

'CAROL' STORMS THROUGH NEW ENGLAND TOPPLING ONE TV, TEN RADIO TOWERS

Many New England stations suspend regular programming to carry hurricane warnings and disaster information.

NEW ENGLAND'S disastrous "Hurricane Carol," which last week wrought up to a half-billion dollars in destruction, killing 50 persons and injuring about a thousand, also was disastrous for a number of radio-tv facilities in the area, first reports indicated last week.

Casualties to the high winds were the 649-foot tower of WBZ-TV Boston, which toppled and also destroyed some of the Westinghouse Broadcasting Co. outlet's second floor offices; a 375-foot directional tower operated by WTAG-AM-FM Worcester; the tower of WVOM Brookline (Boston), and two towers of WPJB-AM-FM Providence. WNAC Boston lost the tops of two of its three radio towers to the hurricane and the two towers of WEAN Providence were downed.

The fm tower of WPRO Providence was flattened, putting the WPRO-FM facility off the air, and a power failure put WPRO-AM off the air for two hours Tuesday afternoon. Except for that interruption, WPRO-AM operated at full power. The tower of WICE Providence was knocked down and its transmitter and sight washed away from its location at Bold Point in East Providence. WICE will be off the air at least 60 days.

Electric power failures were presumed to have put many stations off the air.

Broadcasters rose to the emergency both before and after the storm struck Tuesday.

WTAG's directional tower was two-thirds knocked down but broadcasting was not affected. The station used one of its three gas-powered generators at its transmitter at Holden.

Warning Bulletins

WTAG had been airing hurricane warning bulletins since the previous evening, maintaining contact with the Weather Bureau in Boston, the Worcester airport and civil defense headquarters. Station personnel manned telephones, answering queries from listeners mindful of last year's tornado disaster there.

A WTAG mobile unit went to Holden and taped an interview with station news commentator Jim Little and Cliff Davis, weatherman, of the Worcester *Evening Gazette*. Special bulletins warned listeners to beware of fallen wires and other hazards.

Lyda Flanders, on her weekday *Modern Kitchen*, rallied her listeners to act quickly to preserve fruits torn from trees by the wind, airing emergency canning recipes.

WBZ General Manager Paul Mills was credited with some quick thinking which possibly saved many lives. Acting on a "hunch," he ordered all employes out of the sales, traffic and promotion offices to the first floor a few seconds before the tower fell at 12:10 p.m.

Damage to WBZ-AM-FM-TV facilities was estimated at a half-million dollars when the tower snapped at the 200-foot mark and tons of steel fell across the nearby two-story building which houses the stations. Cost of a new tower was estimated at a quarter-million dollars. Insurance fully covered all damage.

WBZ-TV was off the air from 12:10 p.m. to 9:10 p.m., resuming telecasting with the use of a 216-foot standby tower, installed in 1951 for emergencies. WBZ was off the air for less than three minutes because of a power failure.

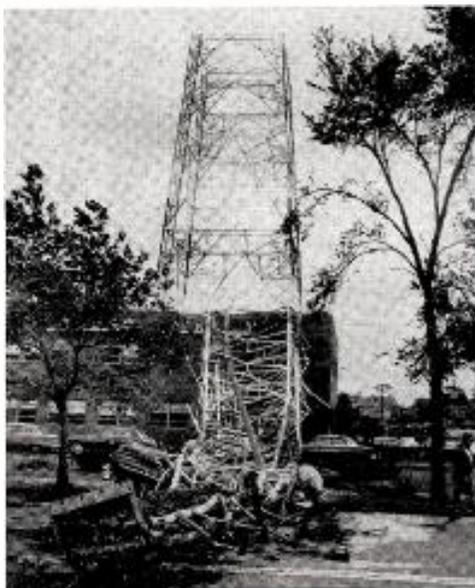
One employe, Joyce Johnson, 20, received minor injuries when debris fell around her.

W. C. Swartley, WBZ-TV general manager, in Chicago at an NBC affiliates meeting, re-

turned to Boston by air, and W. H. Hauser, chief engineer, drove back from a vacation on Cape Cod.

A 100-man emergency clean-up crew removed the debris of the tower within an hour to clear a roadway. Films of the destroyed tower were made by WBZ-TV and fed to NBC-TV by WNAC-TV Boston, CBS affiliate. WBZ radio supplied news to WJAR-TV Providence, cut off from news wire service to Boston by power failures. WJAR-TV, operating on emergency power, could transmit only network programs. The station resumed regular programming Friday with the arrival of a Caterpillar mobile electric set which enabled the station to return to full power.

When the tops of two of WNAC's three radio towers were downed at 10:40 a.m. Tuesday, the station continued on the air under



THIS is what remained of the 649-foot tower of WBZ-TV Boston after it was toppled over by last Tuesday's New England hurricane. Boston Post photo shows how the tower fell across the building housing WBZ-AM-FM-TV studios and offices, causing total damages of a half-million dollars, with replacement for the tower estimated at a quarter-million dollars.

emergency power from a diesel-operated generator.

The Yankee Network key station continued on the air all day with messages from state police, Gov. Christian Herter's office, civil defense agencies, municipalities and others. Storm warnings were broadcast about every 10 minutes, the station said.

The WNAC radio towers are in Burlington, Mass. A 40-foot segment was blown from one, a 50-foot portion was bent over from the second and the third was left intact.

WNAC-TV was put off the air at 11:02 a.m. because of a power failure, but returned to operation sometime later.

It was the second time WEAN Providence, another Yankee outlet, had lost its two radio towers. The first time was during the hurricane of 1938.

WWLP (TV) Springfield instituted an emergency program under direction of William L. Putnam, treasurer and stockholder. The tv

station claims it was the only one in that area on the air without interruption, with John Quill, weatherman for the ch. 61 outlet, on the air almost continuously.

The telephone company sent a truck to WWLP's mountain transmitter location to keep a studio quiz show—depending upon telephone calls—from being interrupted. When network service was interrupted, the station maintained service by its own microwave link.

WPJB Providence was thrown off the air when its two transmitter towers were blown down.

WMTW (TV) Poland, Me., with transmitter located on the top of Mt. Washington, N. H., reported winds up to 150 miles per hour, but no damage to its transmitter. When the hurricane hit, WMTW was installing a microwave disc and the end of the transmitter building was open, but the disc was anchored down.

WVDA Boston stayed on the air throughout the hurricane, breaking into programs from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. to air information on the disaster, according to Lambert Beeuwkes, general manager. The station had four crews of news reporters roving the area from Gloucester, Mass., to Newport, R. I., with tape recorders and beeper phones.

WVDA newsmen interviewed other newsmen at WBZ-TV regarding the destruction of the latter's tower. Rod MacLeish, WVDA news chief, fed ABC an all-New England roundup on the hurricane, Mr. Beeuwkes said.

WKBS Mineola, L. I., N. Y., reported it gave continuous barometer readings from Montauk Point to New York City during the hurricane and was able to predict for listeners the exact center of the storm as it approached and hit Long Island.

Telephones Out

WEIM Fitchburg, Mass., was cut off the air and for a while both power and telephone services were interrupted as falling trees pulled down poles and wires in three places along the feed to its transmitter on Alpine Road.

Power was restored first and WEIM operated as usual from its studios by using its mobile unit to replace the downed telephone wires. Telephone wires were back to normal two hours after power was restored, with Chief Engineer Ted Kalin and engineers Jim Gould and Cliff Ey helping restore the station to the air.

WCOP Boston remained on the air without interruption, abandoning all regular programs in favor of transmitting reports on progress of the hurricane, flashes from stricken communities and warnings.

Roland C. Hale, chief engineer and assistant station manager, ordered an auxiliary gasoline-driven generator out to take over power problems. Bill Marlowe aired reports furnished by the *Boston Post* editorial staff. He was relieved by Ellie Dierdorff, Jim Brokaw and Carl Stuart.

Boston Post Promotion Manager Mark Finley coordinated radio news coverage.

New York stations as a whole stepped up their presentations of special programs and bulletins on progress of the hurricane, traffic reports, accounts of damage, etc. WNBC was off the air for 29 seconds while auxiliary equipment was put into use when power failed.

On Long Island, in the hurricane's path, some stations were less fortunate. WPAC and WALK Patchogue were reported off the air throughout Tuesday due to the power failure.

WHLI Hempstead, L. I., using its emergency generator from sign-on Tuesday morning, missed no airtime, called in off-duty personnel, and provided listeners with bulletins every five minutes, plus on-the-scene reports and interviews in flooded areas. WHLI estimated at least 100 special spot announcements were bought by utilities companies, stores announcing postponements of scheduled sales, and the like.