

50 YEARS OF UNIQUE RADIO

760 ON YOUR AM RADIO DIAL

A CAPITAL CITIES STATION
DETROIT, MICHIGAN

WJR

In radio broadcasting a 50th anniversary is a particularly significant event. It establishes a station as one of the few pioneers of the industry.

Those who have lived through these golden years of 1922-1972 with WJR will find this booklet a cherished souvenir and a delightful experience.

Here is the record of the people and programs that played vital roles in making WJR one of the great radio stations in the nation.

And those of the younger generation should be fascinated by the nostalgia of the past and the great promise of the future. For even with WJR's respect for its distinguished past and the distinctive role it has played in the development of today's dynamic communications medium, the personalities now on the scene sincerely believe "the best is yet to come."

the twenties

WCX-WJR

All in all, 1922 wasn't a bad year to be born! The stock market was high and so were spirits!

It was the year of the Volstead Act, "Bathtub Gin" and "Yes, We Have No Bananas." The United States Senate seated its first female member, and the infamous "Bluebeard" was executed in France! "Abie's Irish Rose" was playing to "Standing Room Only" on Broadway, the Woolworth Tower was the world's tallest building, and the Germans were building a zeppelin to fly the Atlantic!

At the beach, women were wearing scandalous one-piece bathing suits, and in living rooms across the country, Mah-Jongg was the rage. And in basements, on front porches and in parlors, "Radio-Bugs" were straining to hear the first words spoken by an American President "over the air."

It was Warren G. Harding, broadcasting a typically terse message from Baltimore!

In Detroit, the radio buffs had already heard brief news reports broadcast from Pittsburgh's KDKA and the Motor City's own station, WWJ, founded by the "Detroit News."

Now, came word that Detroit would have another radio voice . . . WCX . . . to be founded by the "Free Press" in obvious response to publicity received by the "News" with its own station.



C.D. Tomy
First Manager WCX, 1922



Norman White, 1929
singer, announcer, producer

So WCX, later to become WJR Radio, signed on May 4, 1922, one of a few dozen radio stations in America.

But, just as there were thousands willing to endure the screeching, static-charged signals of early radio, there were those who weren't sold on the viability of the new medium, or regarded it as a toy, or worse yet, a fad which would fade away like goldfish swallowing and marathon dancing!

Ironically, one of those who felt radio was little more than a frill was E. D. Stair, owner and publisher of the "Free Press." He had reluctantly agreed to the radio experiment, persuaded by his general manager, W. H. Pettibone. Perhaps significantly, he appointed a New York newspaperman, C. D. Neal Tomy as the first station manager of WCX.

WCX signed on with predictably impressive ceremonies, featuring Michigan Governor Groesbeck and President Burton of the University of



Lucille Burke, one of the
WJR "Manuel Cigar Girls"



Whispering Will Collins,
popular singer of the 20s



Leo Fitzpatrick, the
"old chief", 1939



Uncle Neal reads the funnies

Michigan. As a footnote of the time, a review of the affair reported that Eddie Guest, the "Free Press" poet and nationally popular writer of verse, had recited "A Good Little Boy." "Sitting a few feet away," noted the review, "was his young son, Bud Guest . . . his bare knees showing below his trousers." Telegrams were received from as far away as Chicago and Grand Rapids, indicating that the sign-on ceremonies were heard distinctly and with little interference. Still later, messages came to the station reporting reception in Texas and Arkansas.

Significantly, one of the few local "dead-spots" for WCX reception was near the Belle Isle Bridge where the still unconvinced E. D. Stair lived! In contrast, occupants of Detroit's Dime Bank Building discovered they had merely to pick up the phone to receive WCX loud and clear; in fact, it couldn't be tuned out! Despite all, it appeared that radio was here to stay.

Programming ideas were thin and hard to come by in those days. There were long periods of silence and a decided lack of exciting listening fare. But in the fall of 1923, general manager Tomy was inspired to offer a "Michigan Red Apple" to any and all listeners who could identify an anonymous singing voice. Thus, with the very first "mystery voice" on radio, WCX organized "The Red Apple Club" which gained an incredible half-million members in the space of a year. Radio had demonstrated that it could create its own "stars!"

The first such personality on WCX was a 16-year-old pianist named "Bernice," whose light touch at the keyboard was uniquely effective over the crude microphones of the day. Another singer, "Whispering Will Collins" was also a popular name on the WCX marquee. In the main, all of WCX's programming was done live, since there were no networks, and reproduced (recorded) music was still in the early state of development in 1923.

WCX also pioneered "The Team" concept in radio. Al Cameron and Pete Bontsema (Al and Pete of the Red Apple Club) became Detroit celebrities and later went on to network radio. Still another young singer acquiring local stardom was Norman White. His mail count was enormous on the Red Apple Club, and he later became popular on his own show, "Luncheon Song Revue."

By December of 1924, WCX Radio had become confident enough of its future to move into new studios in the plush Book-Cadillac Hotel. At the same time, Edward Jewett, president of



P. M. Thomas, Neal Tomy, G. A. Richards (seated), Norman White



Jean Goldkette, popular orchestra leader of the 20s and 30s



Father Coughlin and Babe Ruth



Neal Tomy and the Mickey Mouse Club

Pianist Bernice



Smilin' Ed McConnell



Harold Keane "The Sunshine Boy"





Eddie Guest and son Bud



Tracy and Duncan, 1930s



G. A. Richards



Ford Sunday Evening Hour; Lily Pons, soloist; Eugene Goossens, conducting, 1942

Samuel Benavie, leader
WJR Studio Orchestra

John McKenzie

Father Coughlin



Pontiac's Jewett Radio and Phonograph Company, persuaded Mr. Stair and the Free Press to share the WCX facility and frequency with his own newly formed station WJR (for Jewett Radio!).

The first joint broadcast was August 16, 1925 . . . a live performance by the Jean Goldkette Dance Orchestra, playing from the Blue Room of the Book-Cadillac Hotel.

In September, Leo Fitzpatrick, widely known as "The Old Chief" of the Kansas City Nighthawks, joined WCX/WJR to organize "The Jewett Jesters." Apparently, what the program lacked in originality of title, it made up in content, for it became another original radio success. One of the favorites on the program was a young blind singer, Harold Kean, who was billed as "The Sunshine Boy."

However, things were far from sunny in the business offices at WJR. Expenses continued to exceed the budgets. A huge deficit was piling up and reports of poor reception made the job of selling commercial time very difficult. What's more, things weren't much brighter with the parent company, Jewett Radio. Sales of Jewett radios and phonographs dipped sharply, and the company was on the brink of collapse.

In early March, 1926, the assets of Jewett were liquidated, and Leo Fitzpatrick was named to preside over the dismantlement. While only 31 years old, Fitzpatrick was already considered a veteran broadcaster and a very capable businessman. His first triumph was to convince the liquidator to let him keep WJR alive. He also persuaded Merrill Mitchell to return and erect new antennas which would greatly improve reception.

Attracting and holding commercial sponsors was the major challenge of early radio. However, among the first to sense the power and potential of the new medium were clergymen. Some of the first sponsors at full commercial rates were the Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian churches in Detroit and Pontiac.

Thus began an incredible and colorful chapter in radio history . . . the first broadcast of Father Charles Coughlin on the third Sunday of October, 1926. In the 20 years to follow, the nation would come to understand the impact of radio through the broadcasts of this astonishingly powerful and controversial figure.

1926 also saw WJR end its association with Jewett Radio. The station became a separate enterprise with Edward B. Robinette, president of the liquidation firm, as owner. To shore up the financial strength of the station, Fitzpatrick conceived announcing a sponsor's name along with

the call letters of the station. The first "ID" commercial spot was an instant success and revenues increased substantially.

In this period, G. A. Richards first became a sponsor on WJR. A distributor of Oakland and Pontiac automobiles in lower Michigan, he soon became so impressed with his new selling tool, he took an option to buy the station outright. This association was to last 40 years, and led to the development of WJR as we know it today.

A showman of great flamboyance, Richards had a complete ground-level studio constructed right in his auto display rooms in the General

Within the first months of 1927, Fitzpatrick and his new assistant, John Patt, negotiated for an affiliation with "The Blue Network" of the National Broadcasting Company. Even at this early stage of network development, NBC was offering such popular regulars as "Roxy and His Gang," "The Collier's Hour," and "George Olsen's Orchestra." The greatly improved talent and programming immediately provided WCX/WJR with responsive audiences.

In another programming stroke designed to demonstrate the immediacy and relevance of radio, WJR devoted the entire day of June 11,



John F. Patt, 1930



Jimmy Stevenson, sportscaster 1930s



Bill McCullough,
announcer



Ron Gamble, emcee



Jack White,
newscaster



"The Hermit's Cave"



Duncan Moore, commentator and
farm editor 1930s

Motors Building. He then staged an elaborate dedicatory program for the new studios that lasted a record five hours on Christmas night, 1926.

Richards immediately felt the impact of this advertising on his business, but he also sensed something more important to himself . . . prestige and "good will." The station shortly began to use his phrase on the air and soon became known as "The Good Will Station."

1927 to broadcasting the ceremonies marking the return of Lindbergh from his epochal New York to Paris flight!

Less than a week later, WCX/WJR moved its signal to 680 kilocycles in accordance with a Federal Radio Commission plan to realign over 600 stations nationwide. This further improved reception and led to wider acceptance of radio. 1927 also saw the consummation of the sale of WJR (but not yet WCX) to Richards and other



Control Staff: (left to right) Jennings, McPhillips, Neubrecht, Chief Friedenthal, Roehrig, MacClellan. (bottom row) Casson, Haboush, Nolan, Corliss, Jones, Brechner



G. A. Richards gives keys of Cadillac to Bing Crosby.

major stockholders including Fitzpatrick, P. M. Thomas, and Harry Grub.

In December, another milestone occurred. Until then, Detroit theatre owners had looked with suspicion upon radio, and resisted broadcasts from their stages, even though such broadcasts were becoming popular in New York and Chicago. The management of the giant Michigan Theatre, however, finally decided to permit the broadcast of a concert by the famous Edward Werner Orchestra, with Helen Yorke as guest soloist.

Fitzpatrick ordered a "full sound treatment" for this auspicious event. He directed the chief engineer, A. J. Friedenthal, to install fifteen microphones to insure a perfect pickup. Somewhat sheepishly, the order was modified when it was discovered that WJR had only five microphones! Four were rushed to the remote pickup, leaving the studio with but a single microphone on the premises!

With one theatre broadcast under its belt, WJR signed up a raft of organ music concerts originating from local theatres. Such organists as Merle Clark, Bob Clark, Arthur Gustow and Armin Franz became overnight sensations.

In a reversal of form, the impact of radio was soon felt on the vaudeville stage. Radio stars like "The WJR Manuel Cigar Girls" and "Ford and Glenn" became box office hits. People wanted to see their new radio idols.

In 1928, radio again proved its unique ability to "go anywhere and do anything" to cover a news event. Both the Republican and Democratic

conventions were broadcast, featuring Graham McNamee.

By now, the number of radio sets in use had skyrocketed in Detroit and throughout the mid-west. Nationally, over 1,000,000 radios had been sold. Americans wanted to know what was happening and to be entertained . . . Radio was now an accepted part of the American life style. The commercial impact of radio grew with every passing month at WJR. Norm White's daily "Luncheon Song Review" drew an astonishing 26,353 letters, and the letters were in response to a recipe being offered by Henkel Flour!

By now, the enormous power and popularity of Father Coughlin had reached such a peak that his WJR broadcasts were picked up for the NBC Blue Network.

And in this epochal year came the beginning of one of the best and most popular radio shows of all time, "Amos and Andy."

On Armistice Day, 1928, radio frequencies were again reassigned. WCX/WJR was moved to an exclusive, clear channel frequency, 760 kilocycles. Then, shortly before Christmas Day, G. A. Richards and the Fisher Brothers announced the station would become the first tenant of the new and glamorous Fisher Tower on Detroit's posh West Grand Boulevard. The entire 28th floor would be occupied by the most modern technical facility in the nation. At the same time, WCX announced it would retain the Book-Cadillac facility. During the four years of broadcasting on the same frequency, the programming excellence of WJR had dominated the Detroit audience.

WCX had failed to provide the interest so important to commercial success. In early January, what had been guessed by many, was confirmed: WCX had agreed to relinquish all rights to the wave length, if WJR would purchase WCX's equipment. WJR had now embarked on a course of its own. Norm White joined the expanding WJR staff, as did "Uncle Neal" Tomy who had by now become a household word with his reading of the funnypapers on "Skeezix Time."

In early 1929, G. A. Richards retired from the automobile business to devote himself completely to his expanding radio interests. WJR ended the year in a state of prosperity, a far cry from its near-collapse just four years earlier.

the thirties

Even in the early part of the depression, dark times for the nation and Detroit, people regarded radio as an important source of escape and free entertainment. Each month of 1930 saw substantial additions to the growing WJR client list, and optimistic reports were relayed to Richards, who was then in California recuperating from a heart attack.

The emerging role of radio as an important news medium developed further in 1930. In conjunction with the "Detroit Times," WJR presented a flamboyant, theatrical program each evening just ahead of "Floyd Gibbons" and "Amos and Andy." The program format called for a "Detroit Times" reporter to interview a leading personality or newsmaker either at the newspaper office or, if possible, at the scene of the story.

On the very first program, a 16-year-old bandit, wounded in a robbery attempt, was inter-

viewed from his hospital bed . . . a highly dramatic and effective use of radio for these times. WJR gave the broadcast time free, and the "Times" reciprocated by giving the broadcast front page coverage.

In 1931 WJR increased its power to 10,000 watts, a difficult technical feat at the time, and the deepening depression brought the first hint of hard times to WJR. Radio's first major critics emerged. Perhaps because of the national economic despair, many people attacked radio as frivolous and irresponsible. Newspapers charged radio with "skimming off the cream of advertising dollars, and dulling the senses of the public with mindless programming." In reply, Leo Fitzpatrick inaugurated a series of programs called "Radio Realities." In his initial broadcast, Fitzpatrick answered critics of the still fledgling radio industry with what remains one of radio's strongest claims to fairness. Said Fitzpatrick, "If there is a fair-minded medium in the world today, it's radio . . . which stands on the record of its own spoken word, ready to give an accounting to its public at any time."

WJR's darkest year was 1933. Salaries were cut and a number of persons were discharged. But in the fall of 1933 business sprang back, recalls were made, and the employees received bonuses which, in most cases, offset salary losses.

In 1935, WJR increased its power to its present 50,000 watts by constructing a new transmitter and antenna facility in Riverview, near Trenton in the downriver area. Growing dissatisfaction with NBC's "Blue Network" led to affiliation with the Columbia Broadcasting System. On

At a transmitter party is G. A. Richards (left foreground) with P. M. Thomas, transmitter chief Merrill Mitchell seated, and Jim Quello (standing far right).





One of G. A. Richards' promotions of the 40s



Eddie Rickenbacker (l. to r.), G. A. Richards, and Michigan Governor Kim Sigler in 1948



May Hawks, Lazy Ranch Boys, with Don Large and Make Way for Youth Chorus in background, 1954

The Flint tornado, 1953, with WJR mobile studio as headquarters for State Police, the Governor and civil defense



January 29, 1935, the Detroit radio network alignment changed for the last time: WJR moved to CBS. WXYZ became the Blue Network station (later to become ABC), and WWJ remained the NBC Red Network outlet (later simply, NBC).

The mid-thirties also saw the dawn of a "Show Business" career that would have great effects on the station in years to come. Household Finance Company was sponsoring a program called "The Household Musical Clock." Part of the format was a rapid-fire newscaster called Billy Repaid. What his many fans did not know was that his real name was . . . Diaper! For obvious reasons, his producers decided that his name spelled backward—would be much more suitable. Desiring a change of style, HFC in 1936 hired Bud Guest, then working as a general assignment reporter and rewrite man for the "Free Press," to replace Repaid. Bud worked on the air and for the newspaper until 1943 when he went into the Navy.

Other familiar WJR personalities of the 30s included Smilin' Ed McConnell, sportscaster Jimmy Stevenson, commentator and farm editor Duncan Moore, announcer Bill McCullough and orchestra leaders Jean Goldkette and Samuel Benavie.

In the late 30s, G. A. Richards expanded his "Good Will Stations" broadcasting empire to include WGAR in Cleveland, and KMPC in Los Angeles. Later, failing health forced him to relinquish active management and to become chairman of the board.

the forties

Another familiar voice came to WJR just ahead of World War II . . . Charley Park became a staff announcer. Like all WJR voices, Charley Park sold defense bonds, headed radio scrap-metal drives, and sought blood donors during the post Pearl Harbor days.

During 1942, WJR originated the nationally famous "Ford Sunday Evening Hour" which CBS broadcast coast-to-coast. War or no war, "Uncle Neal" still read the funnies to the kids, and a host of new programs became popular with "defense workers" and "homefront householders!"

Among the WJR staples at the time were: "The Farm Forum" with Larry Payne. Marc Williams as "Happy Hank," "Tim Doolittle and the Gang," the Don Large Melody Marvels, George Cushing and Bud Guest with "In Our Opinion," and a live orchestra conducted by Paul LaVoie, with hosts Bud Mitchell and Dave Olsen. Two live dramas came from WJR's venerable "Studio D" during these years. "The Hermit's Cave," produced by Eric Howlett and written by Geraldine Elliott, became a national legend with its particu-

larly grizzly plots and fiendish murders. "The Mummies" was still another popular local live-drama featuring dramatized short stories.

In 1943, a rising young composer, arranger and musician named Jimmy Clark joined WJR from the Detroit dance-band circuit. In the years since, Jimmy accounted for literally thousands of hours of live music programming. Little known to the Detroit audience, he has written hundreds of advertising jingles, including the Lucky Strike jingle "Light Up a Lucky, It's Light Up Time."

In 1945, Harry Wismer came to WJR Radio as assistant to Richards and WJR general manager. A sportswriter and strong, colorful personality, he also retained his position as sports director for the ABC radio network, an unusual circumstance for a major CBS affiliate. Later, Wismer was one of the founders of the American Football League.

In 1947, James Quello, now station manager, joined the WJR staff as promotion and publicity director. He later became program director, then vice-president and general manager.

During this period, Norm White, the popular young singer of the twenties, had become production manager, and another parade of WJR legendary names came to the forefront. Ron Gamble was now chief announcer, Charley Park had become Bud Guest's regular announcer on the new "Sunnyside of the Street Club." Joe Penberthy, Jim Wood, Jim Garrett, Jack Ogilvie and Ralph Freeman became well-known voices from the "Golden Tower."

Top programs during the late 40's were: "Bob Murphy's Sports Column of the Air," Dale McIntyre's "Know Your America," Fran Pettay's "One Hour of Entertainment," Don Large's "Make Way for Youth Chorus" and the "Anything Goes" show with Fred Kendall, Jimmy Clark and Marion Gillette.

the fifties

The now legendary Van Patrick was named sports director in 1949. When Van became the play-by-play announcer for the Tigers in 1951, he was succeeded by "Rapid Robert" Reynolds.

By the mid-fifties, television competition had changed the fabric of old-fashioned radio programming. But less so at WJR. To demonstrate this to the industry, the station transported 75 staff entertainers to New York to perform before 500 New York advertising executives at a glamorous Waldorf-Astoria Starlight Roof dinner and show. The WJR band, the Don Large Chorus, singers Renee McKay, Judy Carroll and Fred Kendall literally "knocked 'em cold" in a two-hour show hosted by Bud Guest. Even New York bigwigs were dazzled by WJR's formidable array of talent.



Don Large and Make Way for Youth Chorus, Goodwill Cavalcade, New York, 1954



Ned Nolan and Eric Howlett in control booth, 1956

Bill Sheehan in Paris and with Yamasacki, New Delhi, India, 1959



WJR was one of the sole radio holdouts against the burgeoning television phenomenon.

Another phenomenal WJR saga began in 1956. J. P. McCarthy joined the station as a staff announcer. Bud Guest remembers the Detroit radio superstar as a "scrawny kind of kid, fresh out of the Army and scared to death." Chief announcer Charley Park had another memory of McCarthy. "He was a fresh, cocky kid that you could tell had what it takes to be more than good! He could be great. I decided to shoot craps and hire him!"

Two years later, general manager Worth Kramer and program director Jim Quello decided to let J. P. take on the highly competitive "Music Hall" during WJR's key drive time. J. P. proceeded to cut himself a big slice of the tough Detroit morning audience. In fact, he became successful enough to be lured away by San Francisco's exciting personality station, KGO. J. P. did well in the bitterly competitive "Bay City Market," but he missed his "hometown." So, shortly after Capital Cities Broadcasting acquired WJR, Jim Quello was able to go to the coast and persuade J. P. to come home, which he did on December 7, 1964.

the sixties

During the late fifties and early sixties, the WJR programming and news departments made subtle changes in style and format to meet the challenge of television and the growing number of "rock stations." But Worth Kramer and the WJR management were determined to maintain quality programming and the WJR image, even when WJR decided upon disaffiliating with the CBS Radio Network in 1958.

Karl Haas, a distinguished pianist and musicologist, was named director of fine arts to help fill the CBS programming void. Similarly, news director Bill Sheehan (later to head the ABC Television News Network) carried WJR news coverage to Russia with President Eisenhower, just as he had traveled with Nikita Khrushchev on his famous American tour.

Shortly after the disaffiliation, the WJR staff grew to include 102 artists, musicians, engineers, writers, reporters, producers and directors, who kept the WJR sound unique, entertaining, and informative 24 hours a day, all without the network. However, the "go it alone" period was relatively short.

In 1962, the station and CBS finally ironed out their difficulties and WJR is today one of the CBS "flagship stations."

In the early sixties, WJR was one of the few remaining radio stations in America still producing live music programs. Don Large's "Make Way for



Charley Park with son and famed clown Emmett Kelley



Charley Park does U of M "color".



James Quello, (l. to r.), Senator Prentiss M. Brown and Governor G. Mennen Williams with WJR mobile studio at the Mackinac Bridge dedication



Irving Berlin and Charley Park in the early 40s



"J.P." (center) with Irish Rovers

Larry Storch, Jack Harris, Jerry Lester and Eddie Fisher on Open House





The combined services of Karl Haas and Lee Murray (first row); Charley Park, Fred Friedenthal, Jimmy Launce (second row); Bob Reynolds, Harold Lake, Reg Merridew, Jay Roberts and Frank Tomlinson (third row) are required to send happy Bud Guest on a 1963 vacation.



Van Cliburne and Karl Haas



Bob Reynolds "works out" with Lions.

Jim Wood and Jan Wynn, Jimmy Clark at piano



Youth Chorus" was the sole network program originating in Detroit, and "Guest House" was the biggest locally-produced program. Goodwill president Worth Kramer and program director Reginald Merridew explained to "Broadcasting" Magazine that they felt live programming was the very essence of WJR's unique sound.

Even now, WJR continues to program live music with its highly popular musical variety program, "The Jack Harris Open House Show." The continuity is provided by Jimmy Clark and the WJR Band, with regular guest Jean Oliver, and special guest stars. The list of celebrities to "sign-in" on the Harris Show is a veritable "Who's Who" of show business. Barbara Streisand made her radio debut in "Studio D." Milton Berle, Liza Minelli, Sammy Davis Jr., John Gary, Jimmy Durante, and literally hundreds of others have visited and performed with Jack.

In 1964 a transaction occurred which had an enormous impact on recent WJR history. Capital Cities Broadcasting Corporation purchased WJR and the Goodwill Stations.

Capital Cities board chairman Frank Smith and president Tom Murphy completed the negotiations with Goodwill president Worth Kramer and director Sibley Moore. Daniel B. Burke, from Capital Cities' Albany TV station, was appointed executive vice-president and general manager. Jim Quello was asked to remain as station manager.

Despite reassurances from Capital Cities' management, the shockwave of WJR's sale put the rumor mills to work overtime. Reports of massive programming and personnel changes swept local broadcasting and advertising circles. But within the first year of operation it became apparent to both the staff and to WJR fans that the unique qualities of WJR's programming and community involvement were fully appreciated and would not be tampered with.

General manager Dan Burke began a systematic build-up of the news department which resulted in vintage years for WJR News. Bill Harris was named news director and a number of newscasters were added to the staff, including Rod Hansen, Dave Taylor, Oscar Frenette, Gene Healy and Jim Smidebush. The last seven years have been a banner era for WJR news awards. They include:

1964—Michigan Associated Press Broadcasters Association 1st Place Award for "Walk to Freedom," adjudged the best locally scheduled special show in the Class II Division of the 1963 MAPB news competition.

1965—Michigan Associated Press—For best farm show, "Voice of Agriculture."

—To Hal Youngblood for Documentary "The Wonderful World of Julie Harris".

1967—**Associated Press**—For general excellent news presentation . . . selected for a consistent daily schedule of well written and well developed newscasts; excellent coverage by direct reporting; the thoroughness of experience; superior broadcast journalism.

Detroit Press Club Foundation—1966 Professional Award for distinguished presentation of documentary material, written and produced by radio station personnel.

1968—**Sigma Delta Chi (National Journalistic Society)**—For a continuing series of on-the-scene reports and analysis during the city's riots in 1967. Of particular merit was a half-hour news special entitled "Tell it Like it is."

Detroit Press Club—For distinguished reporting of an event under deadline by an individual or a team of newscasters or reporters. "Tell it Like it is."

Michigan Associated Press Broadcasters Association—First Place Award for "Sunday Supplement"—1967 outstanding public affairs program.

Michigan Associated Press Broadcasters Association—First Place Award to Len Walter for general excellence of individual news reporting—1967.

1969—**American Medical Association**—For "Rule of Law"—Certificate of special commendation in the 1968 Medical Journalism Awards Competition.

American Bar Association Gavel Award—In recognition and commendation of distinguished service in furthering public understanding and appreciation of the inherent values of the American system of law and the administration of justice.

National Conference of Christians and Jews—Certificate of recognition presented to Oscar Frenette, producer of

"Psychology of Rebellion." For exemplary discharge of the responsibility of mass media . . . by making a telling contribution to the eradication of prejudice, through creative educational public service programming in the vital area of human relations.

Michigan Associated Press—For general excellence of news reporting.

Michigan Associated Press—To Dave Taylor for "The Outstanding Radio Documentary of 1968."

1969—**Michigan Associated Press**—To Rod Hansen for "General Excellence in individual reporting for 1968."

1970—**Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award**—To Phil Jones for outstanding coverage of the problems of poverty and discrimination—"I Am Not Alone."

Broadcast Communication Arts Dept.—San Francisco State College to Oscar Frenette for "Quest for Mystique." In recognition of signal accomplishment and highest standards in local radio and television broadcasting.

Michigan Associated Press — For general excellence of overall news presentation.

Michigan Associated Press—To Rod Hansen—for general excellence of individual reporting.

Michigan Associated Press—For best spot news coverage.

Detroit Press Club Foundation—For distinguished reporting of an event—"The New Bethel Shooting."

Detroit Press Club Foundation—To Oscar Frenette— For distinguished presentation of documentary material, "Who Will Listen?"

Catholic Broadcasters Association—Gabriel Award to Oscar Frenette for "Quest for Mystique"—a series of six documentary programs dealing with our changing times.

WJR assembles staff in lobby of Fisher building to visually prove its power to leave CBS and "go it alone" in 1959.



It was also following the Capital Cities' purchase that a young staff announcer was given his own program to see what he might do with his own unusual format and highly personalized style of delivery. That program was "Kaleidoscope," and the voice was Michael Whorf.

Within the next several years, both "Kaleidoscope" and "Adventures in Good Music" were moved to "prime time" positions in the WJR daily program schedule. By placing "Adventures in Good Music" and "Kaleidoscope" back-to-back, WJR was in sole position to offer its listeners two Peabody Award-winning programs within a two-hour span of time.

It must also be noted that the American Airlines "Music 'Til Dawn" program was the recipient of a Peabody award in 1966 with WJR's Jay Roberts cited for his contributions to that honor. Jay was also named the "Disc Jockey of the Year," 1966-67 by "Movie Mirror" magazine.

After his return from San Francisco, J. P. did both the morning and afternoon "Music Hall," while Jimmy Launce co-hosted "Focus," WJR's new public affairs and entertainment magazine, with Lee Murray. In 1966, producer Hal Youngblood suggested the famous lineup switch: J. P. McCarthy to host the increasingly popular noontime show, and Launce to expand his talents in afternoon "Music Hall."

In 1969 Dan Burke, who had seen the station through the important transitional years following the acquisition, was promoted to the presidency of the publishing division of Capital Cities. This growing division includes Fairchild Publications, which produces New York's prestigious Women's Wear Daily, and the "Pontiac Press."

William R. James was appointed vice-president and general manager replacing Burke. James, a native Detroiter, had full appreciation of WJR programming and the station's standing in the community. With full respect for the station's history, James has and is, concentrating his management team's sights on adding new lustre to WJR's distinguished record.

the seventies

In November of 1970, Charley Park, who was WJR's veteran chief announcer and a metaphor of the "Golden Tower Sound", announced his retirement. He was replaced as chief announcer by still another familiar and respected WJR veteran, Jim Garrett.

In the spring of 1971, WJR staffer's mourned the loss of two talented and respected members of the "WJR family." Jack Kessler, who began as an actor with "The Hermit's Cave" drama, then



Worth Kramer, president of the Goodwill Stations, Inc., 1960-64



The famous dig to find the buried Ford car, Bud Guest, center



Mike Whorf in record library Charley Park's "Teacher's Report Card"

Senator Haskell Nichols (right) presents Marshall Wells with House Resolution Number 6 (1964) commending his program.





Presentation to Fred Friedenthal, (left), chief engineer, on his retirement (1964) after 38 years with WJR. Ned Nolan, who succeeded to the position, retired January, 1972, after 42 years of dedicated service.



Bud Guest, Jan Wynn, and Jack Harris guest on Arthur Godfrey Time, January, 1963.



Jack Kessler, actor-writer, producer



Daniel B. Burke, former WJR executive vice president and general manager, president—publishing division, Capital Cities Broadcasting

became a writer-producer, died in March. Detroit musician, WJR bandsman Eddie Webb passed away in late November.

Jack Kessler was succeeded by Nicholas P. Calanni, who now serves as promotion director and producer of The Jack Harris Show. Nick joins Nancy Linehan and Sandy Halleck to complete WJR's stable of producers. Nancy produces J. P. McCarthy's "Morning Music Hall." Sandy produces Jim Launce's "P.M. Music Hall" and the "WJR Sports Magazine."

Subsequently, WJR's distinguished chief engineer and former director of the recording division, Ned Nolan, announced retirement. He was succeeded by John Paul Begin, his former assistant.

In the closing months of 1971, J. P. McCarthy was named to the program director's post, with operations manager Bill Harris and executive producer Hal Youngblood serving as his assistants.

Replacing Harris as news director is Dave White, the seasoned and highly respected newsman who had directed the morning news block for a number of years. The equally honored and experienced newsman Oscar Frenette is now the assistant news director and head of the special reports section.

1971 also saw the expansion of WJR's sports coverage. Under the direction of Bob Reynolds, three-time winner of the Michigan Sportscaster of the Year Award, the Detroit Lions broadcasts were added to the WJR lineup which already included the Detroit Tigers, the Detroit Pistons, and M.S.U. football.



Mickey Rooney on "Focus" with Jimmy Launce

F. Sibley Moore, former vice-president and director, the Goodwill Stations

Jimmy Launce can't believe sound of Marc Avery's voice.





James Henry Quello, vice-president and 25-year management veteran



William R. James, vice-president and general manager

Reynolds also brought John Bell from the announcing staff into the sports department to join him and Paul Carey, also a three time winner of the Michigan Sportscaster Award. For coverage of other special events, such as Lions, Tigers and M.S.U. football, WJR also calls on the familiar sports voices of Van Patrick, Ernie Harwell, Ray Lane, Warren Reynolds (Bob's son) and Tom Hemingway.

Certainly, none of the rich and varied history of WJR would be possible without the technical staff and administrative workers. However, it would be as impossible to chronicle their story as it is to fully account for all the names and voices that are (and have been heard) on WJR.

WJR receives countless letters each week citing the correspondent's pride at hearing WJR in some distant part of the nation, or world. Indeed, the two 50,000 watt transformers have produced strong, clear signals to people traveling on Virginia's Blueridge Parkway; up in Cape Cod; off Puget Sound, even on aircraft carriers deep in the North Atlantic! Farmers in Indiana rise to the sound of Marshall Wells; insomniacs in Boston finally drift off with Jay Robert's smooth voice. Jimmy Launce puzzles over riddles sent from Kansas, and J. P. McCarthy answers fan letters from San Francisco.

WJR has a powerful voice. That great voice of the Great Lakes has served Detroit, the

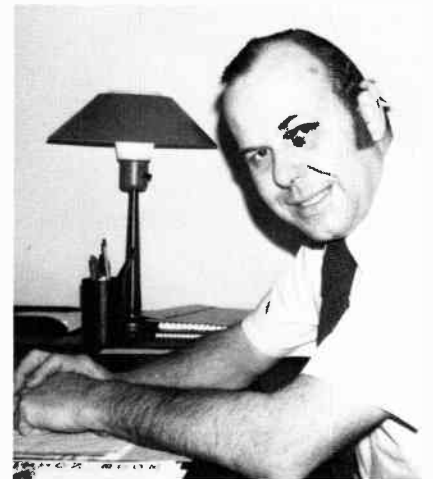
Jay Roberts named "Disc Jockey of the Year" 1966-67 Movie Mirror Magazine



West lobby Fisher building



John P. Begin, chief engineer, successor to retiring Ned Nolan





News director Bill Marris moved to post of operation's manager in late 1971.

State of Michigan and middle-America for 50 great years. The responsibility is an enormous one. But with its dedicated staff, WJR has the talent, the will and the direction to meet the exciting challenge of the next half century. Indeed, the past has been but a prelude to the future.

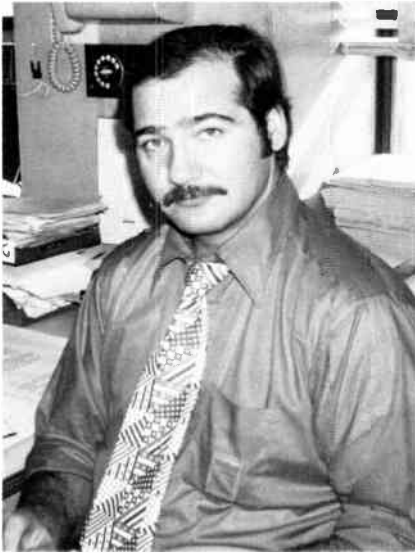
Hal Youngblood, executive producer and stand-by on-the-air performer



Jim Garrett, 25-year WJR veteran, named chief announcer on retirement of Charley Park, late 1970.



the dynamic now



TOM KORZENIOWSKI, news



AM



DAVE TAYLOR, news



AM



Town and Country Show/Farm Roundup



AM



PM



Dan Rather,
CBS news



Marvin Kalb,
CBS news



AM

FIRST
LINE
REPORT

J. P. McCarthy

program director

Music Hall, "The Sounds of the Morning"

IT IS NO ACCIDENT that hundreds of thousands of Detroiters and adjacent suburbanites awake and hustle off to work five days a week, under the spell of J.P. McCarthy.

For this is literally what happens from the moment Joe surfaces at 6:10 a.m. until 9:00. Are the freeways clear, or has Michigan Emergency Patrol reported some accidents or tieups?

Are the Tigers, Lions, Pistons, or Wings up or down? What player or coach should be routed out of bed? Better yet, get sports director Bob Reynolds out of his sack.

This may be the morning to check the betting odds on the Superbowl with Bennie the Bookie in Vegas.

Despite Joe's jesting claim that he is a "cultural bankrupt", don't let him kid you. He is no ordinary Joe. He has a keen awareness of what is going on. Combine this with his lightning recall, a pleasing voice, empathic sincerity, a keen sense of humor and you have the skilled host of the five-day-a-week 12:15 noon **Focus** interview program that brings local, national and international personalities to the WJR microphones.

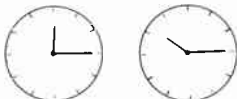


AM

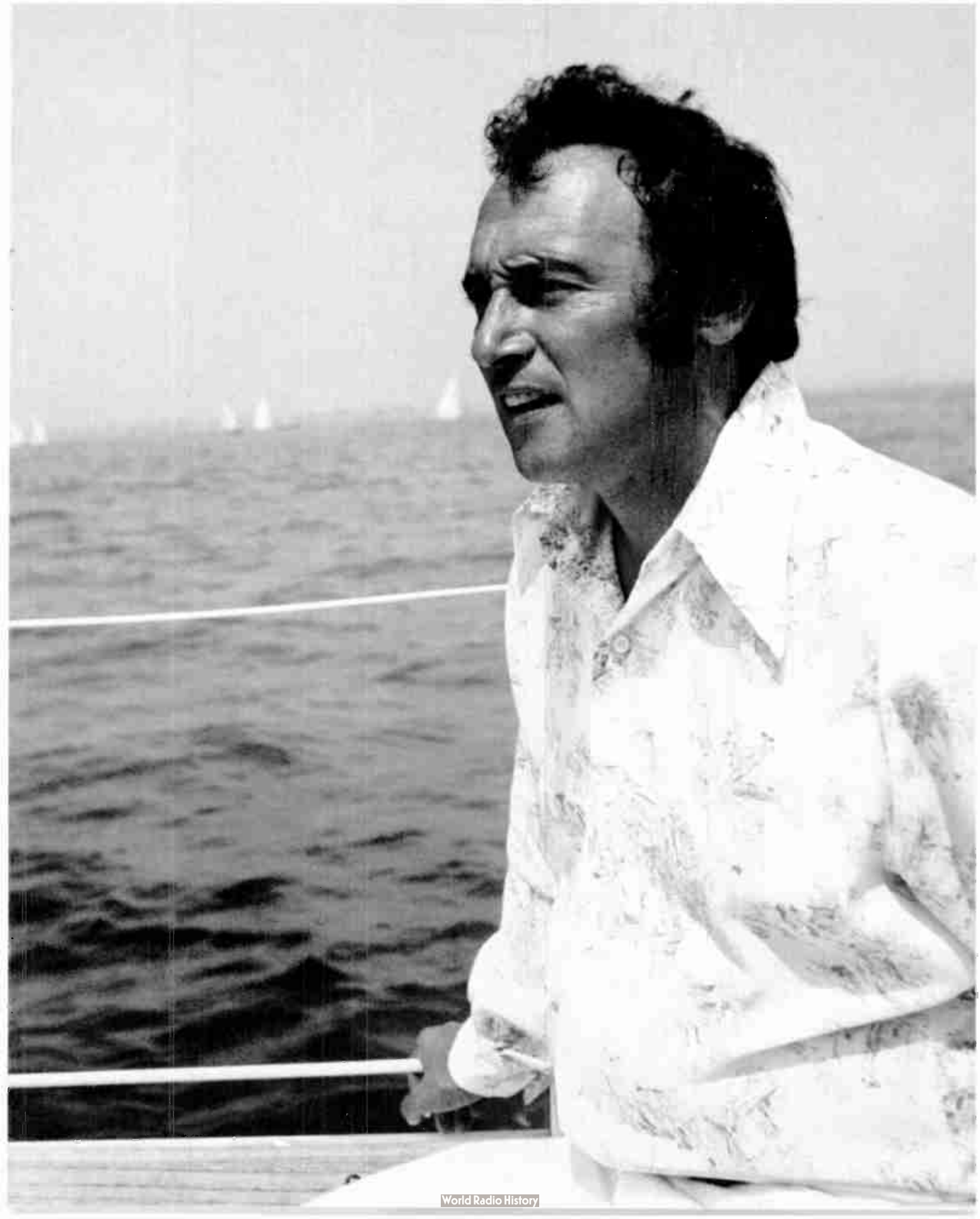


NANCY LINEHAN,
producer

and
Focus



PM





Bud Guest

Sunnyside Break

A MOST DELIGHTFUL teller of tales is Sunnyside Reporter Bud Guest. Since he began viewing the news from the lighter side some twenty-six years ago, he readily admits that he hasn't presented an ulcer-producing thought to his thousands of faithful Sunnyside listeners.

Starting this year, Bud will be changing his routine by doing special features for WJR as a "reporter-at-large."

NO FUNCTION of a modern radio station is more important than the news department, and WJR's nationally acclaimed and honored news department is one of the most active and vital news gathering and reporting sources in broadcasting today. Via telephone, reports are coming in constantly from key correspondents outstate and in the city. Special mobile unit cars are on the move on specific assignments. Each man carries a portable tape recorder for instantaneous use. Heading the WJR 13-man news team is Dave White, assisted by Oscar Frenette. The news as presented on the air is a skillful blend of "actualities", reports from the scene of the event and written text edited for conciseness and accuracy. That's WJR news: first, complete, responsible.



DAVE WHITE,
news director

AM



BILL CURNOW, news



GENE FOGEL, news



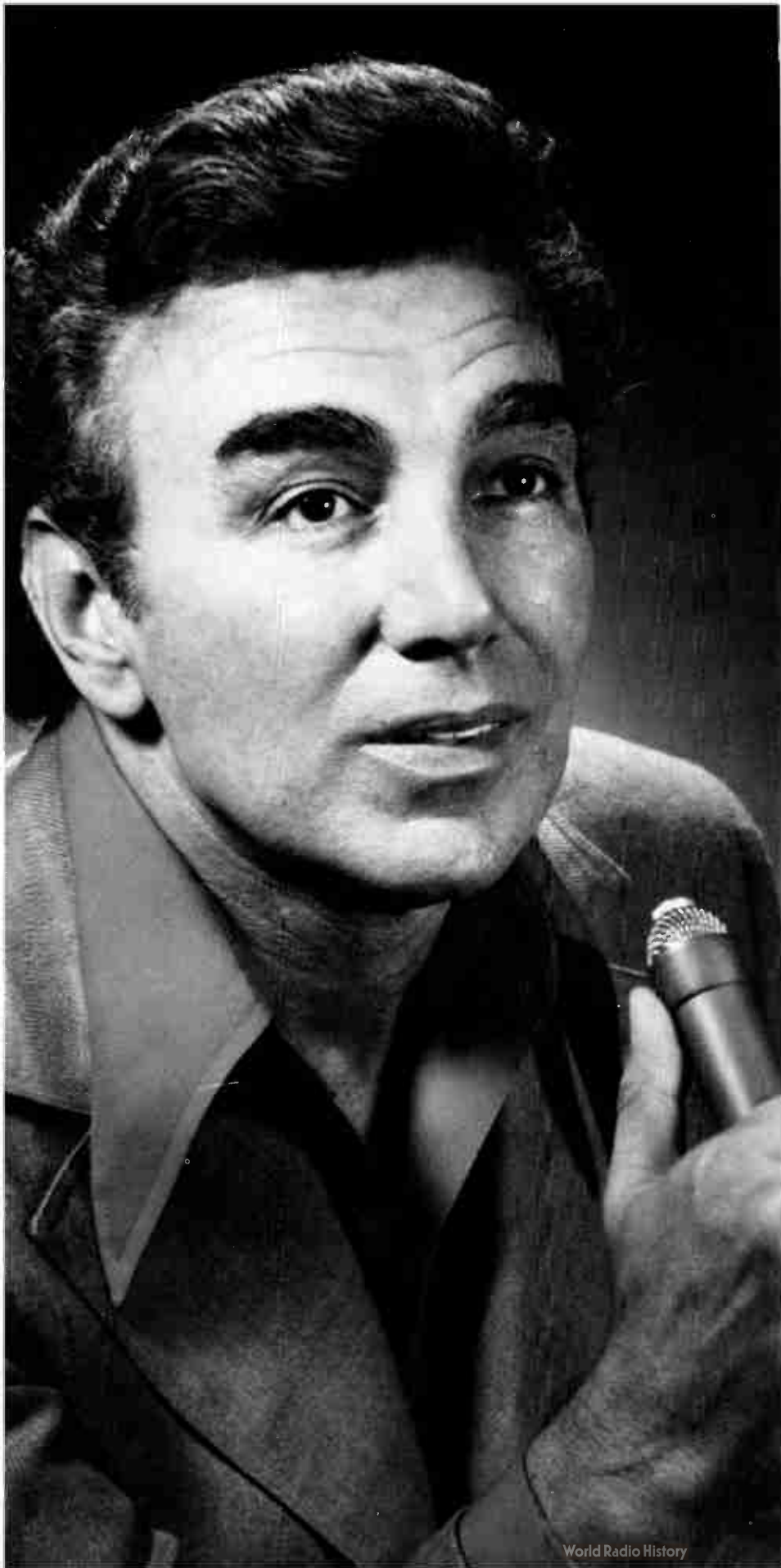
ROD HANSEN, news



DON HOWE, news



JIM DOHERTY, news



Jack Harris

JACK HARRIS is the genial, easy-going, singing host of Open House, an unscripted, mostly-unrehearsed, forty-five minute musical melange that "happens" at 9:15 in the morning, five days a week.

Open House is a visiting-talent showcase that comes across as if Jack, the guests, and the boys in the Jimmy Clark orchestra are all having a whale of a time. And they are.

Jean Oliver is the "steady" guest vocalist that joins her bright chatter with Jack's to further enliven an already upbeat program.

WJR listeners have come to expect the unexpected on the Jack Harris Open House Show, and are not surprised when the big stars that visit the Detroit and Windsor night spots drop in to talk with Jack and do a chorus or two with the Jimmy Clark "aggravation."

Included in the list of headliners who have guested with Jack are Milton Berle, Sammy Davis, Jr., Jimmy Durante, John Gary, Liza Minelli, Barbra Streisand and the Supremes.

The Jack Harris Open House Show



AM



JIMMY CLARK, music director



GEORGE BALL, bass



DICK BOHL, percussion



ED KRUPA, guitar



JEAN OLIVER, songstress



NICK CALANNI, producer



LENNIE SCHICK, sax-clarinet

[World Radio History](#)



EARL SCOTT, trumpet



Dallas
Townsend,
CBS news



Mike Roy's
Cooking
Thing, CBS



"GOOD MORNING EVERYONE," is the hearty greeting that introduces WJR's director of fine arts, Karl Haas, in his classical "Adventures in Good Music", broadcast five days a week at 10:10 in the morning.

The Peabody Award winning program is a welcome visitor in the home and office, as is attested by the thousands of letters that have been received.

But not all his devotees are longhairs, by any means. One sun and wind-weathered farmer told Dr. Haas: "I have a transistor on my tractor. I listen to you every day. I don't understand a damn thing you're talking about, but I like the way you say it."

"Adventures in Good Music" is laced with a generous measure of Dr. Haas' own wide personal experiences and humor. He is able to draw on his extensive circle of friendships over the years with such musical greats as Van Cliburne, Bruno Walter, Dame Myra Hess, Artur Schnabel, Isaac Stern, Artur Rubinstein, Pablo Casals, Leonard Bernstein, and others.

His program titles such as "Prize Liszts", "Sax and the Single Symphony", "Rocking with Rachmaninoff", and "No Stranger in Parodies" reveal his delight in, and mastery of, the subtle twist of words.

Karl Haas

director of fine arts

Adventures in Good Music



AM





AM

Allen Jackson,
CBS news



AM

Abigail Van Buren,
CBS "Dear Abby"



AM

CLIFF MOSELY, news

WHAT IS MICHAEL WHORF's "Kaleidoscope"? Perhaps, Michael, who hosts this 45-minute dramatic narrative presentation, explains it best when he calls it "Theatre of the Mind".

For that is the sum and substance of "Kaleidoscope": with the ancient storyteller's art, combined with the transcribed voices, sounds and music of an era, a time, a place or a personality . . . Michael literally uses your imagination as his stage.

He vividly places you at "Valley Forge" on a cruelly-cold December night when George Washington and his rag-tag Continental army made a bid for victory at the Delaware River. He bids that you remember (even share the agony and triumph) of "The Night to Remember" when nearly two thousand souls sank with the unsinkable ship "Titanic".

He asks you to see again that galvanic moment when the white-maned Robert Frost stood before the Capitol of the United States on a blindingly bright January day and read an inaugural poem . . . that signaled the beginning of "The Kennedy Years".

Dramatic, poignant and prophetic; Theatre of the Mind. That's Kaleidoscope.

Mike Whorf
Kaleidoscope



AM



PM





PM

Douglas Edwards,
CBS news



PM

John Meyer,
CBS news

WITH THE PAUL WINTER SHOW, WJR has further broadened the base of its appeal and programming range. Because, "The Paul Winter Show" is possibly the most literate, urbane, and devastatingly witty program on any radio station today.

"The Paul Winter style" is precisely the same brand of intelligent, relevant presentation of ideas on radio that Winter made so popular in the classroom. He has taught philosophy, humanities, English literature and journalism in virtually every major college and university in the Detroit area, including his alumni university, Michigan.

His program is a collage of Broadway and film music, reviews of plays, books, historical events, fashion, fancy, human foibles and almost anything else that come into a brilliant, concerned and creative mind.

One day, he may launch a metaphorical balloon to honor the "Mad Montgofier Brothers," or he may build an entire show around the far from dignified Elizabethan theatre, or comedy features drawn from his inventive and bizarre sense of humor.



PM



PM



PM



OSCAR FRENETTE
assistant news
director

Paul Winter



PM





**Mike Wallace at
Large, CBS**



**Walter Cronkite,
CBS news**



NOT MANY FELLOWS for an unseen audience, and himself unseen, would strap on a harness and climb out onto a ledge of the 21st floor of the Fisher Building to interview a window washer at his work. But Jimmy Launce did.

For reasons that seemed perfectly sound at the time, Jimmy has also ridden elephants and flown in an F-80 Jetstar.

But because Jimmy Launce is not all gags and Seltzer and because he is an able communicator, he can handle effortlessly things other deejays would die before touching. Like telephoning Thor Heyerdahl to congratulate him on crossing the Atlantic in a papyrus boat.

Somehow Jimmy can make that kind of thing track with a news story about the little old lady from Grand Rapids who broke the mugger's wrist with a karate chop. And with comedy routines and the best music of the day.

Launce's special ability is to take these diverse elements and fit them into a show that offers something a little different each day.

"Afternoon Music Hall" is the way Detroiters get back in touch with the world after they've had their noses to the grindstone all day. Jimmy Launce makes "Music Hall" as warm as the afternoon sun. Even when there is none.



**SANDY HALLECK,
producer**

Jimmy Launce

The Afternoon Music Hall



PM





PAUL CARY, assistant
sports director



Bob Reynolds

*Sports Show and
Sports Magazine of the Air*

BOB REYNOLDS IS A REAL, honest-to-Pete expert in just about any sport you could name: auto racing, golfing, yachting, baseball, football, hockey, tennis, basketball, boxing. The list is endless.

Bob's a real sportsman's sportsman. You can count on him to know what's happening, what isn't, and why! And he knows it while the news is new! And oftentimes before it's news.

He, with assistant sports director Paul Carey and sports editor John Bell, prepares and broadcasts two fifteen-minute sports news programs, Monday through Saturday, one fifteen-minute program Sunday evening, and a special 50-minute "Sports Magazine" every evening when the time isn't pre-empted by play-by-play of Piston basketball or Tiger baseball.

Bob spends part of each March in Lakeland with the Tigers obtaining background for the year's reporting on baseball.

Bob even covered an ostrich race once. "That was my most unusual broadcast," he said.

WJR is truly the power station for sports.



JOHN BELL,
sports editor





Lowell Thomas, CBS news, and a founder of Capital Cities Broadcasting.

The 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. "Information Block"

LISTENERS CAN BE WELL INFORMED on all aspects of the day's news by tuning in the 6:00-7:00 p.m. information block. It covers a wide spectrum of the day's events . . . 6:00 p.m. News, 6:15 Sports, 6:30 Business Barometer, 6:40 Automotive Report, 6:45 Points and Trends, 6:55 "Spirit of '76" features, followed at 7:00 by the incomparable Lowell Thomas.



PM



JIM SMIDEBUSH

Business Barometer



Points and Trends



PM



JOE CALLAHAN

Automotive Report



PM



PM

Phil Rizzuto, CBS Sports Time USA



PM

Stuart Novins, CBS news



SPECTRUM (top row, left to right), Nicholas Von Hoffman, John K. Jessup, M. Stanton Evans; (bottom row) Murray Kempton, Stewart Alsop, Jeffrey St. John.



Del Vaughn CBS news



PM



GENE HEALY, news



PM



PM

"JOURNAL '72" — Weekdays at 7:15 p.m. WJR's News and public affairs department presents documentary programs, interviews on controversial issues and major addresses by prominent thought leaders.



PM

"THIS IS YOUR CAPTAIN speaking. Welcome to Night Flight 760. Our destination tonight is—"

The soft, soothing voice of Captain Jay Roberts rides the booming 50,000 watt WJR signal six nights a week, presenting a five and one-half hour simulated jet trip to some Michigan destination, in cooperation with the Michigan Tourist Council.

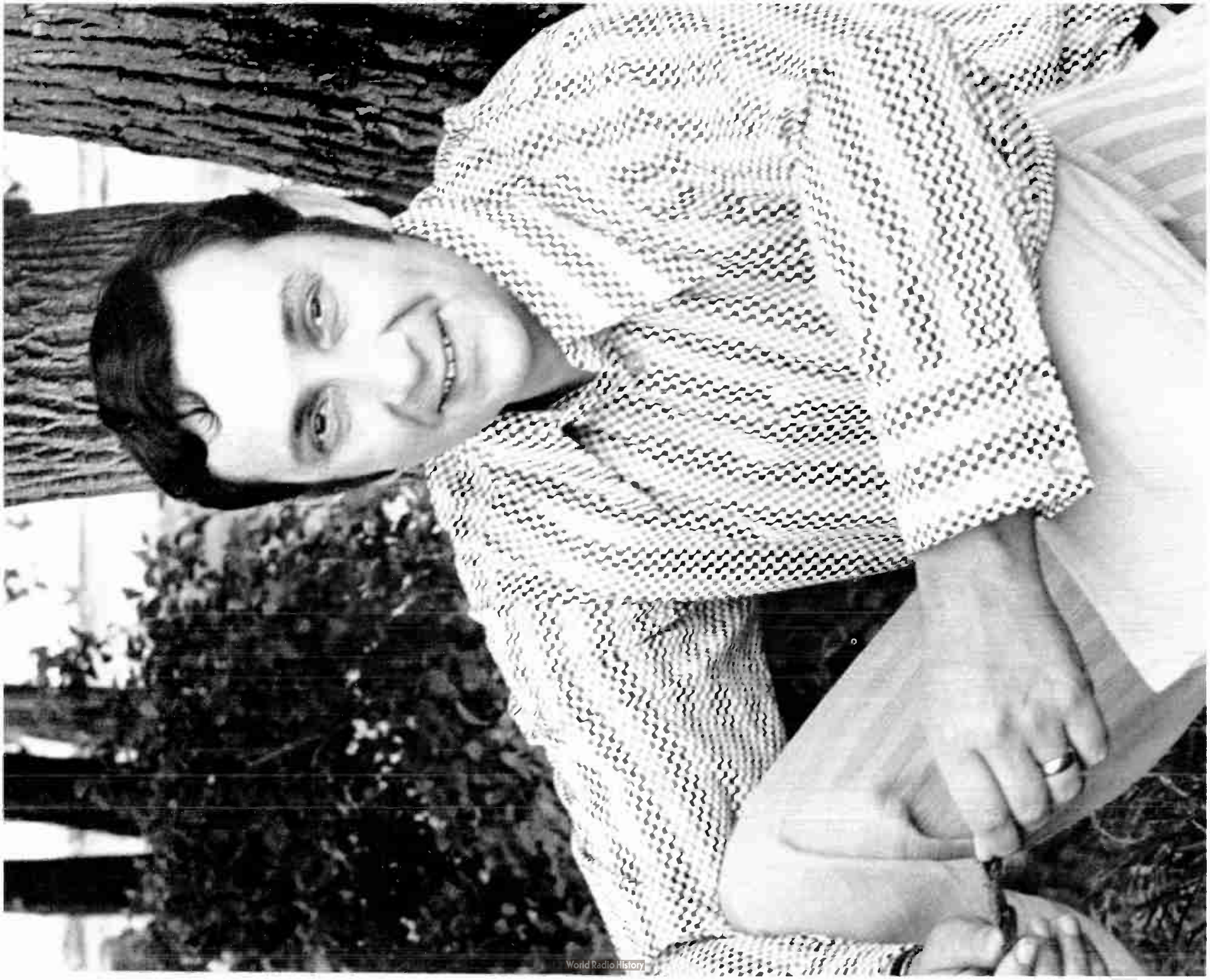
He gives information about the history, scenic attractions, industry, amusements — even the local tales and legends of the area. Interspersed on the hour are the latest news reports.

Sensitive to the different character of night audiences, Jay even programs his music to suit weather conditions. If he has scheduled music for a clear night, and the weather turns "horrible", he selects up-tempo music with the thought to keep people alert who may be driving.

Listeners to Night Flight 760 are not merely insomniacs, but include the night guard, the traveller, and the millions of folk who earn their living by working the dark hours of the day. As one magazine writer said of Jay, "thousands go to bed with him."

Jay Roberts

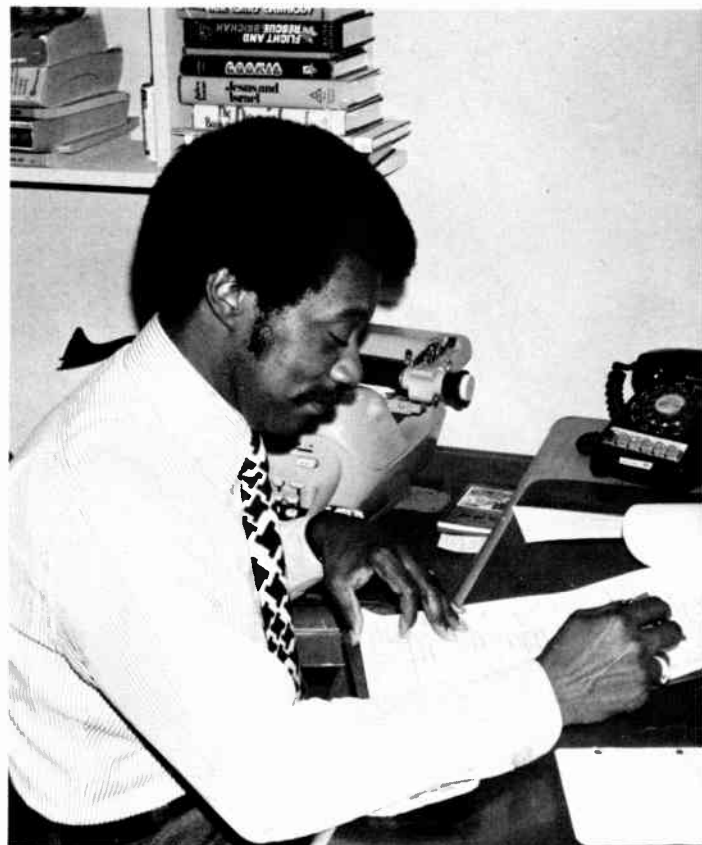
Night Flight 760



The guys on WJR's **WEEKEND**



The ED HEAD "Weekend".



The GENE ELZY "Weekend Jazz Scene".

"WEEKEND" is a "Broadcast Triptych" of information and service developed for WJR's highly mobile and active audience.

Keystoned by Marc Avery with the Saturday morning "Music Hall" and Ted Strasser's "Patterns in Music" on Sunday morning, they are followed by Ed Head who puts his particular personality stamp on later segments of the afternoon and evening.

Programmed with music, news, weather, traffic and entertainment information, "Weekend" also embraces special events broadcasts such as Tigers', Lions', and Pistons' games, the Metropolitan Opera and jazz expert Gene Elzy's Saturday night jazz scene.

Also "at large" in the sweeping format are the CBS "Dimension" features and network news reports.



MARC AVERY "At Large".



TED STRASSER "Patterns in Music".



RICHARD G. RAKOVAN, general sales manager



JAMES E. LONG, national sales manager

*and now
the folks
behind the
scenes . . .*



**ROBERT HABERMAS, president Wolverine
Broadcast Network, division of WJR**



MICHAEL MUTHLEB, account executive



VERNERS J. ORE, account executive



DONALD N. PETTIBONE, account executive



DOUGLAS W. WOODY, account executive



ROSETTA E. ALLEN, billing clerk



MURIEL ATWATER, assistant sales service manager



T. BEN BASS, business manager



HELEN M. BLISS, assistant business manager



RICHARD D. BOOTH, FM program director



HOFF BRADFORD, communications



JAMES O. BROW, engineering assistant



ROSINA M. CARRIERE, sales service manager



GEORGE B. FIRESTINE, JR., engineer



JOAN V. GUZIK, traffic department



FRANCES A. HAHN, traffic manager



MARLENE A. HARVEY, secretary to program & engineering



JOHN N. HENRY, JR., engineer



KEITH W. KINNEY, engineer



DONALD L. KOLLMORGEN, engineer



CHERYL A. MOTYKA, record library



DANIEL A. OGDEN, production



DONALD OLSZEWSKI, engineer



SHIRLEY M. PETTIGREW, secretary to production



MARY JO POISALL, FM supervisor



DOROTHY H. POWERS, secretary to James Quello



JOAN A. PRUETT, receptionist



MARION L. RADICK, secretary to sales



HELEN M. RIGELHOF, secretary to J.P. McCarthy



SHERRI ROGERSON, secretary to newsroom



VERNA J. SKUTNIK, secretary to Guest & Reynolds



GLORIA STASKIEWICZ, secretary to sales managers



DONALD E. STOKER, engineer



HELEN M. TARTOF, communications



MARGARET A. TOROSIAN, secretary to sales & account executives



BURTON H. VAN GEISON, engineer



PATRICIA G. VINSON, student apprentice



BEVERLY J. VIRGIS, traffic



GERTRUDE R. WESGATE, secretary to W. R. James

THESE PAGES have presented the history of a fresh, clear, radio voice that stands out from all the rest.

It is a unique voice, with a charisma that has been developing for half a century.

It is a great voice, befitting the Great Lake State in which it was born.

It is a powerful voice, emanating from the gleaming, golden tower of the Fisher Building in the heart of the dynamic Motor City.

It is a distinctive, imaginative, provocative voice.

It is the voice of personalities. People.

It is "Rapid-Robert" Reynolds. The Kaleidoscope of Mike Whorf. The chuckle of Haas. The light touch of Guest. The songs of Harris. The cadence of Clark. The soothing voice of Roberts. It is the wit and humor of McCarthy, Launce, Paul Winter and all the others.

It is the authoritative voice of news. White. Frenette. Taylor. Korzeniowski. And the other competent men.

Unusual. Comfortable. Exciting. Warm. Personal.

A constant companion. An institution!

That's WJR radio.

Prepared for WJR by Robert B. Tuttle, editor and publisher of Impresario Magazine. Sources of information include a thesis by Charles Gordon Shaw in 1942, newspaper stories, WJR publicity releases and publications, and personal interviews with staff personnel. Copyright 1972 by Robert B. Tuttle.

