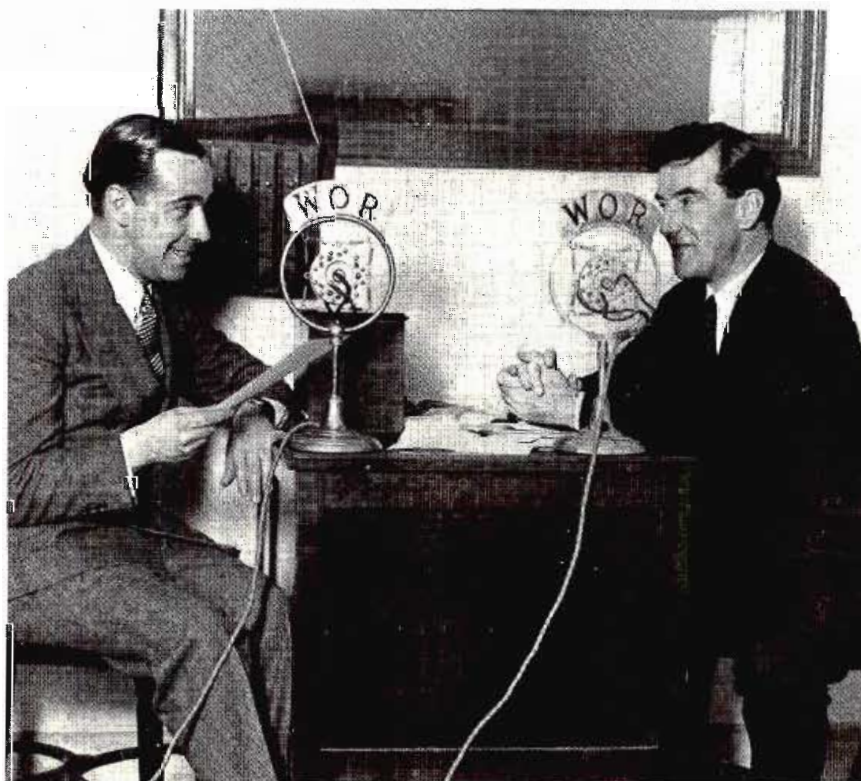


hailed as revolutionary in the 1960s, in such works as *Diet For A Small Planet*.

Before endorsing products on WOR, McCann tested them in his own laboratories, checking for impurities, feeding them to rats. This built the credibility of the station and its personalities.

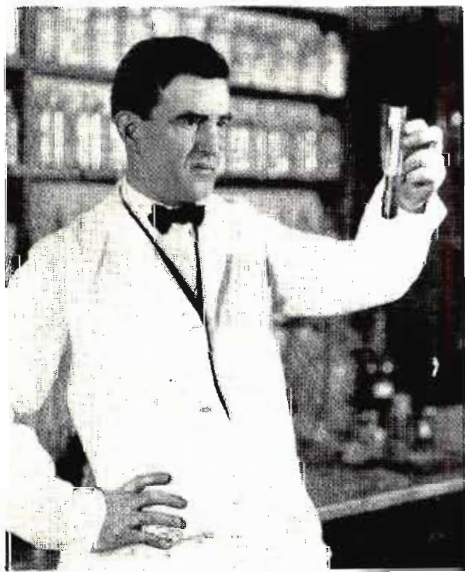
The McCann Pure Food Hour was both exceedingly popular and ahead of its time. This show also ran into three generations. Alfred McCann took over the show after his father's death in 1931, and Patricia McCann appeared with her parents for years. She took over herself in 1975.

The relationship between the Gamblings and the McCanns has run for as many years as their respective shows. The "A" in John A. Gambling stands for Alfred. It came from Alfred McCann.



John B. Gambling (left) and Alfred W. McCann on The Pure Food Hour, 1930

ALFRED W. McCANN AND THE PURE FOOD HOUR

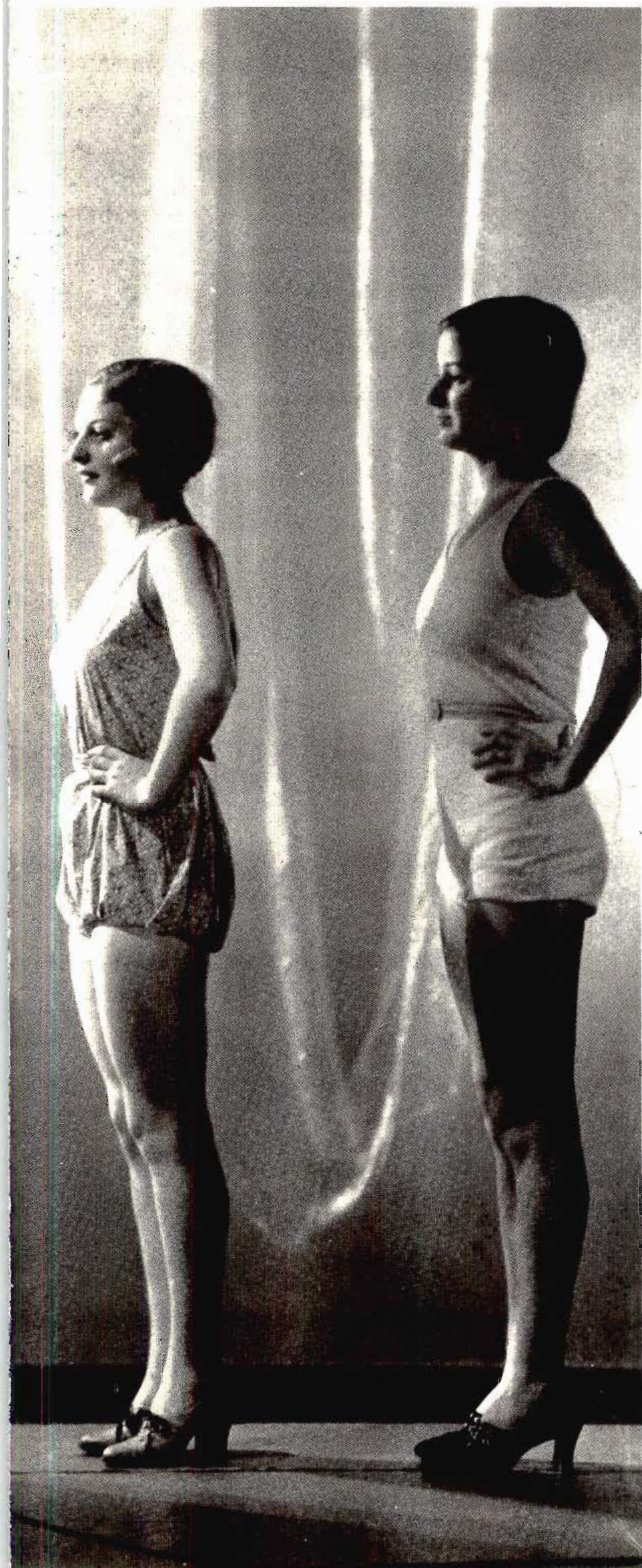


ALFRED McCANN started as a journalist, writing for the *New York Globe*. An early experience with food poisoning left him seriously ill, and infuriated enough to start an investigation of the food industry that would result in an incalculable contribution to people's consciousness of the subject, and in changes being made. Changes in practices of the industry, changes in thinking. In the 1920s, Alfred McCann was raising questions that are still being discussed as something new in the 1980s.

He set out to expose the dangers of food additives. He warned about tubercular beef, sausage from hogs with cholera, deodorized rotten eggs, painters' glue in ice cream, Vaseline in butter, Red Dye in Maraschino cherries. He went after the crooked companies of the industry with a vengeance. Whole carloads of beef that

were supposed to be delivered to the railroad yards of upper Manhattan would mysteriously disappear when word got out that McCann was on his way to inspect. His son's childhood memories include headlines telling of attempts on his father's life. But McCann continued, undaunted. He went to court 286 times on lawsuits, and successfully defended himself each time.

WOR grabbed this newspaper crusader and gave him a forum with *The McCann Pure Food Hour*, the station's first hour-long show. On WOR, McCann continued to expand his emphasis. He discussed the dangers of refined flour and sugar and virtues of whole wheat, until 200,000 loaves of whole wheat bread a day were sold in New York. He discussed the inefficiency of our food system, with ten pounds of grain being used to produce one pound of beef. This was the same focus that was



THE THREE GENERATION SAGA OF THE GAMBLINGS started with a case of laryngitis.

The morning gym class was voted "The Most Popular Show in America" by the *New York Daily Mirror's* radio poll concensus in 1924. This was a program of exercises that an instructor, originally Arthur Bagley, read as the audience followed with the help of a chart of instructions. Listeners mailed in to the station for their exercise charts. Health cultist Bernarr McFadden took over for Bagley.

One day in 1925, before 7:00 a.m., McFadden called in sick. An engineer by the name of John B. Gambling called Jack Poppele at the station's home base in Newark. Gambling was at the New York studio and wanted to know what to do.

"You have the exercise charts?" asked Poppele.

"Yes," answered Gambling.

"You know the routine?"

"Yes."

"Good. Do it. You're on!"

An hour later, the response was overwhelming. "That voice!" people kept calling in to exclaim. "Where did you get that golden voice?" Gambling's beautiful baritone, precise diction and English heritage spelled perfection. A short while later he was leading the exercises every morning. It was John Gambling and the Morning Gym Class, complete with orchestra. The first sponsor was Colgate Toothpaste. Eventually Gambling worked in news and weather reports, culled from the morning newspapers, who didn't seem to object as long as he mentioned their names. Actually, these were, in primitive form, the first radio newscasts.

Gambling's show *The Musical Clock* was extended to 10:00 a.m. The station filled in the slot with *The McCann Pure Food Hour*.

KEEP FIT
 WITH
Gamblings GYM CLASSES

LOOK FIT
 WITH
Clemons Clothes

1409 BROADWAY at 39th STREET
 64 NASSAU ST. 863 SIXTH AVE
 Tel. 308-1 Midway Lane. Tel. 308 and Midway



tune in on
WOR

Continuous
 Every Morning
6:45 AM to 8 AM
*Excepting Sundays
 and Holidays*

JOHN B. GAMBLING
 PHYSICAL DIRECTOR

JOHN B. GAMBLING AND HIS MORNING GYM CLASS



Music to exercise by. "The World's Greatest Little Orchestra." John B. Gambling, far right.

“The WOR management believed that a station had the right to transmit opinion, and defended that right vigorously. . . The station backed me.”

**Letter from J.H. Klein, Jr.,
Commander, U.S.N., Executive Officer of
the Shenandoah**

IN REPLY
REFER TO 300/X

Form No. 78-11-102-1000
U. S. N. No. 206

U. S. S. SHENANDOAH
NAVAL AIR STATION, LAKEHURST, N. J.

20 January 1924.

My dear Mr. Samberger:

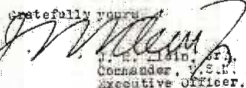
On behalf of the officers and crew of the U. S. S. SHENANDOAH I wish to express my appreciation to you and the operating force of W. O. R. for the assistance given us on the night of 16 January, when the SHENANDOAH broke away from her mast and sailed out over New Jersey.

I understand that you ceased operations entirely during this period and devoted your entire attention to getting in touch with the SHENANDOAH and thereafter maintaining uninterrupted communication from us to the ship. As a result of your efforts we were constantly notified in regard to the ship.

Will you please also express to your radio audience our appreciation for the many telephone and telegraphic communications sent during the night from those who saw the ship in flight?

This cordial cooperation and unselfish devotion to the air forces is something which we particularly appreciate because should any misfortune ever overtake us in the air we shall always feel that we have a multitude of friends on the ground who are constantly helping us as you and your people did.

Captain McCarty, commanding the SHENANDOAH, is absent from the station at this time and I know that he, as well as all the officers and men on the station, subscribes to these views and we all hope that if we can be of any assistance to you that you will not hesitate to let us know.

Sincerely yours,

J. H. Klein, Jr.,
Commander, U.S.N.,
Executive Officer.

Mr. Louis Samberger,
Broadcasting Station W. O. R.,
Newark, N. J.

IN 1924, WOR OPENED A STUDIO IN NEW YORK at Chickering Hall, on West 57th Street. This was to facilitate arrangements for New York talent. Instead of the trip to New Jersey, the mountain moved closer to Mohammed. A year later, WOR moved to 1440 Broadway, where it operates today.

The mid-twenties saw WOR increasing in strength. Hans Von Kaltenborn, a predominant figure in radio commentary as his career developed, came to WOR in 1925. This occurred after Kaltenborn broadcast criticism of Charles Evans Hughes of the State Department, for Hughes' refusal to recognize a bid by Russia for diplomatic relations with the U.S. Hughes overheard the broadcast on WEAF and was furious.

H.V. Kaltenborn was satisfied with WOR: "The WOR management believed that a station had the right to transmit opinion, and defended that right vigorously. . . The station backed me."¹ WOR stood by Kaltenborn when his criticism of New York Mayor Jimmy Walker resulted in direct threats of trouble with the mayoral administration or the barring of WOR from broadcasting municipal functions. "It was a threat of direct discrimination. . . The WOR officials refused to surrender. . . They rode out the storm and rode it out successfully, with the courage to resist pressure. The city officials didn't dare discriminate against WOR."²

¹ Interview with Hans Von Kaltenborn, Columbia University Oral History Department, Radio Pioneers Collection

² *ibid.*



Cast of The Witches' Tale at the microphones

AS THE THIRTIES STARTED, WOR WAS GAINING MOMENTUM. IN SEARCH OF A MORE SERIOUS BUSINESS

administration for the station, Jessie Straus of the Macy's board of trustees appointed Ted Streibert, a former official of the F.B.O. Pictures Company (later RKO Pictures) and Dean of the Harvard Business School, as General Manager. Jessie Koewing had loosely served in this position until June 1923, and Joseph Barnett had managed the station until Streibert's appointment. Streibert was the first General Manager after this position was established. Alfred McCosker took over as head of the Bamberger Broadcasting Service upon Louis Bamberger's retirement. A publicist named Johnny Johnstone came from CBS to head WOR's first serious promotional campaigns.

Popular shows that ran at this time were *Ripley's Believe It or Not*, *Joseph Nathan Kane's Famous First Facts*, *Superman*, *The Shadow*, originally performed by Orson Welles, *Bulldog Drummond*, *The Green Hornet*, *Mysterious Traveler*, *Nick Carter*, *Cisco Kid*, *Dr. I.Q.*, *The Lone Ranger*, and many others.

In programming, WOR was deliberately seeking to build its daytime audience. Management saw that establishing the station in these hours would be its strongest hand, rather than fighting competition in the evening hours. WOR began building on its people, believing that, as Ted Streibert said, "The strength of a personality is a loyalty."



Morton Gould was a twenty-one year old prodigy when he auditioned for a weekly program. He got it, and was responsible for arranging and performing eight different numbers a week on WOR. *The Swing Symphonettes*, *Pavanne*, *Latin American Symphonette* and *American Salute*, an orchestral arrangement of *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* became famous works. All were first heard on WOR.



The Charioteers



The original Superman broadcasts. Clayton Collier is at far right.



Another of WOR's great strengths was its music department. WOR's 60-piece on-staff orchestra was directed by Alfred Wallenstein from 1935 to 1945. The classical broadcasts and presentations of many of the works from modern American composers earned WOR a preeminent place in music broadcasting. Wallenstein was succeeded by Sylan Levin, one of the country's leading conductors.



An important female personality whose broadcast name would be carried on by three different women throughout the years on WOR was Martha Deane. Mary Margaret Bride started in 1934. Later Bessie Beatty took over for her, and Marion Young Taylor in 1941. This show helped to establish women as broadcast interviewers.



Don Carney started in the 1920s on WOR as Luke Higgins in the popular *Main Street Sketches*. *Uncle Don*, his kiddie show, was one of the most successful programs on WOR in the 1930s. Uncle Don would arrive on an imaginary flying machine, play games, tell stories, and dispatch special birthday messages listeners wrote in. "Jane Dillon: must not be mad at baby sitter. Celestyn Hickey: bites nails. Janet Allegretti: surprise in hall closet." Don Carney did NOT find himself accidentally broadcasting the remark, "That ought to satisfy the little bastards." This is one of the more doggedly maintained myths in broadcasting, but it is a myth all the same.

THE McCANNs



Alfred W. McCann, Jr., 1931



Alfred W. McCann, Jr. and John B. Gambling

ALFRID McCANN, JR., took over his father's show upon the unexpected death of Alfred McCann, Sr. in 1931. Alfred McCann, Sr., was only fifty years old when he returned home from his broadcast and collapsed from a heart attack.

Alfred McCann, Jr., was a youth of twenty studying at Georgetown University when he received a call from his mother asking him to come to New York. "The next thing he knew," remembers his daughter Patricia, "he was sitting in front of a microphone with a WOR logo on it. John B. Gambling became my father's coach. He escorted him into the world of radio."

Later, Alfred W. McCann's on-air sobriety was countered by his wife Dora's warmth and gentle humor. The program was moved out of the studio and into the McCanns' home.

The McCanns at home emphasized the good table. It was the first media coverage of gourmet food and wine. The reputations of such internationally known connoisseurs as James Beard and Craig Claiborne were originally established on the McCanns' show.

This show originated here and ran until 1975, when Patricia McCann took over upon the death of her father.



During a broadcast of the *Pure Food Hour*, Patricia Anne McCann, age 2 years, is held by her father, Alfred W. McCann, Jr., as she receives a large birthday cake from David H. Dugan, president of the show's long-time sponsor, Dugan Foods. Patricia made her first broadcast on WOR from her father's knee.



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HE BOND between WOR's audience and the WOR personalities who broadcast from their homes, such as the McCanns, the Fitzgeralds, who broadcast from their New York apartment and Hay Island, and Dorothy Kilgallen and husband Dick Kollmar, would last to the present day. This has always been a strong identifying factor, creating something uniquely personal between WOR's personalities and the people who listen to them. They feel very strongly involved with these WOR people who let them into their lives on a day-to-day basis.



Patricia McCann with her parents



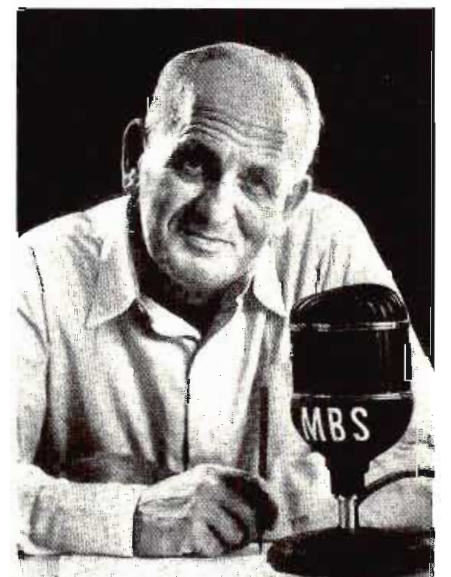
Patricia McCann began broadcasting on WOR in 1975.



Alfred McKosker and George M. Cohan at the October 1934 inauguration of Mutual Broadcasting Network. WOR was the flag station, that is, the originating station of the majority of the Mutual programming. Originally, WXYZ in Detroit, WGN in Chicago, WLW in Cincinnati and WOR formed Mutual's nucleus. Later Mutual had 500 outlets, making it the largest network in the world. The network ownership was shared among the station ownership. The network presidency rotated yearly among the station heads.



Raymond Gram Swing



Gabriel Heatter on the Mutual Broadcasting System

IN THE 1930s, WOR established itself as the leader in radio news broadcasting. In 1934, WOR was the first station in the east to schedule complete fifteen minute news broadcasts, pioneering again in that these newscasts were, for the first time, specifically written for the air. They were broadcast at 8 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 6:30 p.m. and 11 p.m.

Along with scheduled news,

WOR continued the practice of news pre-empting regular programming. One of the more dramatic stories was the Lindbergh kidnapping case. WOR was the first to break the news and stayed on the air continuously for three days. The climax came on the night of Hauptmann's electrocution. Gabriel Heatter, a WOR commentator who rose to fame for his job on this story,

stayed on the air ad-libbing outside the Trenton State prison until the news of Hauptmann's death came fifty-two minutes later.

Raymond Gram Swing became another major news commentator to arise from the drama of another 1930s news event. In this case, it was Swing's analysis of the Munich crisis that put him in the national spotlight.



STAN LOMAX is the sportscaster that New York grew up with. He started at WOR in 1930, and after his boss Ford Frick left to become president of the National League, Stan took over as Sports Director, remaining in that job until the mid 1970s. He was an inherent part of the sports world, knowing just about everyone and covering just about everything at that time. Just how close Stan Lomax was to the world of sports is illustrated in a story about the last time he saw Babe Ruth.

“WOR was having its twenty-fifth birthday. Babe agreed to record a message for us. This was shortly after he’d had an operation under his ear to remove a cancer. There were people around watching his apartment on Riverside Drive. We had to sneak in the back way with all of our equipment. We got up there, and Babe and his wife and his daughter were there. I was shocked when I saw him, because the last time I’d seen him he was big and strong and powerful. Now he was withered away, and he’d lost most of his hair. His voice was a dull roar; that great voice of his had shrunk. We made this record of Babe wishing WOR a happy birthday. And that was the last time the man’s voice was ever heard. He felt terrible, only talked to us a very short while and then went back to bed. But that’s the kind of guy he was.

“I was down in Florida with a ball club when they finally used it. We had the whole Dodger team sitting around listening to it because I told them we’re going to hear Babe Ruth’s voice. A lot of these young fellows had never seen Babe Ruth. They didn’t know. They only knew who he was.

“His voice was nearly gone when it came on. And it was only about twenty-five seconds. But it was the Babe. He was wishing WOR a happy birthday.”



Stan Lomax goes a few rounds with Joe Louis.

*J.R. Poppele, left,
and Alfred J. McCosker
with a display of
WOR microphones,
1922-1935.*



AT AN FAA HEARING concerning planes flying at night on a directed course, Jack Poppele was struck by an idea.

In order for planes to fly at night and in inclement weather, a new system had been devised. Following a radio signal, the beam one degree wide, the planes could fly on a directed course.

In 1934, WOR had a powerful signal. But it radiated in a circular pattern, with the majority lost out to sea. What if the signal could be directed over only land, directed in the same way as the plane signal? Could they build an antenna that would do that? Poppele contacted Bell Laboratories and discussed the idea with them.

A few weeks later Bell called back and said that it could be done. They could focus a signal up toward Boston, and down in the directions of the southeast and northeast, thus covering the majority of the eastern seaboard. Coincidentally, this discovery came when WOR was building its 50-kilowatt transmitter, which would increase the station's power to 50,000 watts.

Convinced that they had a communications breakthrough on their hands, Poppele went to the president of the station and presented his idea.

"Is anyone else using it?" inquired the president.

"No, but . . ."

"We're a broadcast station. Not an experimental station."

Poppele went back to Bell Labs and they refined their calculations. They came up with the same conclusion that it could work perfectly. McCosker still wasn't impressed.

Three times they tried, and on the third, McCosker

finally said that if Poppele was so insistent, he could present it to the board of directors and explain his proposition.

"But if it doesn't work . . ." said the president.

"Yes?" Poppele asked.

"It's your job, not mine."

Poppele prepared charts that illustrated the station's current function, and the proposed operation utilizing the directional antenna. He also did some charts with an economic analysis. The day of his presentation to the board of directors came.

"I indicated what this thing was and what it does and where it will work and what it will do. I also indicated that at the present time we were doing about \$385,000 worth of business and with the directional antenna, our income would go up to \$1,200,000 a year . . . Well, they all voted for it, with the exception of the president.

"The result was that we went ahead with the first directional antenna in the world. We worked on it day and night and we never slept. We even made our measurements in the deep snow. There was one hole we dug for a pole to go in. One of our engineers fell in the hole and disappeared. So we had to get him out."

On March 4, 1935, WOR went on the air with its new 50-kilowatt transmitter and directional antenna, with President Roosevelt flicking the switch from the White House. A massive program celebrated the occasion from Carnegie Hall. To this day, WOR still has the strongest signal up and down the eastern seaboard.

As it turned out, Poppele had made one slight miscalculation. WOR did \$1,800,000 worth of business that first year.

WOR engineers designed a special microphone for exhibit at the 1939 World's Fair in New York.



Kay Kyser, left, J.R. Poppele, center, and Guy Lombardo

BY THE END OF THE 1930s, WOR had established itself as one of the leading radio stations in the country. The invention and establishment of the directional antenna and 50-kilowatt transmitter gave WOR the most powerful signal and greatest coverage range of any station at that time. WOR had become the flag station of the Mutual Broadcasting Network, a fact that made WOR programming national rather than local. A serious business administration had been set up to operate the station to its maximum capacity.

WOR reigned supreme in daytime programming, and all the station's programming had increased in depth and sophistication. It ran the gamut from the morning show with John B. Gambling, who had become one of the foremost personalities in radio, to entertainment of real quality. Game shows, radio dramas, serials, and mysteries such as *The Shadow*, provided creative popular entertainment. WOR's prestigious music department, headed by Alfred Wallenstein, included a full staff symphony orchestra, and had creative geniuses such as Morton Gould doing eight new arrangements a week to be aired on WOR-Mutual.

WOR lead the way in radio to the development and establishment of radio news, airing the first fifteen minute newscasts especially written for radio. It established a commentary block with such names as Raymond Gram Swing, H.V. Kaltenborn and Gabriel Heatter to interpret the news. Stan Lomax headed the powerful new WOR Sports Department. WOR News, in its first decade, was recognized as one of the finest operations in radio.

WOR personalities were to become phenomena

continuing through to the present day, and be largely responsible for the strength and appeal of WOR. Personalities such as John Gambling, a household word and voice of the morning for WOR listeners, and the McCanns, one of many WOR names that would open and share their lives with their listeners, along with Martha Deane, radio's first woman interviewer, who would continue with three women carrying on the name and tradition for WOR listeners, all began here. In the 1930s, WOR was starting to see, and would continue for decades thereafter, what the humanization and communication of having the entertainment and warmth of these WOR people would mean to the people listening to them.

At the end of the 1930s, WOR was, indeed, "One of America's Great Stations."



Election returns, 1933

At the station, Edythe Meserand, assistant head of News and Special Features (later she became the first president of American Women In Radio and Television) was about to leave for a cruise with her fiance. They had a few problems to talk over, namely about her schedule as a WOR newswoman and how it would affect her duties as a wife. It seemed that some choices would have to be made.

"I saw my fiance waiting for me in the lobby. Suddenly, one of the newsmen ran by and grabbed my arm. 'Edythe! The Japanese have attacked Pearl Harbor! Come on!' I froze there. It was one of those moments in your life when you choose, and that moment decides the rest of your life. I turned and ran back upstairs to the WOR newsroom, and left him standing there."



The broadcast day ended with Moonlite Savings Time.

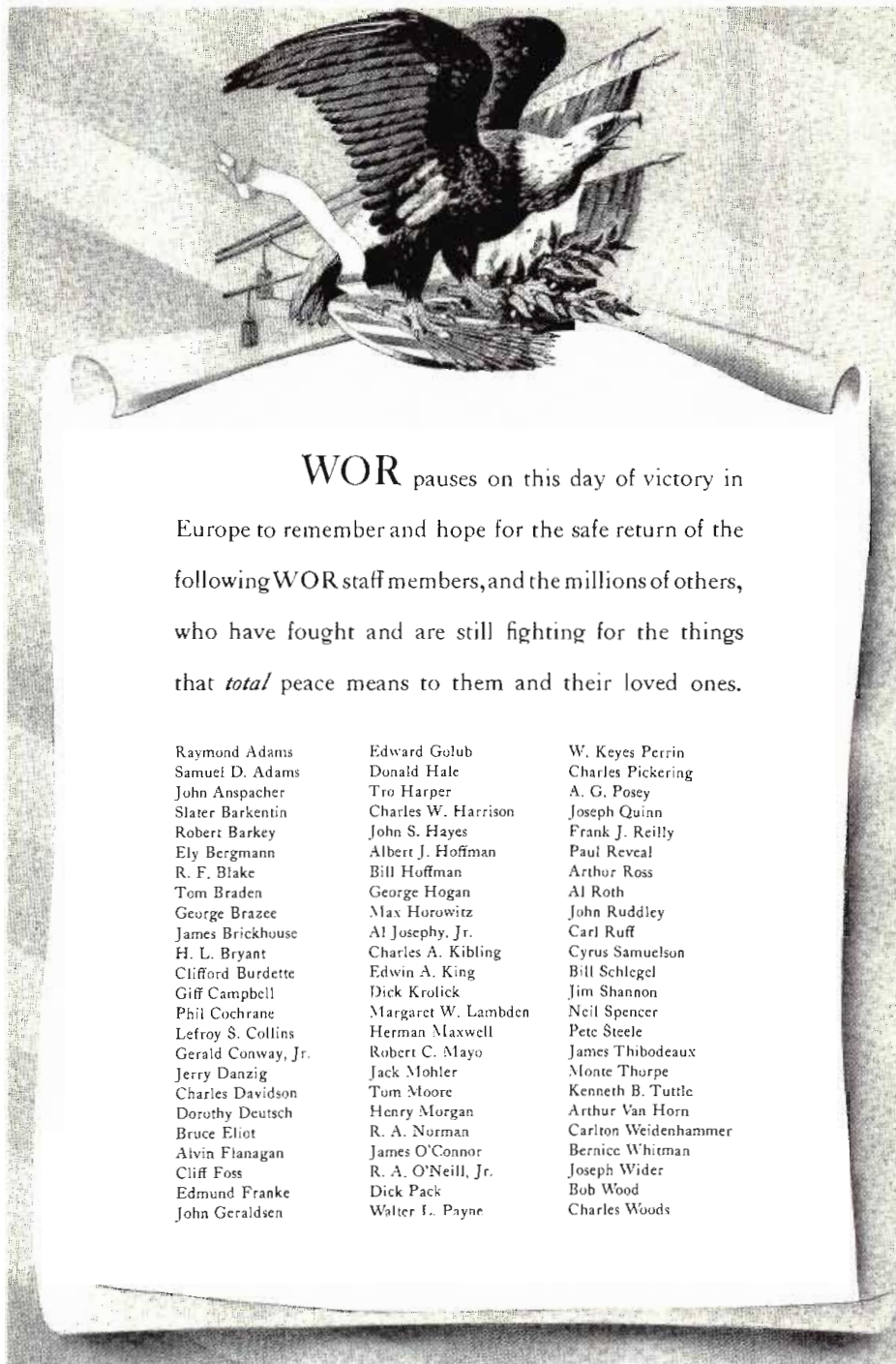
BEFORE THE WAR CAME, WOR WAS READY. TWO YEARS BEFORE THE FATEFUL DAY OF DECEMBER 7, 1941, station executives were quietly gearing their strategy of operation to best serve the listeners and WOR's duty to the country.

In June 1941, WOR was the first 50,000 watt station in the east to broadcast for a full twenty-four hours. WOR was named by the city of Newark to coordinate its first blackout system in May 1941. The programming consisted of entertainment, informational talks, and war bulletins to specially serve workers on late night and graveyard shifts in the factories. *Music To Work By*, *War on Waste*, *This Is Fort Dix* (the first Army camp show to run on radio) and *The American Eagle Club* were programs designed in the waiting period.

It was evident to the broadcasters that some catas-

trophe would happen soon. On November 14, 1941, John Paul Dickson, WOR's correspondent in Berlin, spoke to Adolph Opfinger, Program Director of WOR-Mutual, in a 17-minute transatlantic phone call, saying that censorship had forced them off the air. Broadcasters were forced to include German propaganda in their broadcasts. They were forbidden to mention the crisis in Czechoslovakia and the Jewish situation. Radio was forbidden to go to the front with newspaper correspondents. Personal observations of the radio reporters were deleted, and they were forbidden to quote from German newspapers. The radio cutoff made for an uneasy silence.

On December 7, 1941, the silence was broken.



WOR pauses on this day of victory in

Europe to remember and hope for the safe return of the following WOR staff members, and the millions of others, who have fought and are still fighting for the things that *total* peace means to them and their loved ones.

Raymond Adams	Edward Golub	W. Keyes Perrin
Samuel D. Adams	Donald Hale	Charles Pickering
John Anspacher	Tro Harper	A. G. Posey
Slater Barkentin	Charles W. Harrison	Joseph Quinn
Robert Barkey	John S. Hayes	Frank J. Reilly
Ely Bergmann	Albert J. Hoffman	Paul Reveal
R. F. Blake	Bill Hoffman	Arthur Ross
Tom Braden	George Hogan	Al Roth
George Brazee	Max Horowitz	John Ruddley
James Brickhouse	Al Josephy, Jr.	Carl Ruff
H. L. Bryant	Charles A. Kibling	Cyrus Samuelson
Clifford Burdette	Edwin A. King	Bill Schlegel
Giff Campbell	Dick Krolick	Jim Shannon
Phil Cochrane	Margaret W. Lambden	Neil Spencer
Lefroy S. Collins	Herman Maxwell	Pete Steele
Gerald Conway, Jr.	Robert C. Mayo	James Thibodeaux
Jerry Danzig	Jack Mohler	Monte Thorpe
Charles Davidson	Tom Moore	Kenneth B. Tuttle
Dorothy Deutsch	Henry Morgan	Arthur Van Horn
Bruce Elliot	R. A. Norman	Carlton Weidenhammer
Alvin Flanagan	James O'Connor	Bernice Whitman
Cliff Foss	R. A. O'Neill, Jr.	Joseph Wider
Edmund Franke	Dick Pack	Bob Wood
John Geraldson	Walter L. Payne	Charles Woods

WOR achieved the distinction of producing the first on-the-scene war broadcasting. Using wire recorders, Dave Driscoll filed reports from such sites as an Atlantic anti-sub patrol boat of the U.S. Navy. Driscoll's reports on the Battle for the Atlantic brought WOR listeners right on the spot. One segment included the torpedoing and sinking of a tanker. Newsweek hailed WOR's work as, "The first successful experiment with a new medium of war reporting. The next best thing to on-the-spot broadcasting from the battle front."

This ad, written on V-E Day, appeared in the May 9, 1945 issue of Variety.

Bruce Elliot, an on-staff announcer, was about to lead into another show when the bulletin came. He grabbed a microphone, and sent the news over the Mutual network. "The White House has just announced that Japanese planes have attacked Pearl Harbor . . . !"

The Brooklyn Dodgers and the New York Giants were playing at the Polo Grounds. Bill Slater was the WOR sportscaster that day. Stan Lomax was also there, and recalled the scene.

"Our first indication that something unusual was happening was when they announced for Colonel Wild Bill Donovan to get in touch with his office, which was the Office of Publicity for the Government. Next they announced that all enlisted men should report immediately to the nearest recruitment center. Then the news cut across our program. Pearl Harbor had been

bombed. It took all the joy out of the game."

WOR's News and Special Features Department reorganized as the War Services and News Department. The regular programming, from *John Gambling's Morning Gym Class* to *Moonlite Savings Time*, carried war and victory messages. The Office Of War Information found WOR's personal technique so effective that they distributed it to all radio stations in the country in a booklet entitled *Words For War*.

The station was aiming to dramatize and personalize its war effort broadcasting. Much of the programming was produced in cooperation with the government. Programs such as *Impact*, *This Is Our Enemy*, and *Keep 'Em Rolling* focused on issues such as rationing, salvaging materials for war use, war bonds and blood banks.

THE WOR CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS FUND



THE WOR CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS FUND

is one of the station's longest running and far reaching public service efforts. It began in 1945, when Edythe Meserand accompanied Dave Driscoll to Bellevue Hospital at Thanksgiving, when he traditionally dropped off chocolates to the children. A nurse took Edythe around to the different children and explained each case. "This girl was found abandoned. This three-year-old boy found starving. Child abuse cases . . ."

In the sleepless night that followed, Meserand formulated a plan. The next day, at a weekly department head meeting, she explained her idea. WOR would solicit donations from its listeners with announcements made on the shows (John B. Gambling's, for instance) and purchase and distribute toys and clothing to children who were homeless and abandoned, the

children at Bellevue. She herself would coordinate the wrapping and distributing.

Management argued that, admirable though her instincts were, it would be a physical impossibility for her to function in her position as Special Features Director and undertake this massive project. Edythe argued back that this could be accomplished on nights and weekends. She was vehement enough that they let her try.

Edythe Meserand would take her vacation time following the Christmas Holidays each year — and spend it in the hospital. But the project that she started and ran for ten years is today an organization that supplies toys and clothing to over 75,000 children in over 550 different agencies, at Christmas, and at Christmas in July.

B-25 SMASHES EMPIRE STATE!

WOR SCORES BEAT ON PLANE CRASH!

SOMETIMES WOR found itself making history unintentionally. *Broadcasting* reported in 1945 on one of those times. "BEAT ON EMPIRE CRASH SCORED BY WOR WITH FLASH AT 9:51."

They went on to report, "WOR New York is believed to have scored a national beat on the plane crash into the Empire State Building on July 28. The station aired the crash bulletin at 9:51 AM, two minutes after the accident.

"Edwin Kenny, WOR engineer, was on the roof of the WOR building at 1440 Broadway, less than a half mile from the Empire State Building, at 9:49 checking the air conditioner reading. He immediately informed the station. The bulletin was broadcast a few seconds later.

"At about the same time, Stan Lomax, WOR Sports Director, stopping his car for a traffic light at 34th and Fifth Avenue, saw the 4-engine B-25 Bomber plow its way into the top floors of the world's tallest building. He rushed to WOR and gave the first eye witness account of the tragedy. The station presented bulletins, on the scene descriptions, and interviews thereafter.

"Mr. Lomax's dramatic story of the accident was used by most of the New York newspapers. He was also one of the first reporters to give an eyewitness story of the tragedy to the press associations."

The coverage of the urban-nightmarish event was restored as part of the material from WOR's historical audio library on acetate discs that were recently transferred to tape as part of the WOR history project. The taped pieces sweep a listener back to the scene; it's a vivid experience of imagination that works in the present day in the same way it must have as the original reports went over the air.

As we stand here on the 79th floor, one thing that is

remarkable now is that the fog is coming in through the 20 foot hole in the wall which was created by the impact when the plane hit the building.

On the 80th floor you can see aluminum pieces of the plane . . . all we can see is the figure 5. Everything else is burned off. The sides of the building are seared and scarred . . .

We just spoke to an elevator operator. He escaped death by moments. He was waiting for an elevator in the lobby, a few seconds before the plane engines hurtled down the shaft, killing others who were in the elevators at the time . . .

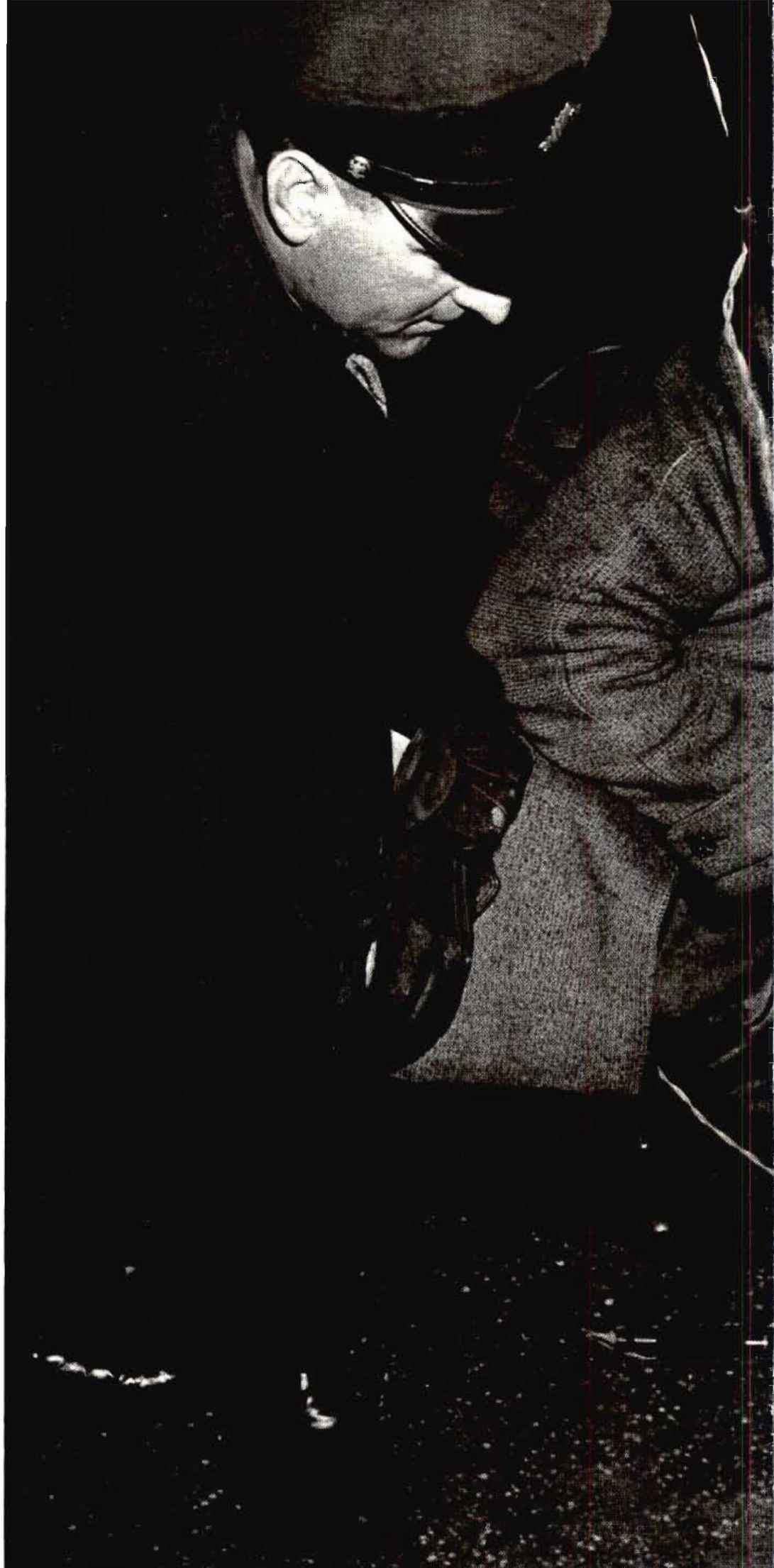
On the street, there is debris scattered for blocks . . . Gasoline flames have blackened the Empire State Building . . . People who were fortunate enough to have escaped began walking down the service stairs . . . We repeat our bulletin. It's 12:25, Eastern War Time in New York City. This morning at about 10:00 an Army bomber crashed into the tallest building in the world, the Empire State Building in New York City . . .

The most extraordinary moment of the coverage was provided to WOR by a man who was giving dictation at the exact moment of the crash in the American Society of Civil Engineers office, at 33 West 39th Street, just a few blocks away.

The tape starts with the man's voice. "This is a letter to Dean Crawford, University of Michigan. . . . We are sending under separa . . ." A faint whirring noise comes in. ". . . under separate cover . . ." the noise intensifies, it is recognizably the whirring of a propeller plane, getting louder. He falters again, ". . . under separate cover . . ." The noise is horrifyingly loud, it sounds as if the plane is on top of the location. The man stops dictating. We hear the deafening sound filling the air of the plane, then a smashing sound, an explosion, and silence.

They got the actual moment.

DAVE DRISCOLL of WOR News and Special Features interviews a groundhog for an inside view of spring. The Special Features coverage ran the gamut from groundhogs to investigative documentaries. *Name Your Poison* was a series that explored such topics as tranquilizer abuse, restaurants that violated health codes, and alcoholism. The department experimented with new ways of covering these stories. In one segment, John Wingate was wired with a tiny microphone and sent into a drug-store complaining of sleeplessness. He was given prescription medicine right over the counter, and WOR documented the incriminating conversation. The series was responsible for increasing public awareness and creating crackdowns on restricted medication.



SPECIAL FEATURES





True or False



It Pays To Be Ignorant



Bret Morrison, last actor to play the dual roles of "The Shadow" and Lamont Cranston



WOR sound effects staff. Barney Beck, pictured on the right, still makes noise as a WOR engineer after 35 years.



At Home with the McCanns



*Santos Ortega, Beth Breckenridge and Everett Sloane thrilled radio audiences with roles in WOR dramas such as *The Shadow*, *The Green Hornet* and *Bulldog Drummond*.*

BY THE END OF THE 1940'S, WOR had been in the radio business for over a quarter of a century. The station was in its heyday, a gemstone in the setting of the golden age of radio. No station matched WOR's signal coverage. The station was still the forerunner in news and commentary, a need for which during wartime had been one of the station's significant contributions. WOR had also served its listenership with specially designed war services such as instructive programs on rationing and other war-effort topics, profiles of service life and home front/war front shows to strengthen morale, 24-hour broadcasting to serve all-night factory workers, and the first on-the-scene battle coverage, an innovation that would shape the evolution of news reporting in the media.

After the war, WOR continued its public service with the start of the WOR Children's Christmas Fund in 1945, a tradition that is continued today as one of the most successful charities in the tri-state area.

The success of established personalities like John B. Gambling, the McCanns, Martha Deane and others, continued. In 1945, Dorothy and Dick took over the breakfast table spot on WOR left vacated by Pegeen and Ed Fitzgerald.

The big era of radio drama flourished in these years. WOR-Mutual's cop shows, mysteries, soap operas, and serials were a wealth, encompassing such classics as *Superman*, *The Green Hornet*, *Bulldog Drummond*, and innumerable others. WOR kept a full sound effects department on staff to create the magic of effects that made the shows come alive in the theater of the mind.



Milton Berle



*Jack Dempsey, top
"Red River" Dave
McEnery, center
Roy Rogers*



*Alvino Ray and the
King Sisters*

Henry Morgan started as a staff announcer on WOR in 1938, a position he held for a year. Morgan took the liberty of interjecting humorous comments while doing everything from dance remotes to weather reports, e.g., "Today's forecast: snow. Followed by little boys on sleds." Management finally gave him 15 minutes on Saturday mornings to do a monologue, the format of which was basically "making fun of radio." Morgan's success in that time slot resulted in his program being moved to three nights a week, alternating with *Superman*, an arrangement that led to Morgan dubbing himself *Super-morg*. Morgan was eventually scheduled every night until he was drafted in 1943 to serve in World War II. Morgan's show was a humorous monologue of anything he happened to care to comment on. Often he would satirize his advertisers. He did a spoof on Lifesavers candy, which Morgan deemed cheated the consumer. He offered to personally make amends for this infraction by selling Morgan's Mint Middles, which resulted in the offending (and offended) owner of Lifesavers removing his sponsorship. Henry Morgan, none the less, was enormously popular and successful.

Henry Morgan returned to WOR radio in 1981 with a show called *Morgan and the Media*.



**Skippy Hollywood Theater,
heard every Sunday afternoon
at 2:00, featured such guests as
Vincent Price in "Strange
Journey," "... half an hour of
good clean blood and
suspense."**



Election coverage, 1944. Alfred McCosker, standing, with Fulton Lewis, Jr., Cecil Brown, Edythe Meserand and Frank Singieser



Carleton Fredericks



Bud Hulic



Barry Gray with Guy Lombardo

AMERICAN FORUM OF THE AIR

Theodore Granik, a New York lawyer, originally started this program in 1929 on WOR, with a more informal structure as a talk series on law for the man in the street. Later the show became a forum for debates on law-related topics. Erik Barnouw, in his trilogy on broadcasting, referred to this program as "One of the most popular discussion programs of the era."¹ *American Forum of the Air* ran through to the 1950s on WOR-Mutual.

¹ Erik Barnouw, *The Golden Web: A History of Broadcasting in the United States 1933-1953*, Oxford University Press, 1968.

WOR MUTUAL GUILD THEATRE
 245 W. 52nd St.—West of Broadway
 New York City

SATURDAY
FEB. 22
 1947

WOR'S 25th ANNIVERSARY
 with
GUEST STARS

This ticket is subject to the terms and conditions stated on the back hereof.

9:00 to 11:00 P. M.
 Doors Close
 8:50 P. M. SHARP
ADMIT ONE



WOR's
25th
SILVER ANNIVERSARY
PARTY

Grand Ballroom
WALDORF-ASTORIA HOTEL

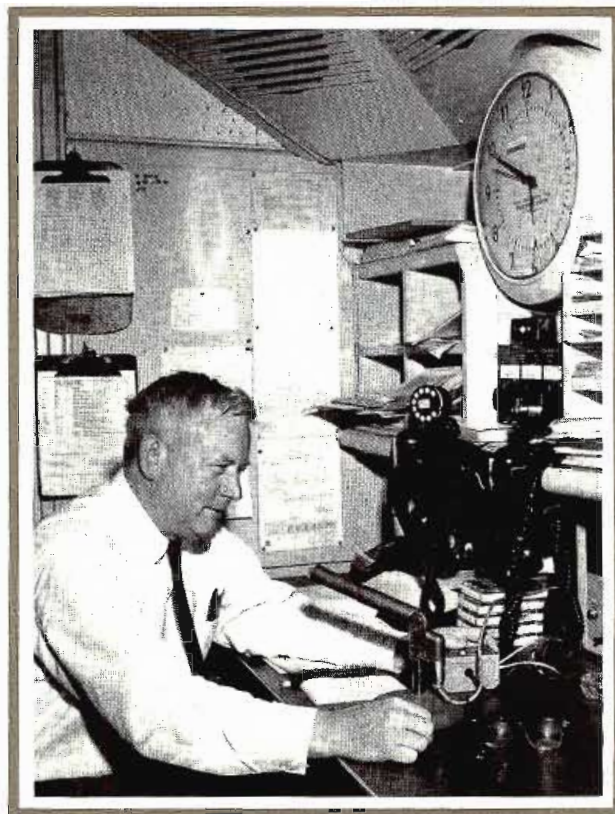
7:00 P.M. February 21, 1947
 INFORMAL

TO CELEBRATE TWENTY-FIVE YEARS of exciting and innovative broadcasting, a gala Silver Anniversary party was given in the Grand Ballroom of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel on February 21, 1947. A host of celebrities provided entertainment; a festive dinner was served, followed by dancing. Among the many door prizes was a ten-inch television set.

The next evening, crowds thronged to the WOR-Mutual Guild Theater on West 52nd Street to continue the celebration of WOR's twenty-fifth anniversary.

*John B. Gambling celebrated
30 years of broadcasting
with a special all-star show
from Madison Square Garden
in March 1955.*





George Brown, Director of WOR's outstanding News Department

THE BROADCAST DAY WAS PACKED WITH A WINNER'S CIRCLE OF WOR'S POPULAR PERSONALITIES.

Martha Deane and *Breakfast with Dorothy and Dick* were still favorites, as they had been since 1941. *Luncheon at Sardis*, a colorful on-the-scene celebrity report, had been running since the late 1940s. *The McCanns at Home* were beloved by thousands of listeners as they continued their gourmet food, wine, and homey family broadcasts, which at this time had run for over twenty years.

The Gambling saga on WOR broke the mold for all radio personalities. No one in radio would ever touch the reign of John Gambling, who ruled in his spot with the number one radio show since 1925. He celebrated his milestone of thirty years in Madison Square Garden, with 25,000 people coming to pay homage. In the 1950s, his son John A. Gambling started the first hi-fi disc jockey easy-listening program on WOR, *Music*

From Studio X. This show was a great success, and proved to be John A. Gambling's training ground. John A. Gambling took over *Rambling With Gambling* in 1959, and continues there through to the present.

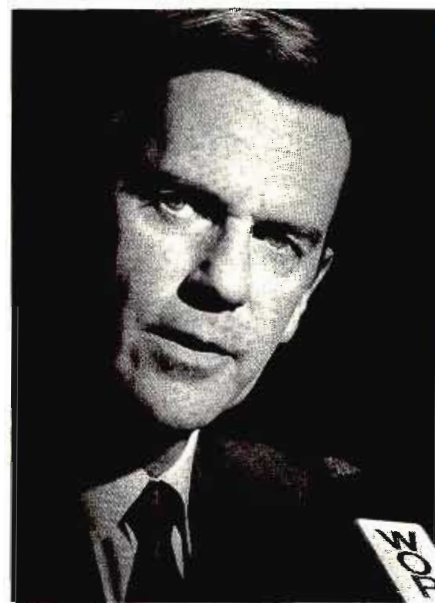
The afternoon finished with *Radio New York*, headed by John Wingate. This successful program provided end-of-the-day listeners with news, traffic and weather reports, commentary and topical news features.

The 1950s were years of upheaval in the radio business. The industry was changing. Television had arrived and upset the apple cart. Rock and roll had made a tentative, but strong enough start to illustrate what a force it would be to contend with in the next decade.

WOR faced all of these challenges in radio's traumatic years and emerged triumphant.



WOR featured the first flying traffic reports in the metropolitan area with Bob Garrity.



Harry Hennessy



The WOR newsmen included in this photo are (left to right) George Brown, Lester Smith, John Wingate, Lyle Van, John Scott and Ed Pettitt.



John Wingate

AT THE END OF THE 1950s, WOR was settled into the era of the modern WOR, as it stands now. The talk format that composes the mainstream of WOR programming was established at this time. The broadcast day ran through on hourly slots as it does today, with news coming at the top of the hour.

WOR's news operation tripled in size. The voices of such newscasters as Henry Gladstone, Harry Hennessy, and others rotated schedules. News Director George Brown headed the department which was utilizing technical innovations in news such as walkie-talkies, mobile units, and the first flying traffic reports in the metropolitan area. WOR's news became the news leader in the metropolitan area, leading the pack in ratings and reputation. General Manager Bob Leder, who took the WOR helm in 1956, beat the competition of rock and roll programming, quiz shows and serials that had appeared formidable in the early 1950s by building a strong programming hook with fifteen-minute newscasts that drew the audience in for the remaining hour.

WOR talk programming encompassed a lineup of interesting, astute, talented personalities. Marion Young Taylor continued in the Martha Deane show. She was considered to be the finest female interviewer in radio. New people who had been added were Long John Nebel, whose late show exploring unexplained phenomena such as flying saucers, UFOs, and other strange happenings drew a fascinated following. Jean Shepherd also came in at this time, with his spell-binding ability to weave reminiscences of his rural childhood roots in a continuing series of monologues. WOR's metropolitan listeners took the stories of this oral watercolorist to their hearts. The Fitzgeralds, who had started in WOR in the 1930s, returned in the late 1950s, and continue through today. The station offered excellence round-the-clock, and it showed. WOR ended the 1950s in the number one position in New York. It's hard to keep a good radio station down.

THE FUNERAL OF POPE PIUS XII

WOR SCORES EXCLUSIVE COVERAGE

IN 1958, WOR newsman Henry Gladstone and News Director George Brown were in London, covering a story on the first transatlantic jet service offered by a British company.

In London, they received a sudden call from WOR in New York, saying that Pope Pius, who had been ill, had taken a turn for the worse. The News Director and reporter immediately headed for Rome to cover the story. Henry Gladstone recalled the scene.

"We ended up in Rome at 3 a.m., their time. I made a hotel reservation through some people I knew in Rome. Just as I was checking into the hotel I heard on the Italian radio that the chap at the desk was listening to that the Pope had died. All I had to do was to pick up the phone at the desk, call WOR, and we were on the 11:00 news the night before.

"After that, George and I didn't sleep for 48 hours. We covered reaction all throughout Gondolfo, the summer residence of the Pope, and called back our reports to New York."

To cover the funeral, Brown and Gladstone, both Protestants, collected a Catholic priest from the American College, an aggressive driver and a car, and headed for St. John's, the Pope's church in Rome, from which point the Pope's body was to be transported to the Vatican.

The newsmen realized that if they followed the procession through Rome, they would be hopelessly caught in the traffic on the way to the Vatican. They

slipped in behind the Crucifer, a high ranking official of the Papal party, and drove behind his car. At the gates of the Vatican, their aggressive driver told the Swiss guards that they were escorting the Crucifer. The WOR newsmen were waved inside, rather than diverted to the removed press area.

They set up their recording equipment on the entrance to St. Peter's. A Vatican plainclothes detective came along.

"What are you doing here? Press is outside at the end of the Colonnade." He indicated an area that was entirely out of the audio range, more than a half mile away.

"We're not reporters," Gladstone told him. "We're recording for . . . posterity."

That stumped the detective. "I'll go ask my boss." He returned a few minutes later. "I can't find my boss. If I throw you out, I'm wrong. If I let you stay, I'm wrong." He came to a decision. "I'll do nothing."

The procession — Sistine choir, foreign corps, service corps, ambassadors, Cardinals—followed. The WOR men recorded it all, then moved into the Vatican and recorded the entire service.

That night, the exclusive coverage ran in a special twenty-five minute program that they fed overseas. WOR-Mutual radio had the complete story, the only coverage of the Pope's funeral. It was the moment that they captured for the news, and as Henry Gladstone had said, "for posterity."

PEGEEN & ED FITZGERALD



THE INCOMPARABLE FITZGERALDS have hosted the longest running husband and wife show in the history of radio. After a stint in the Royal Air Force in 1914, Ed Fitzgerald, who was born in Troy, New York, worked as an actor, theater manager, restaurant owner, newspaper owner and press agent for the Pantages Theater Circuit in California. It was there that Ed and Pegeen met and married.

The Fitzgeralds have virtually shaped the listening habits of America. For fifty years, their witty, informative, even caustic exchanges have endeared them to generations. Millions of people have shared their lives on a day-to-day basis, identifying strongly with the Fitzgeralds and creating a uniquely personal bond.



The Fitzgeralds with Jack O'Brian



Dorothy Kilgallen with her husband Dick Kollmar, Ray Heatherton, and John R. and Ann Gambling as children

ALL THE WAY THROUGH THE TURBULENT 1960s, WOR continued its solidity and strength. The rock and roll era changed many New York stations into music stations seemingly overnight, and others found themselves buffeted by television.

WOR held its place, still offering the finest talk programming, news, and personalities.

WOR News continued to expand its scope. It was a major operation. New 1960s innovations included the city's first flying traffic reports from a helicopter, with Fearless Fred Feldman and Helicopter 710. At this time, WOR offered unusually in-depth coverage of news outside the immediate area. WOR sent its reporters out to where the action was, rather than relying on network or wire service feeds. Thus it was that WOR covered the space program on the spot, major news events such as

the 1964 Alaskan earthquake, and the assassination of Bobby Kennedy, where it was the only New York station still on the air, carrying the story as the flash came. This kind of coverage was unmatched in the New York area.

WOR's talk programming continued to attract an eager and intelligent listenership. At this time, John A. Gambling had proved himself as more than an adequate successor to his father. Gambling's popularity was unsurpassed in the AM radio morning, attracting the largest radio audience in the United States. "The kid" had not merely held the spot, he had doubled the audience. The long running McCanns were as popular as ever at this time, and their daughter Patricia had joined them on WOR and was making waves of her own, doing stories on topics ranging from drug addiction to alternative art. Martha Deane, Marion Young Taylor,



**Martha Deane interviews
Nelson Rockefeller, Coretta King and Tiny Tim.**

had established herself as “the finest woman interviewer in the business”, an accolade that came to her from every critical quadrant in the media, most recently observed by Mike Wallace (himself no talk show slouch) in the September 1981 issue of *Dial Magazine*. Deane got to the heart of the times, interviewing a spectrum of personalities running from Nelson Rockefeller to Tiny Tim. Lord Edward and Lady Pegeen Fitzgerald reigned through these years, covering anything that happened to tickle their seasoned fancies, be it Kent, Connecticut, culture, or cats. Arlene Francis, one of show business’ figures of royalty, came to WOR in 1960 to establish one of the best celebrity interview shows in the media. Jack O’Brian, theater critic, came at this time to cover show business with his show *Critic’s Circle*, a program that took things from a

theater perspective. Both programs run on WOR today. Jean Shepherd continued his program, and Barry Farber joined at this time to be on WOR evenings with an all night topical events program. Nostalgia buff Joe Franklin’s *Down Memory Lane* became part of WOR’s evening programming. The WOR broadcast day was tied up in late afternoons with *Radio New York*, headed by John Wingate, which was a sort of afternoon *Rambling With Gambling*, complete with news, traffic and weather reports, and special feature reporting. Bill Mazer followed with an interview show, predominantly sports oriented, but also encompassing a number of other areas.

WOR offered something for everyone in terms of talk programming, news and personalities in and through the 1960s.



Whereas: ON FEBRUARY 22, 1962, WOR WILL CELEBRATE ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF SERVICE TO THE NEW YORK CITY COMMUNITY AND THE SURROUNDING AREA. AND

WHEREAS: WOR HAS DEVOTED VALUABLE BROADCAST TIME, PRESENTING UP-TO-THE-MINUTE ANNOUNCEMENTS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST--THE ANNUAL WOR CHRISTMAS FUND ANNOUNCEMENTS, TRAFFIC, TRANSIT AND WEATHER REPORTS, URGENT REQUESTS FOR BLOOD DONATIONS, RELIGIOUS PROGRAMS, AND SCHOOL CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENTS WHICH WOR PIONEERED; THE WOR TRANSMITTER IS USED AS ONE OF THE KEY STATIONS FOR THE CONELRAD SYSTEM IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ROBERT F. WAGNER, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, DO HEREBY PRESENT THIS

OFFICIAL CITATION

to
WOR

AS A TRIBUTE TO THIS, ONE OF THE OLDEST RADIO STATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES, WHICH FORMS A VITAL PART OF THE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM OF NEW YORK CITY.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF I HAVE HERETO SET MY HAND AND CAUSED THE SEAL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK TO BE AFFIXED THIS 22ND DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1962.

Robert F. Wagner
MAYOR, THE CITY OF NEW YORK



Fearless Fred Feldman provided New York's first helicopter traffic reports.



Barry Farber



Jack O'Brian



Joe Franklin



Bob and Ray



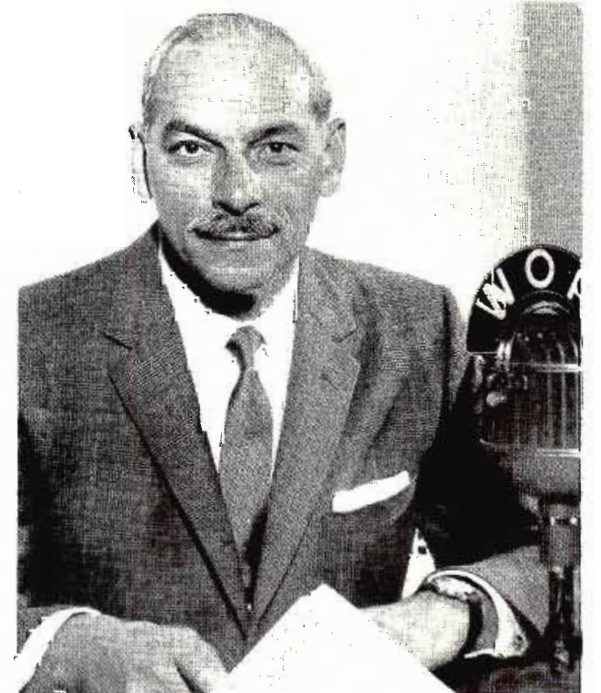
Tex and Jinx McCrary



Jean Shepherd



Peter Roberts



Henry Gladstone



GAMBLING

It's a name that's purely synonymous with radio. The Gamblings have run for three generations on WOR, starting with John B. Gambling in 1925, whose show was taken over by his son John A. John R. Gambling is on WOR Radio with the successful afternoon show *P.M. New York*, where he ends the metropolitan day that his father has begun.





JOHN B. GAMBLING

This radio phenomenon started with John B. Gambling. He was simply the voice, the father figure, the friend, of east coast radio listeners for over 30 years.

From his first day on the air substituting for the morning exercise program, New York took John B. Gambling to its heart. The station was deluged with calls inquiring about the owner of the beautiful British voice with the perfect diction. John B. Gambling became *the* morning on WOR, with his morning program that came complete with exercise session, led by *The World's Greatest Little Orchestra*, singing canaries, the first "newscasts" culled from the morning papers (actually the first radio news reports in the 1920s), and the man's own warmth and wit. He not only captured the audience, he held on to it for thirty years. On March 8, 1955, he celebrated his record-breaking reign at Madison Square Garden, with 28,000 people turning out to honor him. That was only a fraction of the number of people who tuned in.



The cluck from the mythical hen Henrietta was a regular part of John B. Gambling's early morning program, The Musical Clock. The three men huddled around the seated Gambling make up Henrietta: Engineer Jack Byrne, Rudolph the pianist, and the gentleman who brings the singing canaries.

JOHN A. GAMBLING

"I often smile and sort of have to pinch myself," John A. Gambling admits. "It doesn't quite seem possible that I've been with WOR for 30 years."

He started by producing the musical selection for his father's show, and substituting

when John B. went on vacation beginning in 1951. In 1956, WOR tentatively tried out John A. Gambling with *Music From Studio X*, a hi-fidelity, easy listening music program that John hosted and produced. The show was a hit. The lush music, interrupted only on fifteen minute periods for commercials, drew a wide and appreciative audience.

But the big question was, would the son be as good as his father? In September, 1959,

John A. Gambling took over *Rambling With Gambling*.

The show evolved into the highest rated morning program in the country. *Rambling With Gambling* is radio's finest news, service and entertainment program, with the added distinction of being the longest running show to hold the number one spot in the ratings, with the same family hosting it. Not only was the son good enough, John A. Gambling doubled the audience.



JOHN R. GAMBLING

He found himself in front of a WOR mike shortly after he mastered baby talk. In between that point and his current status as host of *P.M. New York*, WOR's afternoon drive time program, John paid his radio dues.

John R. Gambling majored in communications and managed his college radio station at Boston University. He went on to WROR-FM, Boston, where he served as Director of Research and Promotion, then to WAXY-FM in Florida to direct Operations and Programming. His next stop was Poughkeepsie, to WHVS-FM, where he hosted the morning program, then operated and programmed both WHVS and WHPN.

In 1978 John R. came to New York to sign on as a WOR staff announcer. In 1979, he created and hosted *Weekend*, a program where he and co-host Kathy Novak incorporated celebrity interviews, reviews on restaurants, cultural and entertainment offerings around town, and on-the-spot reports of current happenings.

Weekend was a popular WOR show, and in the spring of 1981, WOR management decided to offer the *Weekend* format and personalities to its drive-time listeners every afternoon, Monday through Friday, with a new program called *PM New York*.

John R. brings a friendly, contemporary presence to his show. He, too, faces the scrutiny his father faced when he made his first appearance on WOR. "I don't take being on WOR for granted, or a given just because my name is John Gambling," firmly states this third generation representative of the breed. "It means a lot to me, and I'm trying, and with the show, we're trying, to put everything we've got into it. So far, it's been going well." Time will tell, as it did with his father before him.

Gambling is a name that WOR is proud of. For three generations, it has been a household word, a leader in media, a friend to millions of people tuning in.

Fortunately, the future looks secure for both the morning and afternoon. On September 16, 1980, John R's wife Wendy presented him with twin boys, Andrew John and Bradley John!

Everything the listener needs to know is there in the morning. News, weather reports, consumer tips, reviews of theater and eating spots. The first flying traffic reports were offered on Gambling's show. In January 1982, WOR was the first New York station to offer traffic reports from a Jet Ranger helicopter. *Rambling With Gambling* offered the first school-closing reports to metropolitan and surrounding area listeners.

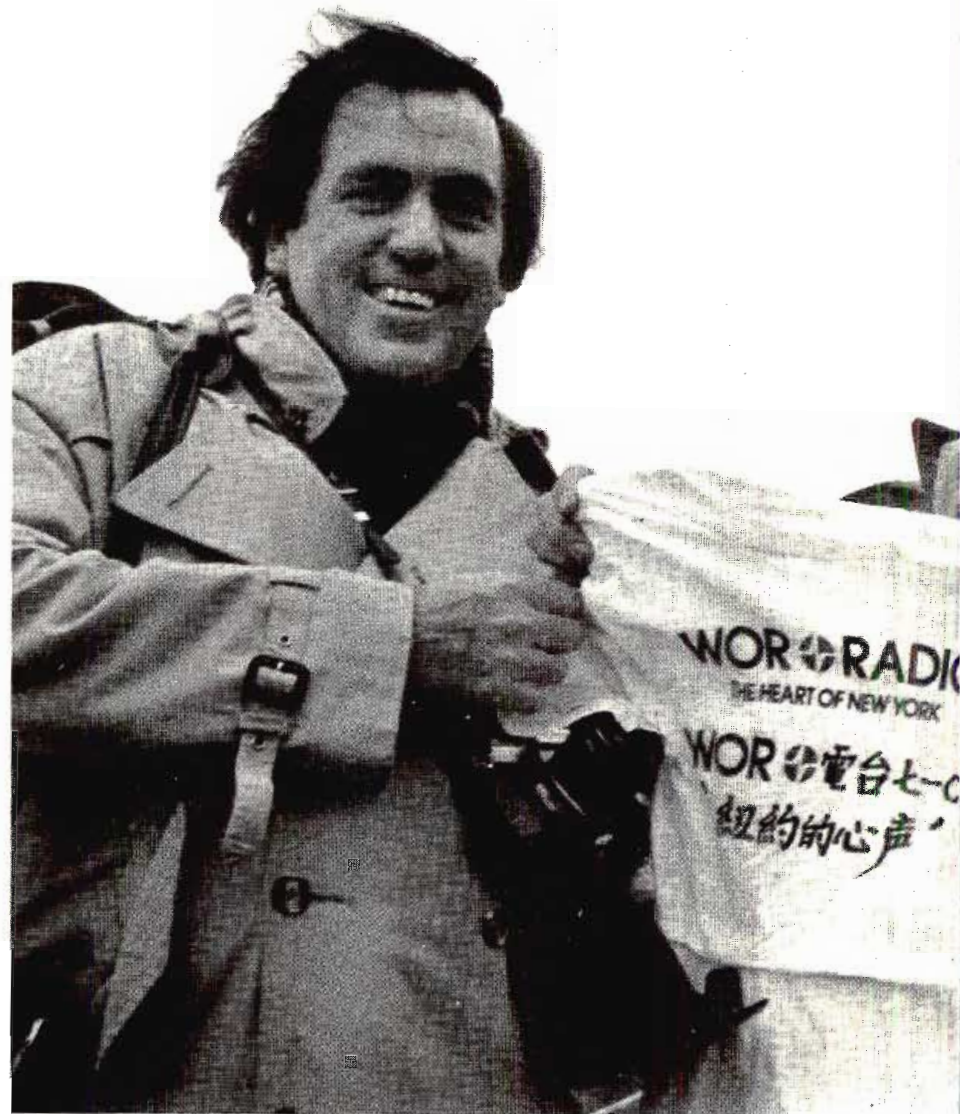
Then there is the man himself, which could be the real attraction. John Gambling reaches out to his listeners as the quintessential nice guy. Likable, reliable, humorous; millions of Americans turn to Gambling to start their day.

"The strength is the quality of what we offer, and reliability," Gambling states. "If the WOR morning crew is on the job, regardless of the weather, the state of the city or the world, things can't be all that bad."

*Rick Devlin and New York
Mayor Ed Koch in China.*



*John A. Gambling
accepts a
proclamation from
New York Governor Carey
commending WOR.*



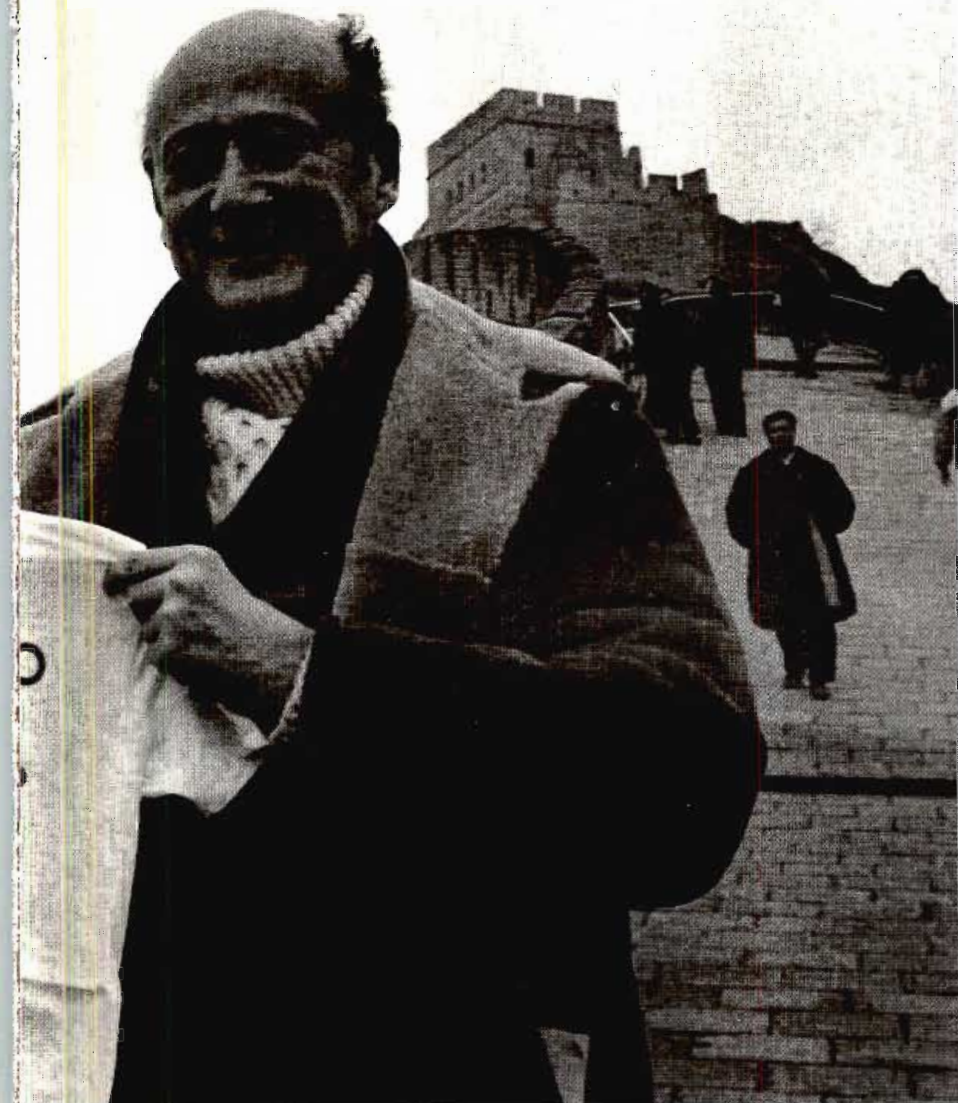
FROM AN OUTSIDER'S VIEW, WOR looked as strong as ever in the mid 1970s. The station stood number one in revenues and audience, but this wasn't conclusive evidence that all was going well.

WOR had grown to one of the greatest radio stations in the country, as Jack Poppele had prophesized to the board of directors many years ago. But no station can afford to rest on its laurels in a competitive market. WOR was successful, no question about that. But society and the marketplace had changed. WOR had to change with it.

In August, 1976, Rick Devlin took the job of Vice-President and General Manager of WOR. Coming into WOR, Devlin was faced with a complex set of problems: "We had to modernize WOR, change the audience

around, at the same time not lose the existing audience, and build on and bring in new people to WOR. It's like turning the Queen Elizabeth around in a strong current without tugboats. You do it slowly and carefully."

Management feared that what had happened to several other so called "great old stations" could befall WOR. The radio media had changed with the new era in the 1970's. WOR, in turn, must recognize change in society. A change in programming was inevitable. At this time, a careful reshaping began to take place. The basic talk formula would remain, but some changes of content and pacing would have to take place within the programs themselves. Some personality retirements would occur at this time. The programming had been consistently good, but this was a time for revisions to keep it that way.



In 1979, Rick Devlin and Reg Laite, who served as News Director at the time, accompanied Ed Koch to China and fed reports on the scene back to WOR. At one point, Rick Devlin found himself spending an hour in a Chinese phone booth, desperately trying to get a line out of Seon to WOR in New York, where he was scheduled to talk to Governor Byrne on John Gambling's show. Finally he did get through to producer Bill McEvilly.

"Rick, can you call back in half an hour? Governor Byrne isn't here yet."

"Bill, I'm not in my office," Devlin replied, exasperated. "I'm halfway across the world!"

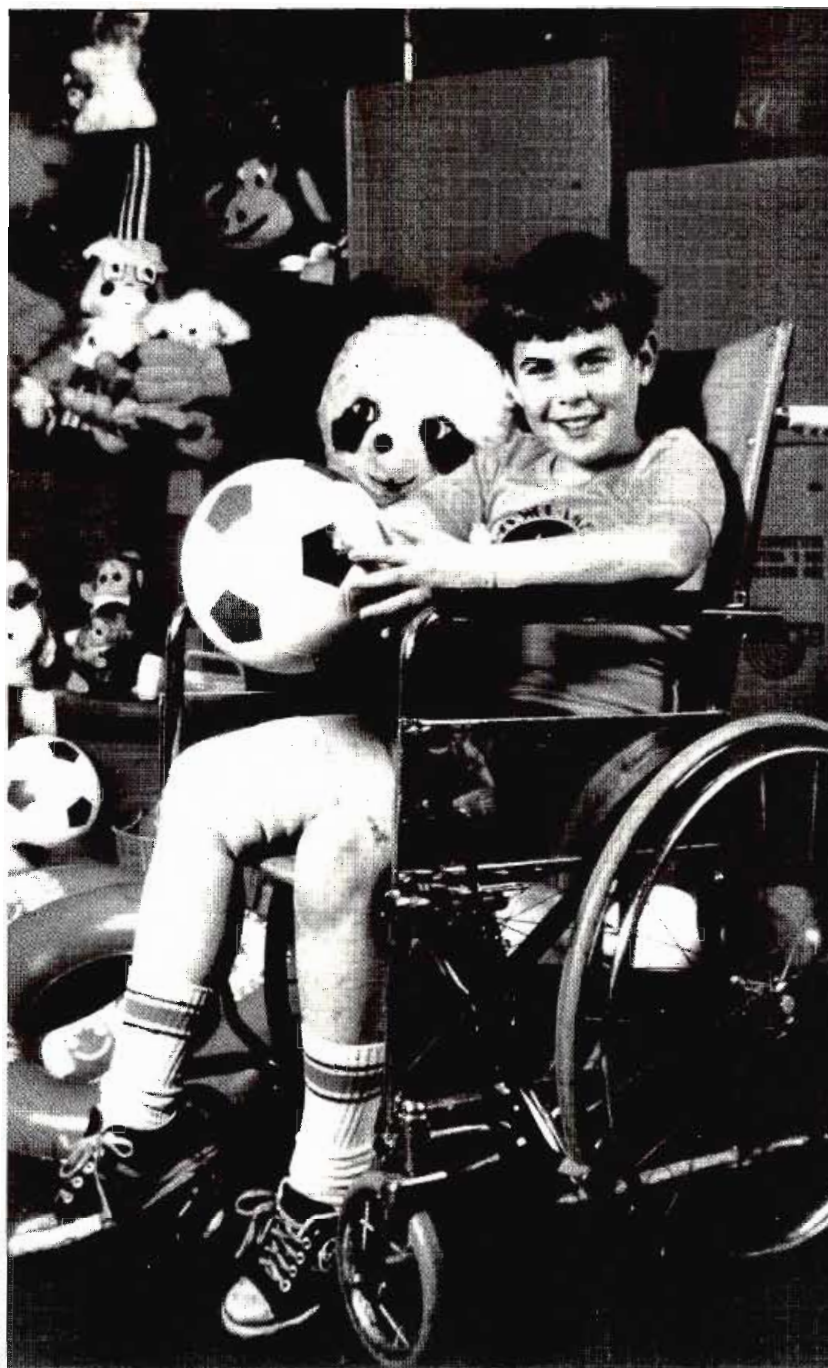


Sherrye Henry with Rosalyn Carter



Jimmy Carter congratulates WOR Washington Correspondent Clifford Evans.

The WOR Children's Christmas Fund and the Christmas In July program provide toys and clothing to over 75,000 children in over 550 different agencies.



A VITAL AREA OF FOCUS was to promote WOR and become involved in the community. Since the rescue of the Shenandoah in the 1920s, WOR has always been a vital part of its listening area. Coming to WOR, Rick Devlin reflected on the enormous influence and responsibility of the station in New York and the surrounding area. The decision was made to become even more involved.

"We have a tremendous impact and influence on the 18 million people who are our listeners. In the past five years, the Children's Christmas Fund that our station runs jumped from a net of \$100,000 to \$400,000. Some organizations raise more total money than WOR. But few actually give as much to the children as we do."

Ali Reynolds, the firebrand administrator of the fund, emphasizes his point. "The money that comes into our program isn't used for administrative costs. The station absorbs those. We do help people. All that money

that comes into the fund, every cent goes right to the kiddos."

"The average gift is under \$20," Devlin states. "That's a tremendous impact and a tremendous tribute to our audience that we can raise that kind of money."

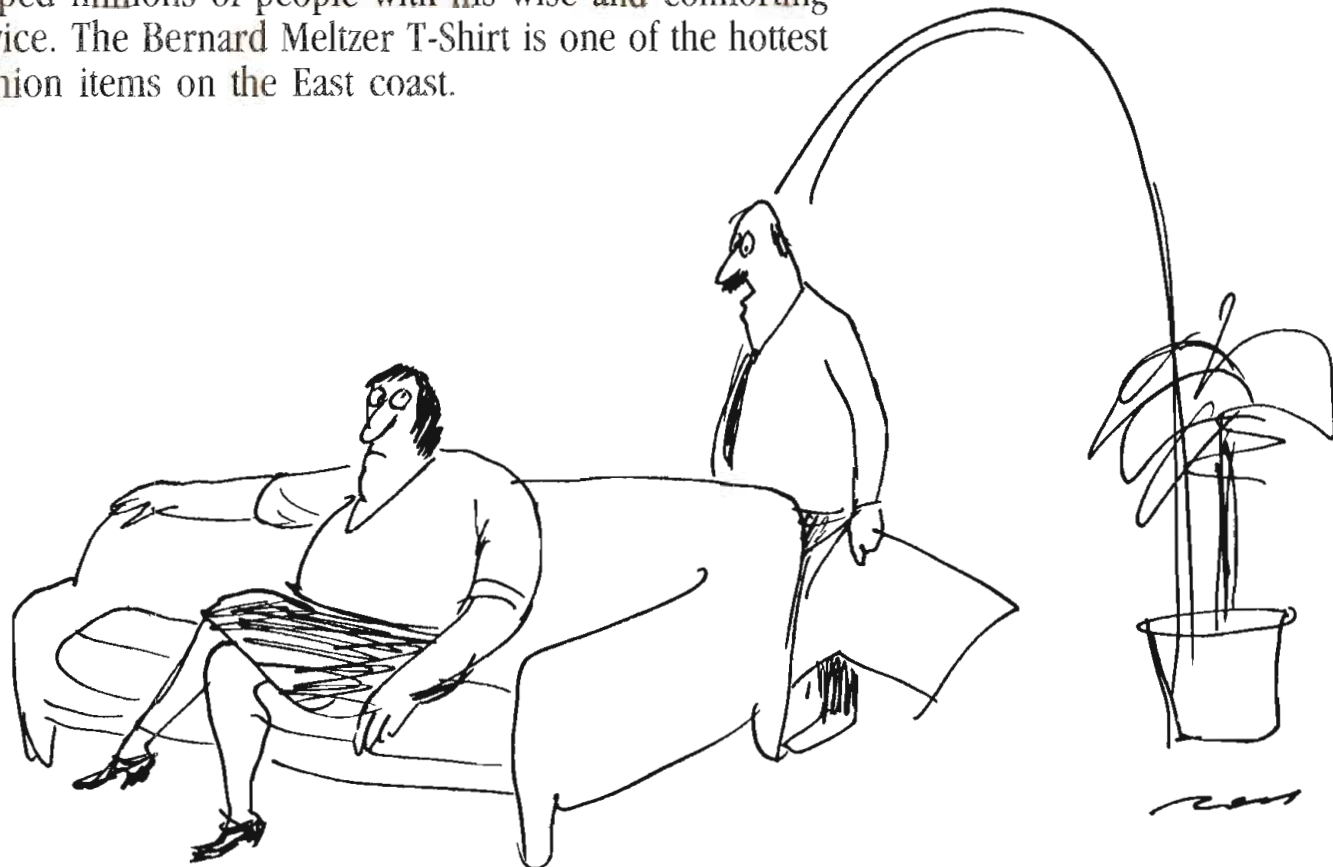
WOR sponsored "The New York Sweeps" contest, involving the participation of over 5000 merchants. "We put up \$75,000," Devlin explains. "You can't point to that and say that it has made a *tremendous* impression, but it actually does in key areas where we put our squads to work. It makes life in New York a lot better. Not only Manhattan, but all five boroughs."

"WOR is unique in that they go all out. We do on-air promos, go physically into the project. These things snowball into a presence. If we're going to be in the community, we have to be a part of it. I don't want us to sit back and say we're such noble great people. Well, get out there and do something about it."

Programming WOR is like programming television in that the shows run on hourly slots. Where they are placed makes a difference. In the 1970s, schedules were successfully juggled to strengthen programming.



BERNARD MELTZER, WOR business expert, is on the air seven days a week. In describing Bernard Meltzer, Rick Devlin says, "Bernie really is a unique individual. He is the most unprofessional broadcaster that has ever been on the air. I say that in a very positive way because he admits it. He knows it. He is unprofessional in the slickness of his delivery. But he is the most professional person I've ever met in terms of having a feel for his audience and knowing how to relate to them and having his true feelings come out to them." Bernard Meltzer has helped millions of people with his wise and comforting advice. The Bernard Meltzer T-Shirt is one of the hottest fashion items on the East coast.



"Bernard Meltzer told me to tell you I love you. I love you."

Drawing by Ross; © 1981 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.



S**HERRYE HENRY** was on in the afternoon, where WOR felt she was being underutilized. The show was moved to 10:00 in the morning, trimmed from two hours to one, and became very strong coming out of the Gambling program.



J**OAN HAMBURG**, whose consumer shopping tips have so endeared her to her WOR audience that she is on twice a day during the Gambling show, now has her own full hour program. Previously she was heard only a few times a week on WOR.



A**RLENE FRANCIS** celebrated twenty years on WOR in 1980 with Rock Hudson, the first guest to appear on her show.

Welcome...to our
WOR-RADIO broadcast, live from
THE MAGIC KINGDOM
Today Millions of New York listeners will experience the Magic of.....
WALT DISNEY WORLD
Courtesy Of
WOR-RADIO
 ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S LEADING RADIO STATIONS
WOR ■ JOHN GAMBLING ■ PATRICIA McCANN
Personality Line Up ■ SHERRY HENRY ■ RALPH SNOOSMITH
 ■ JOHN R. GAMBLING ■ JOAN HAMBURG
 ■ KATHY NOVAK ■ GENE KLAVAN
We hope that, today and every day, all your Dreams Come True.

THE BIG BROADCASTS



Live from London: John A. Gambling, Joan Hamburg, Arlene Francis and Rick Devlin



WOR Radio was the only American radio station to cover the Royal Wedding in July 1981. Rick Devlin and Joan Hamburg, pictured in front of St. Paul's Cathedral, did the coverage live, filing reports back to WOR via satellite.

IN THE OLD SHOW BUSINESS TRADITION of putting the show on the road, WOR stepped out of the studios and put radio back with the people.

The excitement that worked in the early days of radio remotes was just as, if not more, interesting in the 1980s. It hadn't been done in a while, but live radio remotes would prove to be a boom in modern broadcasting. WOR, the biggest show in town, proved that.

The first one that WOR did was a Grand Central Station four-day remote in the fall of 1977. The idea was to take WOR out of the studio and give people a chance to meet the personalities, see programming, and witness a live radio show.

As the engineers set up the equipment and John Gambling and Rick Devlin waited on the set, the venture seemed dubious. They were on the balcony of Grand Central, by themselves where millions of people would pass in a few hours. Now it was deserted. At 5:00 a.m., the men found themselves hitting golf balls in the control area to stay awake. Grand Central is a cold and lonely place at dawn.

But within an hour, the response was incredible. People were fascinated. Crowds came and watched, and as word went out over the airwaves, more listeners were drawn in. The numbers increased every day for four days. People would come at 6:00 a.m. and leave at 10:00 at night. *WOR Live* was a hit.

After that, WOR did remotes from New Jersey's Garden State Arts Center and the Meadowlands, Long Island, upstate New York, various locations in the city, including the dedication of the Citicorp

Center, and then started thinking bigger.

The next remote was Disneyworld in Orlando, Florida. "We took the most visual place in American and made it audio."

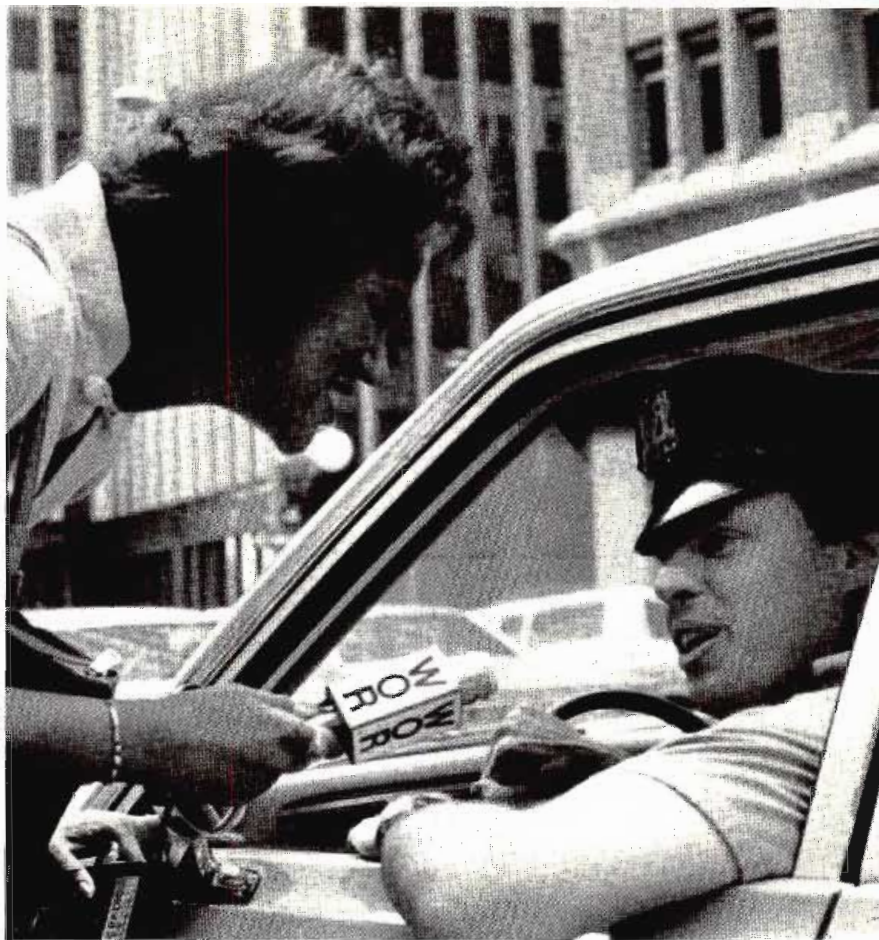
But the start of the BIG big broadcast had not yet occurred.

WOR/Live from London came out of a conversation that Rick Devlin and Arlene Francis had over dinner one evening. They were talking about WOR's extensive theater coverage when the thought struck. Why not go over to London in the spring and cover the upcoming New York theater season from its origin? "I discussed it with TWA next," Devlin remembered. "We started to work out the details of the arrangements. Arlene and I would go over and broadcast . . . Then we started talking more, and I said, "If I'm going to take one, why don't I just take the whole station . . ." And out of that came the most ambitious, successful caper in the history of live radio.

A project of this magnitude had never before been tried. It was the first time a station did satellite transmission of a week long, international broadcast. The twenty-five hour (7a.m. to noon) week long remote covered every aspect of what it's like to visit London. It was an exciting series of broadcasts. The audience thoroughly enjoyed it. It proved to be a way of taking people to a location mentally that they might not have visited in their lives and providing a vivid, vicarious experience that was entertaining and informative. From the success of this, WOR is planning to do remotes from such exotic locations as Hawaii, Hong Kong, Paris, and of course, London again.



WOR is the only independent radio station still to cover the major national political conventions, most recently both the GOP convention in Detroit and the Democratic gathering in New York, gavel to gavel, not relying on network or AP or UPI feeds.



Denise Richardson interviews a member of the NYPD for WOR's hard-hitting documentary *The Blue Minority*. Radio documentaries such as this one, and *Goodbye, Lucy*, which examined the defeat of a dedicated teacher in the New York school system, along with *Cystic Fibrosis*, *The Secret Disease*, utilize radio to its maximum influence as a provocative medium. Produced by Reg Laite, the audio jigsaw puzzle was structured and designed by writer-producer Jack Franks. The intense reporting was done by Shelly Strickler and Denise Richardson. Barney Beck, an engineer whose thirty-five years in the business enable him to "make Truman Capote sound like John Wayne," is one of the people behind it all. The WOR News Department realizes the importance of its documentaries. So do outside sources. The aforementioned three documentaries collected a total of 25 prestigious broadcasting awards.



In 1976, WOR was the official OPSAIL station in New York.

NEW HAS TOTAL CONTROL at WOR programming, in that when something unique occurs, WOR News pre-empts all programming. Other stations do it, but not with the depth that WOR achieves in covering special events as they happen.

The set-up of the WOR News Department went through several transition periods. First, the mammoth operation that had remained for years since Bob Leder had expanded it was trimmed. The newscasts, which had alternated every half hour with different individuals,

changed. Previously, there had been writers and on-air newscasters. The new operation was more streamlined in that the distinct operations no longer existed. People who were on-air also wrote copy.

WOR News operates with the same resources found at all-news stations, but tops them with superior technical equipment such as the Jet Ranger helicopter, more staffing and better facilities. WOR Radio provides more than the all-news stations—superior news coverage *plus* our unique programming.

WOR built the reputation of its excellent news department by offering the finest names in radio commentary to analyze and clarify the news. The following names are included in the lineup of WOR's news commentators.

Garnet Marks	Jay Sims	Cal Tinney
Mark Hawley	Frank Singieser	Wythe Williams
Arthur Hale	Fulton Lewis, Jr.	Hendrik William Van Loon
Harlan Eugene Reed	Hans Von Kaltenborn	Fulton Oursler
Sidney Mosley	Bill Henry	Royal Arch Gunnison
Gabriel Heatter	Prescott Robinson	Floyd Gibbons
Boake Carter	Henry Gladstone	Tro Harper
Raymond Gram Swing	John Scott	Sid Walton
H. R. Baukage	Harry Hennessy	Vincent Connolly
William L. Shirer	John Wingate	Tony Marvin
John B. Kennedy	Lester Smith	George Hamilton Combs
Drew Pearson	Henry J. Taylor	Les Higbie
Samuel Grafton	Walter Winchell	Sam Hayes
Cedric Foster	Arthur Van Horn	Holland Engle
Cecil Brown	Fred Vandeventer	Peter Roberts
Lyle Van	Lowell Thomas	Jack Allen
George Carson Putnam	Walter Kiernan	Rodger Skibenes
Edwin C. Hill	Upton Close	Sheila Carter
Melvin Elliott	Quentin Reynolds	Dave Driscoll
Westbrook Van Voorhis	John Gunther	Charles Woods
	George Fielding Eliot	



Lou Adler

Several of these voices in this partial listing are still heard today on WOR. Some are no longer with us. However, all have been presented at one time or another on WOR.

LOU ADLER, a name that holds a reputation for true excellence in the news business, joined WOR in November 1981. Adler has already injected, and will continue to expand, a new dynamism and direction to WOR news coverage, as both morning newscaster and Vice President and News Director.



Lester Smith



Sports Director Don Criqui



Shelly Strickler



Weathercaster Bill Korbel



Jack Allen



Rodger Skibenesh



Dr. Karen Blaker moderates "Ask Dr. Blaker."



Larry King hosts a nationally syndicated interview show.



Kathy Novak, co-host of PM New York



Ralph Snodsmith of Garden Hotline

A

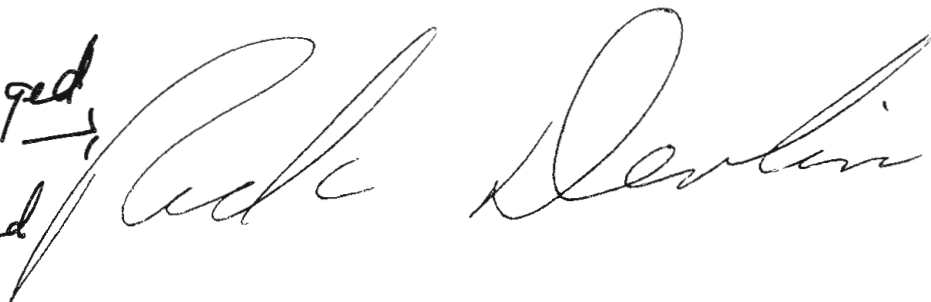
S THE FIRST 60 YEARS OF BROADCASTING ON WOR RADIO DRAWS TO A CLOSE, I find myself very honored and lucky to be in the position of Vice President and General Manager of the #1 radio station in all of America. It is fitting that this is the Diamond Jubilee of WOR Radio, for like a diamond, WOR has become the gem it is today only after many years in the crucible of competitive broadcasting. It has faced many challenges over the years and has overcome them all not only successfully but in a style that has endeared it to its millions of faithful listeners.

But what about the future for WOR Radio. Just as in the past, WOR today is faced with many challenges as it strives to maintain its position as #1 in America. Cable TV, pay TV, direct satellite to home TV, 24-hour satellite transmission for radio, video cassette recorders, video discs, etc. all represent information and entertainment alternatives to an individual who is listening to WOR Radio. However, I am not only convinced but firmly committed to the principle that WOR Radio can provide programming better than anyone else, and therefore our intelligent audience will continue to listen to us for many years to come. Not only is our on-air staff committed, but our entire back-up staff of hundreds is likewise committed to this principle that WOR Radio is #1 and will continue to maintain this position. We will change not for change's sake but rather to continuously bring to our audience the best programming possible to reflect our changing society while always remembering the principles of greatness that have enabled us to maintain our position during our first sixty years of broadcasting. We respect our audience in everything we do and, therefore, they respect our programming efforts. We will continue to provide our audience with the most innovative and exciting programming in all of radio.

WOR Radio is the most unique and special radio station in the entire history of radio broadcasting. We will continue to be #1 in the years to come because of the dedication and commitment of the entire staff at WOR and because of the loyalty and mutual respect of our ever growing audience.

On behalf of the entire staff of WOR Radio, both present and past, I would like to simply say thank you for the first sixty years and all of us now at WOR can only promise you that the years to come will be even better than ever.

*He was discharged
over night just after
this book was published*



Excuse - spent too much money.



*"Did it ever occur to you that maybe I don't want
to wake up with John Gambling?"*

*Fortunately, millions of people have and continue to wake-up with John Gambling—
Host of the #1 Radio Program in America.*

WOR Radio is deeply indebted to Jack Poppele, Chief Engineer 1922-1955, who preserved the original photographs, correspondence and documentation throughout our early years. We are equally indebted to James Thibideaux who preserved our written records and photo archives, without which this book could not have been created.

Written by Marianne Macy

Designed and produced by Nightingale Gordon, New York

WOR-RADIO 1440 BROADWAY NEW YORK, N.Y. 10018