

WOR-TV, KHJ-TV Buy MCA-TV Western Films

IN A PURCHASE estimated at \$1.5 million, WOR-TV New York and KHJ-TV Los Angeles last week acquired from MCA-TV a package of 123 feature-length films starring Gene Autry and Roy Rogers. Both tv stations are owned and operated by General Teleradio Inc.

The package, consisting of 56 Autry films and 67 Rogers features, originally was produced by Republic Pictures. A WOR-TV spokesman said that none of the pictures has ever been shown on tv.

Although no specific programming plans have been announced for the new package, the features will be cut to one-hour length by Republic Pictures before release to the tv stations. The contract provides that the films also will be made available for showing on WNAC-TV Boston and WHBQ (TV) Memphis, both General Teleradio stations.

WOR-TV plans to institute an extensive promotion, advertising and merchandising campaign on behalf of the new package, similar to the one it conducted last year for its highly-rated *Million Dollar Movie* feature film program.

Higher Ratings on Re-Run Claimed for 'Disneyland'

ALL but one repeat of *Disneyland* films, which have been on a re-run basis on ABC-TV since last March 26, have gotten higher audience shares than the originals, Don Coyle, ABC director of research, claimed last Wednesday.

Mr. Coyle said his conclusions were based on Trendex ratings covering nine major cities and he added that National Nielsen Ratings for two weeks ending March 26 "confirm the rating-rise of the *Disneyland* [Wednesdays, 7:30-8:30 p.m. EST] repeat shows." The only re-run which failed to earn a higher audience share was the first which earned almost the same audience rating as did the original. The April 13 repeat of "Davy Crockett" obtained the highest Trendex rating, Mr. Coyle said, bringing a 35.4, or 25% above the 28.0 rating of the film

shows in the same cities last Dec. 15.

The rating studies, according to Mr. Coyle, indicate that "repeat performances, by themselves, do not jeopardize audience levels."

Official Films' Nidorf Resigns as Board Chairman

RESIGNATION of Michael Nidorf as chairman of the board of directors of Official Films Inc., New York, was announced last week by Harold L. Hackett, president of Official. Mr. Nidorf, who will continue his stock investment in the company, said he resigned because of "increasing demands" made upon his time in directing the career of singing star Jo Stafford.

Mr. Hackett said Seymour Reed, company treasurer, has been elected to the board of directors.

Mr. Nidorf's post as board chairman has not been filled.

WNAC-TV Corners 'Ramar'

TELEVISION Programs of America last week announced that WNAC-TV Boston has acquired exclusive rights to *Ramar of the Jungle* series in that area in a transaction involving more than \$100,000. It was believed by TPA to be "one of the largest syndication film sales for a single property ever recorded in Boston."

Michael M. Sillerman, executive vice president of TPA, said that a unique aspect of the sale was a commitment by WNAC-TV to buy any future *Ramar* films TPA might make. WNAC-TV has obtained rights to 52 completed *Ramar* programs. TPA plans to produce an additional 26 episodes of the *Ramar* series.

ABC-TV Show Names Smith

APPOINTMENT of J. English Smith, program service manager, ABC-TV, as coordinator of *Warner Bros. Presents* (Tuesday, 7:30-8:30 p.m. EDT), which will premiere Sept. 13, was announced last week. He will headquarter in Burbank, Calif. His replacement as program service manager in the New York office has not yet been announced.

Ziv's 'Mr. D. A.' Renewed By 94% of Present Clients

RENEWAL rate of 94% of advertisers sponsoring *Mr. District Attorney*, Ziv Television Programs Inc. series, was announced last week by M. J. Rifkin, vice president in charge of sales.

Sponsors who have renewed include: Carter Products Inc., which will again carry the show in the 36 markets it used last year; Bank of St. Louis, St. Louis; Safeway Stores, Albuquerque; James G. Gill Co. and Pet Milk Co., Charlotte, N. C.; Stroh's Brewery, Kalamazoo, Mich., and Ft. Wayne, Ind.; Pioneer Title Insurance & Trust, Las Vegas; National Brewing Co., Greenville, N. C.; General Tire & Rubber Co., Bakersfield, Calif.; Capitol Stores Div., National Food Stores, Baton Rouge La.; Pioneer Bank and Plymouth Laundry, Chattanooga, Tenn., and High's Ice Cream Corp., Norfolk, Va.

Screen Gems Sales at High With 372 Stations in Lineup

JOHN H. MITCHELL, vice president in charge of sales, Screen Gems Inc., New York, tv subsidiary of Columbia Pictures Corp., reported last week that sales have reached an all-time high with 372 stations using Screen Gems products.

Mr. Mitchell announced that *All Star Theatre*, the syndicated series of top-rated *Ford Theatre*, recorded its 201st sale last week when KTVT (TV) Salt Lake City purchased the series.

The company's 15-minute sports interview program entitled *Big Playback* is being shown by 83 stations and *Adventures of Rin Tin Tin* has been syndicated in 50 markets. The latter series is also telecast on ABC-TV in 70 additional markets under sponsorship of the National Biscuit Co.

The syndicated version of the current *Fire-side Theatre*, titled *Top Plays of 1955* has been sold in 23 markets and *Jet Jackson* has been purchased by 15 outlets, Mr. Mitchell said.

MCA-TV Opens 2 New Offices

SALES SERVICE has been organized at MCA-TV Ltd., New York, tv film syndicators, so that a phone call placed from anywhere in the nation can bring an MCA salesman within 24 hours, says Wynn Nathan, vice president in charge of sales. Mr. Nathan's statement marked the opening last week of new MCA-TV sales offices in Indianapolis, Ind., and Grand Rapids, Mich. Mr. Nathan reported MCA-TV now has 22 "fully-staffed" offices with more than 70 salesmen.

FILM PEOPLE

Gary Stevens, formerly with Blaine-Thompson Co., N. Y., handling radio-tv advertising for Warner Bros., Burbank, Calif., named general manager, Warner Bros. tv div., which will produce upcoming ABC-TV *Warner Bros. Presents*; **Art Silver**, manager, Warner's trailer dept., will be in charge of "Behind-the-Scenes" segment of program.

Roy Lockwood, formerly producer, CBS-TV, to Robert Lawrence Productions, N. Y., as producer-director.

Sy Weintraub, executive vice president, Flamingo Films, N. Y., father of girl, Lori Gail, April 11.

Paul G. Thomas, 36, associate producer, Marterto Productions, Hollywood, and brother of ABC-TV star **Danny Thomas**, died in automobile accident near Barstow, Calif., April 16.



KEY PARTICIPANTS in NBC Film Div.'s national sales meeting held a fortnight ago in New York are (l to r): seated, Ted Sissan, director of the division; Carl M. Stanton, vice president in charge of the division; Jake Keever, national sales manager; standing, Dan Curtis, central sales manager, and Cliff Ogden, western sales manager.