



Record Crowd Turns Out for "Finale" Which Turns Into "Continuance"

By Dan Grabel

North, South, East and West. They came from everywhere, those dedicated PN members who wanted to be on the scene when, it appeared, the final curtain was coming down on the NBC retirees organization Peter Peterson and engineering colleagues created informally in 1987.

Good news – it didn't happen. The other shoe did not drop. PN lives.

The venue again – LaMaganette on 50th street and Third avenue. The turnout – bigger than ever, 240 guests at the annual luncheon. Retirees from as far as Hawaii, Maine and Florida showed up to break bread, re-tell old stories and enjoy the companionship of those with whom they had spent endless hours, days and years at NBC and on distant remotes.

Peter Peterson read a roll call of faraway luncheon attendees and the long distance honors went to retired TD John Burkhart and his wife Elizabeth from Maui, Hawaii. He also introduced three of NBC's "color girls," the

women who sat in front of the early color camera while engineers worked on facial tones: Susan Adams, Marilyn Gray and Gloria Kenyon.

Peter called the annual Sunday luncheon a "love affair" with the past. He said, "You are the people who did good things and showed – through television – how America lived, and the world, too. You all helped make it happen. The greatest generation? – it is sitting here in this room!"

He recalled that 30 NBCers showed up for the first luncheon, 120 for the next, and today – double that. Peter remembered the first newsletter was created by the late Sam Sambataro with an electric typewriter. Then Heino Ripp's great improvement, using an early computer. Finally Frank

Vierling's magnificent, glossy, in-color version with good photography and artwork.

Heino Ripp told of his early problems getting out the newsletter. The computer age was young in 1987.

This writer spoke next and pointed out that a run of 14 years – PN's life so far - wasn't bad in



Peter opens our annual "Love Affair."

WHAT'S INSIDE

La Mag Luncheon.....	1
Pictures, Pictures	4
Retrospective	7
Ripp's TV Life in Rhyme.....	10
Enid Roth Writes	15
Detritus Maximus	16
We Get Letters & Poems.....	17
A Ripped Letter	18
B&W Reflections	19

Caught in the Web.....	23
25 Year Honorees	25
Snapshot	26
Yet More Letters.....	28
News Man, Reuven Frank.....	29
Silent Microphones	30
We Get Notes	32
A Message from Vic	33
Jack Irving's Album	34
The Good Life.....	36
Gurnee Recalls.....	36

Marilyn On Allen.....	38
And More Notes.....	39
Kudos	40
LiBretto Reflects.....	41
Memory Serves.....	42
Radio Roundup	43
Don Blair Pens	45
A Note from Perry.....	45
Ken's Korner	46
A Man for the Time.....	48
A Message From Pete	49



*Computers were young—
we were young—ger when PN was born.*

TV-land. Milton Berle, Sid Caesar, Jack Paar, and even the original Howdy Doody did not survive that long. And among newspapers, I recalled a list of dailies no longer with us:

The Journal, The Graphic, The Mirror, The Sun, The World, The Telegram, Long Island Press, etc. All gone.

Special thanks were offered to those contributors no longer with us – Ken Arber, Dick Dudley and Roy Silver.

When director Enid Roth began her message, she said Peter had told her to limit her remarks to two minutes. Enid tried to assure that by bringing along her trusty stopwatch.

“Two minutes?”

Enid asked, incredulously. “Well, I’ve brought NBC stop watch number 1529 to check it. It was issued to me eons ago and I still have it. This is the watch that timed Dave Garroway on “Today,” Arlene Francis on “Home Show,” “Jeopardy” with Art Fleming, Hugh Downs, and the “Perry Como Show” and remotes from all over the country.



“Times” remembered.



*Special thanks to our departed:
Ken Arber, Dick Dudley and Roy
Silver.*

“This is the stopwatch that timed JFK’s inauguration on that snowy day in Washington in 1961, and at Arlington Cemetery for JFK’s burial in 1963.

“This watch is now an antique, and so am I. I wear glasses, I’ve had cancer, and I’ve had senior memory lapses. Although often I cannot remember where I put my glasses ten minutes ago,

when I come to a PN luncheon I remember everything.

“To me this group represents the early age of television. Responsibility, integrity, and great people made it that way. I’m proud to have been part of it. Without PN magazine, I’ll be out of the loop –and so will you. I feel very sad and I want to make a toast to those who made this day possible – Peter, and Heino, and Frank and Dan. It’s a toast I first heard in Mexico, and here is its translation in English... ‘Health, wealth, love and time to enjoy them.’ ”

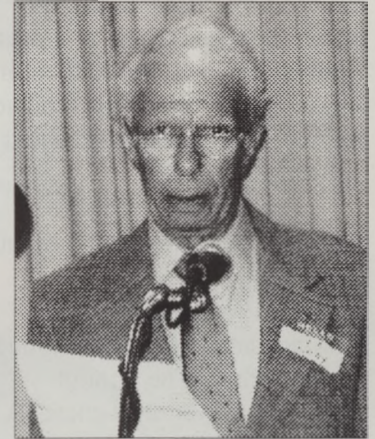
[Editor’s note to Enid Roth: I still have NBC stop watch number 996]

Announcer Vic Roby lamented the small turnout of his colleagues and hoped that PN Magazine could continue with sponsorship – companies that make eye glasses, hearing aids, and pacemakers. Vic said, “When I came to NBC there were 20 staff announcers. Today, there are just three.”

News vice president Bill Wheatly brought best wishes from the company and said it was a privilege to have worked with many of today’s luncheon guests.



*Bill Wheatly brought best
wishes from the company.*



*Retired Vic Roby laments, “Just
3 staff announcers left.”*

Finally, Peterson returned to the rostrum to disclose that three PN members have agreed to take over the reigns and manage the PN organization. They are Marilyn Altman, Lenny Stucker and James Marshall.

The audience was happily surprised and overjoyed.

Marilyn said, “We are not going to let Peacock North disappear so easily. We are very much against PN ‘petering’ out. This is a very special group. We’re going to make it grow and continue the tradition that Peter, Heino, Frank and Dan have established over the past 14 years. Some form of communication will continue, but not as the current, elaborate glossy 48-page magazine.”

Lenny added, “We are the second generation. I’ve enjoyed every moment of my PN membership. We’ll give it our very best try to carry on as a healthy, vibrant organization.”

Finally, Jim Marshall added, “At some point we all evolve in history. We feel that it is now our job to continue PN as living history.”

Peter, Ripp, Frank and all our PN members join me (*Dan*) in wishing them great success in their new venture and for another successful *Peacock North* run.



MEET YOUR NEW PN STAFF

Marilyn Altman:

For those of you who don't know me, I am a 51-year young, New York City born and bred woman (Washington Heights), 1971 alumnus of CCNY (political science major) First Class FCC licensee (a distinction now obsolete) who, when arriving on the television scene in 1974, was told by an NBC executive who will remain nameless (mainly because I cannot remember his name) that I will "probably never work at NBC because no one will want to work with a girl." Well, after making my debut at NBC in 1975 as a video operator, then as a master control transmission engineer, I finally landed steady work as a technical director with the "Today Show" in 1980. I remained a technical director for the company till 1998 having worked on every news show, sporting event and entertainment program (except for SNL) that the network had to offer. They were glorious and fulfilling years. I left the staff of NBC only to return in 1999 as a technical manager for Network News Field Operations for the political year and other associated news assignments.

After being associated with NBC for 26 years, it is my honor and pleasure to be in the company of all of you under the *Peacock North* umbrella.

For those of you who don't know me, and for those who do, I hope this is the start of a beautiful friendship.

James (Jim) Marshall:

In 1962 I graduated from DeVry Technical Institute in Chicago and began my engineering career with an NBC affiliate in Charleston, WV. On April 1, 1963, I joined NBC in Chicago as a Group-2 Cameraman. During my twelve-year tenure, I gained experience in areas of camera, lighting, audio, video, VTR and TD. I was Senior Video on CG-3 for three years and then transferred to New York in 1975. Shortly after transferring, I went into Management and became a Technical Supervisor for 18 months. Being a hands-on person, I missed the action and returned to NABET as a video engineer. Most of my time was spent travelling with Sports, News and Entertainment. In 1983, I became a Technical Director and worked on The Cosby Show, Phil Donahue and various news assignments. In 1994 I started Late Night with Conan O'Brien and continued with that show until my retirement in 1997.

Now my wife Mary and I are snowbirds, splitting our time between Florida and Ohio.



Introducing, Len Stucker, Marilyn Altman and Jim Marshall, our new PN

My hobbies are fishing, building computers, fishing, playing Tournament Cribbage (which I learned in the back of N-6 from Jim Sunder) and fishing.

Marilyn Altman supplies us with Len's bio.

Len Stucker:

If you don't remember Lenny Stucker, here are a few highlights of his accomplishments:

Lenny joined NBC in 1969, springing into action as a cable puller on the TONIGHT SHOW and then becoming a cameraman on that show in 1970. He was one of the first ENNG cameramen at NBC (1973) when newsgathering started to take off. He went on to become a technical director in Sports working closely with the likes of Ted Nathanson, Harry Coyle, Don Ohlmeyer, Michael Weisman. He was the first TD at NBC to direct sporting events while still maintaining a NABET status. He eventually left NBC in 1990 with nowhere in particular to go. He ended up one month later directing for USA NETWORK. Then with TALENTWORKS, a company he helped create and became sole owner in 1990, his boundaries expanded into the international arena. He became the program director for Europe for Bertelsman Media. He is presently the co-owner and co-creator of Battlebots, the new American rage..... we're talking **BIG!**

So, if you don't remember Lenny Stucker, he's the snappy dresser with the smile on his face holding the Hasbro prototype Bot in one hand and a toy contract in the other. Now does that help? ☐

Your new contacts:

Marilyn Altman:

732-906-2554 or altmanm50@yahoo.com

Len Stucker:

631-232-2456 or talentw@ix.netcom.com

Jim Marshall:

740-374-8527 or jwmary@yahoo.com

LA MAGANETTE

THE BASH



*George Corrado
& Rosemary
Doherty*

*Bambi Tascarella
& Al Robbins*



Gene Frisch



*Gigi Harold
& Don Gogarty*



Don & Lois Elis



*▲ Dot & Bill
DeLannoy*



*Hank
Huestis*



*?, Carol Aerenson &
Joan Gifford.*



*The Auerbachs,
Barbara & Dick.*



Fred Collins



Mary Marshall



*◀ Bob
Mausler*



*Dorothy Brodine & George
Moyancheff*



Arthur Zarakas



*The RWDs – Bob &
Elizabeth Davis*

Heino Ripp & Frank Vierling





Joel Spector, Joe & Madalyn Gilligan



Lillian Russo



Pete Fatovich & Dave Wilson



Bob Garthwaite



Ross Martindale



Jim & Florence Sunder



Bob Van Ry



Peter Flynn & Noel Engler

Irving
Messing ▼



The Grabels, Dan & Pat



Sharon Stucker



Son & Mother – Gary and Peg Peterson.



Gretta Rogg & Ariane Mautner.



Theresa & John Scuoppo.



Francesca Peters & Gary Iorio.



Jack &
Irene
Keegan



Arnold
Rand



The other Peters,
George.



Mary Polak, Vivian Mausler.



Rick Berman & Marilyn Altman.



Rick Caro.



Gloria Clyné & Len Stucker.



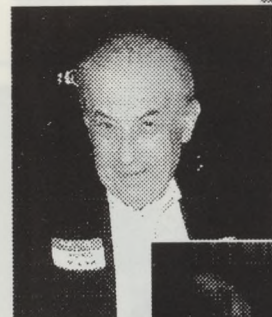
Ed
Gough



Charles
& Fran
Davison



Ernest & Olive Monah



Herb
Polak



Win Mullen



Marg McGlynn
Bud Shadel &
Frank Weill.



Roger
Muir



Gene
& Jane
Garnes.



Len Stucker



Howard
Atlas



Dollie
Messing



Tony & Nancy Nelle.



Beryl Pfizer

The smiles tell the story – until we meet again.

Retrospective

By Dan Grabel



Retrospectives?

Everybody does them — museums, TV docs, newspapers, and now Peacock North. Retrospectives may cover a lifetime of work, ours does, even though that lifetime is just 15 years.

PN come into being following Pete Peterson's retirement party. The first issues were one and two page creations from the late Sam Sambataro who was the group's first president. But in time the publication evolved — to 8 pages, 10, 24, then the monster 48. And we went from newsprint to glossy stock. And from just type to photos and art work, thanks to Heino Ripp, and later, to more sophistication and color, thanks to Frank Vierling.

Now, look back with us.

- ♦ **Nov. 1988:** GE health plan info filters out... Sam Sambataro, Mel Dobbs, and Vic Barry became silent mikes... GE quits radio and WNBC radio has its license taken over by WFAN... Rock Center became a landmark... Hank Eustis and Morty Aronoff offered help to those with alcohol or substance abuse problems... 34 retirees joined PN including Marian Eiskamp, Vic Roby and Ed Wackernagle... PN officers were Gene Martin, president; Dan Grabel, vice president; Peter Peterson, treasurer; Phil Falcone, secretary and Heino Ripp, "computer whiz,"... Orlando and son Ken Tamburi simultaneously win Emmys for work on "Golden Girls."
- ♦ **Feb. 1989:** NBC invited 350 retirees to the 25 year club induction at the Plaza Hotel. (but this was a tradition that was soon to expire)... 28 veterans became members... 90 retirees joined PN.
- ♦ **June 1989:** Lunch at La Maganette with 100 in attendance... PN's membership soared to 330... Ken Arber, raconteur supreme, told an anecdote about director Tony Messuri, US Navy, who had just died. Tony was overseeing the post-war assignment of an Italian submarine from the Mediterranean to Bermuda. It wasn't until trip's end that Tony disclosed to the Italian crew that he could speak Italian. En route, he cautiously overheard all their conversations, to be alert for a mutiny... NBC opened a health club for staffers.
- ♦ **Fall 1989:** PN hosts semi monthly lunches at Picco Lissimo in Ft. Lee... RCA building becomes the GE building.
- ♦ **Spring 1990:** We go to 20 pages... 30 retirees join, including Marvin Einhorn, Reuven Frank and Walter Vetter... PN had lunch at the Crowne Plaza in White Plains. Scotty Connal and Stew MacGregory recalled the
- "Heidi" goof... Peter Peterson went south and reported on the NBCFR (NBC Florida Retirees) lunch... director Jac Hein and press dept.'s Hy Goldberg became silent mikes.
- ♦ **Summer 1990:** Joe Garagiola returned to "Today" show in effort to improve ratings... J. Fred Muggs is 38 and living in Tampa... Clay Ackerson and Russ Tornebene are among new PN members and announcer Gino Hamilton reports on life in Apache Junction, Arizona, his current hometown. PN up to 400 members
- ♦ **Fall 1990:** Don Pardo attends his first PN lunch and shouts, "Unbelievable!"... Tony Rokoz, of Rio Rancho, New Mexico, retired engineer, is net control for a daily NBC ham radio network... NBC equipped an employees station at 30 Rock... retirees Heino Ripp and Gene Martin worked on an A&E network drama... at the end of a Gemini space assignment in Florida, Chet Huntley and others tossed 20 fully-clothed people into the pool at the Crest motel party... add Bill Cullen and Whitney Baston to silent mikes.
- ♦ **Spring 1991:** Grant Tinker and Max Buck become dues-paying members of PN... announcer Wayne Howell recalls in days before WWII he was working at a Nashville station and rented a room to fellow employee David Brinkley. Said Wayne, every night he said "Goodnight David"... Wash. Producer Bob Asman wrote a report for PN on "Space Memories" and recalled his experiences with directors Jim Kitchell and Bob Priaulx... our Rotogravure showed photos of Mercury mission writers Mort Hochstein, Joe Meehan, Dennis Dalton and Don Meaney; all slim, with full mops of hair! ... Frank DiRienzo became pres. of PN.
- ♦ **Spring 1993:** 130 people showed up for the Florida Retirees lunch bash in Orlando. A winter storm kept 25 others away... NBC ate crow and settled GM's suit against "Dateline" which had done a piece on the safety of GM trucks. "Blatant deception," cried the auto-maker, who might have got one million in damages... It was the year of the World Trade Center bombing and NBC, which has a transmitter atop the 110-story bldg., got back on the air within hours after the blast tnx to sharp engineers and help from other broadcast media — some of it as far away as Miami, where Dick Lobo of WTVJ offered to truck a spare transmitter to NYC... Frank Vierling took over from Heino Ripp as publisher of PN... Photos included an ancient "telop" of WNBC's show, "Rocky Jones, Space Ranger." Evening broadcast time was \$120 an hour in 1941... retired director Marcia Kuyper Schneider recalled a holiday in Armenia on a surprise TV assignment.
- ♦ **Summer 1993:** Jack (we always called him "Jack" in his local Chicago days) Chancellor, retired after 40 years... Dick Dudley recalled experiences with announcer Wayne Howell, who had become a "silent mike," also Johnny

Andrews and John Norell... And practically everybody who attended the PN lunch, including director Joyce Hurley and Eng. Ross Martindale got their picture in the issue.

- ♦ **Winter 1993:** We ran a photo of J. Fred Muggs joining Dave Garroway for a show from the new Americana in Miami Beach in early 1950s... Laura Skidmore, NBC Chicago, marked 55 years with NBC and announcer Howard Reig, just plain 50 years.
- ♦ **Spring 1994:** Columnist Dick Dudley recalled when *NO* recordings were allowed on the NBC airwaves and the net had 40 announcers!... Ed Herlihy was a speaker at the PN luncheon, stage mgr. Fred Lights was a guest... 200 paid tribute to the late Betty Furness in a memorial in studio 8H. Bambi Tascarella helped organize it... Ken Arber recalled shows with WNBC 11th Hour newscaster John K. M. McCaffery... We wrote copy for John back in the late '60s... Ed Meyer organized a Disneyland Network Pioneers Seminar in Orlando.
- ♦ **Spring 1995:** Stage manager Hal Alexander sent us a photo of a "Sing Along with Mitch Miller" rehearsal at the Brooklyn studios... Producer Peter Lasally joined the late night Tom Snyder show... news anchor Roger Mudd moved to the History Channel... Silent Mikes included Rita Stipo, a 45-year NBC vet, also scenic designer Hjalmar Hermanson, correspondent Fred Brigs and Paul Lipson.
- ♦ **Fall 1995:** Announcer Roger Tuttle rolled out his home-made airplane, put together in his garage. He had to remove bricks to get it out. Silent Mikes: Camel Caravan anchor John Cameron Swayze, and sportscaster Lindsay Nelson... NBC PR staffer Mort Hochstein recalled his experiences with comics Ed Wynn, Martha Raye and Buddy Hackett... Producer-director Charlie Jones recalled a 1957 episode of NBC's "Wide Wide World" underwater at a reef off Key Largo, Florida. Barry Wood was the honcho... our archives back cover photo showed producer Doris Ann and the crew of *Frontiers of Faith*, including Dan Zampino, Bill Goetz and Marty Hoade.
- ♦ **Fall 1996:** Front cover showed a 1953 NBC-hosted party for employees at the Hotel Roosevelt. Entertainers included Milton Berle, Sid Caesar and Imogene Coca. Photo from NBC Chimes mag, 1953, showed Tom Smiley working as a TD on *Howdy Doody*. Others on the show: Art Jensen, John Kenny, Silvio Giusetti, Harvey Belair and Bjorn Bjornsen... NABET local president Arthur Kent was active in National Academy of TV Arts & Sciences... Silent Mikes included producer George Heineman, sports' Scotty Connal, John Chancellor, John B. Rogers, Sig Bajak, Mel Allen and cameraman Tom Priestly... engineer Bill Howard did a marvelous piece on installing the original TV plant in the Cleveland O&O in 1948.
- ♦ **Spring 1997:** David Brinkley's open mike on his Sunday ABC show caught him saying — about Bill Clinton, "He is a bore and will always be a bore." That was before Monica... Bryant Gumbel quit the "Today" show, and Matt Lauer replaced him... "Doc" Potter recalled pushing buttons at 67th Street studio and up at 106th for the first Shari Lewis show on NBC... Sandy and Don, the Traveling Luftigs, reported on yet another European trip... Perry Massey managed to condense his NBC life — page staff to vice president — in three pages. (Milton Berle, Caesar and Coca, "Home," "Wide Wide World," Jack Paar)... Silent Mikes: Arthur Kent and Robert Sarnoff.
- ♦ **Fall 1997:** We reported in "at 30 rock" that Tom Brokaw had a new contract worth \$7-million per!! Its up for renewal this year... PN got with it and published a list of e-mail addresses. Heino Ripp reported on the memorial service for director Ted Nathanson at the Museum of TV and Radio... Bob Weintraub, former Local 11 president, became a "silent mike"... Scenic artist Al Gallo found old pix of a Perry Como show in 1959. Clark Jones was the director, Ripp was TD, Bill Klages did lights, cameras: Al Camoin, Jack Bennet and Arnie Gold... Brinkley retired.
- ♦ **SUMMER 1998:** At the PN lunch, Harry Fleetwood disclosed his generous gift to NYC's Park's Dept to beautify Verdi Square, Broadway at 72nd street and Ed Herlihy, nearing 90, recalled his colorful career. ("Horn & Hardart's Children's Hour," *Metrotone News*, etc)... Silent Mikes included Frank Sinatra, Peter Lind Hayes and problem solver Bernard Meltzer... News Dept president Reuven Frank recalled election night coverage in studio 8H with Huntley and Brinkley. Reuven first worked the big night as a writer in 1950... Floyd Kalber retired; also Director Marilyn Jacobs Furey. Marvin Einhorn went from directing to acting. Hal Alexander recalled the 1960s Bell Telephone Hour.
- ♦ **Fall 1998:** Our e-mail list got longer... Bee Reed sent in a photo of the "Break the Bank" staff. No year or IDs, but everyone wore jackets and ties!!! Elmer Gorry recalled life as a longshoreman, stagehand and Dugan Bakery deliveryman before joining NBC in 1952 and then as unit mgr. on the "Ding Dong School" show... PN did a pix spread on the Perry Como show remoting from Guantánamo in Cuba. Jim Fox, one of NBC's best raconteurs — I remember the endless stories he told during commissary lunches — was the unit mgr.... Lilly Russo recalled her TV start with "Howdy Doody," then "Broadway Open House" with Jerry Lester and Dagmar... Silent Mikes: "Buffalo Bob" Smith, Joseph C. Harsch, and Shari Lewis... Frank Vierling recalled NBC's decision to cover Cape Canaveral's many space shots and how the transmission operation was designed... Ray Lafferty recalled the first color video recording equipment. Remember two inch tape and engineers

splicing it with a razor! Oy! Such an exact science!

- ♦ **Spring 1999:** Stage mgr. Jim O’Gorman sent in a photo of himself, in dinner jacket, on China’s Great Wall... We ran a 1952 photo of the “Max Liebman Spectaculars” crew, including Jim Blaney, Heino Ripp, and Carmine Piccioccio... Gloria Clyne retired after 56 years at 30 Rock... Joe McShane recalled managing the 106th Street studios. Said McShane, “We should have got a differential for hazardous duty”... Charlie Mangano recalled life in Traffic Operations with Jim Connor, Tony Gianetti and Al Frey... Ken Arber and Dick Dudley filled every issue with memories. Gosh! What total recall. Or did they make up those tales?... VP Jim Holton gave us the inside story on “Monitor” radio. We decorated it with a picture of Jerry Smith interviewing Monique Van Voorhen and Jane Mansfield, with eye-catching bosoms... And we did a profile of Gabe Pressman to mark his 45th year at WNBC. He had never missed a day’s work, maybe still hasn’t, and with his rumpled corduroy suit he never made the “10 Best Dressed” list.
 - ♦ **Summer 1999:** Soaper “Another World” was axed after a 35 year run... The glitzy NBC store opened in the refurbished main floor of 30 Rock... We attended the party WNBC news people threw to mark the 25th anniversary of “News 4 New York.” Remember: Bernie Glazer, Alice Bell, Tony Priesendorf, Jay Miller, Royce Rowe, Bob Garner, Chauncy Howell, Gerry Solomon, Pia Lindstrom, Bob Teague, Earl Ubell, Hendrick Krogious, Tom Ginnocchio and Normal Fein?... The archive photo — star Wendy Barrie (“Be a good bunny”) and her crew, including Marcel Thienpont, Carl Rohrer and Bill Egan... Silent Mikes: announcer Bill Wendell, Ed Wackernagel, and Bill Goetz.
 - ♦ **Fall 1999:** Space correspondent Jay Barbree reported on a reunion of NBCers who covered John Glenn’s Mercury Seven flight, including Jim Kitchell, Art Lord, Russ Tornabene and Ray Weiss.. Our “At 30 Rock” column reported on Hurley’s closing (properly ‘Hurley Bros & Daley’) and Bryant Gumbel’s return to TV... Don and Sandy Luftig reported on a trip to Iceland... Director Clark Jones did a reprise of his career running 4 decades (“Your Hit Parade,” the “Tony Awards,” Perry Como). I remember Clark from WPIX, (1948) prior to all the big network stuff... Two other career reprises — by senior staff engineer Bob Mausler, and Director of Documentaries Dan O’Connor, dating back to 1964 with LBJ... Silent Mikes: Jim Holton, Martin Agronsky, Jerry Weiss, Martha Rountree, Allan Funt and “Moondog.”
 - ♦ **Spring 2000:** Betty Rollins and John Palmer are back on NBC... Don Blair takes up residence in Florida... Bob Costas pens first book “Fair Ball, A Fan’s Case for Baseball”... GE stock rose 6-fold in 5 years (where is it now?)... Tom Brokaw still top newsmen and received the Congressional Medal of Honor Society’s “Tex” McCrary
- award for Excellence in Journalism... Al Baeder took a buy-out... Marge McGlynn home from a wonderful Hawaiian cruise... Steve Bellis rehabing after heart attack... Arnie Reif sent us a vintage BOC pix... Jim O’Gorman found a Chinese restaurant in Ireland... the Asmans took a 50th Anniversary trip to Venice... Randy Wands relates a Papal story... Fifty NBC veterans honored... Cissie Lindemann Memories... Good-bye to Hurley’s... Our Silent Microphones remembered: Dick Dudley, Peter Tintle Joe Maietta, Bobby Quinn, Bob Priaulx, Jack Bennet and Gene Rayburn among too many others...
- ♦ **Summer 2000:** 14th Reunion at LaMag a smash success... Bob Van Ry opted out after 472 SNL Shows... 6 new knees sported by Herb Oxman, Frank DeRienzo and Roger Tuttle... Mort Hochstein subbed “at 30 rock” while this writer recuped from surgery... Frank Gaeta sent us a few pix of a few of his career highlights... and Dot Brodine wrote of her fond memories of NBC... the Luftigs include us in with travel trips gained through their globe trotting... we had a Frank Bourgholzer Report and Glo’s unprofessional audition tale lightened the day...and we mourned the loss of Nick Penella, Reggie Jackson, Joe Milroy and Jim Cordon... Wes Paulsen, Tony Block and Ross Martindale contributed their perspectives on their NBC careers...and, of course, we were treated to another of Ken Arber’s Korner columns.
 - ♦ **Fall 2000:** The shock heard round the world — Pete Peterson to step down in 2001. A sad day, but we go out at the TOP. But, all good things must come to an end — and this looks like the end of a *very good thing*... NBC pulls plug on “Later Today”... NBCi.com — you heard it here first — is in shambles — stock dives from \$106 to \$8... (as I write April 10, NBC unplugs i.com)...too many Silent Mikes: Roy Silver, Steve Allen, Ray Scherer, Chuck Corcoran, Scotty Schachter, Frank McKiernan, John Rice, Florence Ring, Shad Northshield, Vinny Kane, Allen Courtney and Bill Flood, Jr. ...John Deeg looks back on the war... Cissie Lindemann writes “Snapshot,” ... Lauren Krug-Grant contributes “Radio Roundup” and Ken pens what turns out to be his last “Korner”... the Luftigs were off again, this time to Spain and Jordan

That’s it, folks. Our memories culled from the PN pages.

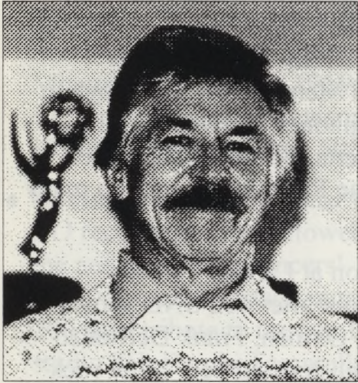
And, “Goodnight, Mrs. Calabash — a final goodnight,” and to you, too, Roy Silver.

Dan, our retired newswriter turned PN scribe, substituted this retrospective in place of his usual “at 30 rock.” Dan and wife Pat live in Scarsdale, NY.

My Life in TV in Rhyme (?)

by heino ripp

At age 20, one
always thought of the
future,
But when you're in the
seventies, it's changing to
scalpel and sutures
(no longer pork bellies and
futures!)]



At NBC I was interviewed by Ferdinand Wankel,
(My poppa wanted some money in my bank-el.)
Was a bit nervous and eager,
Thank God he didn't smoke a cee-gar!
He was very friendly and professional,
Somewhat like being at a confessional.
He laid out possibilities and choices,
Even mentioned NBC choir needed voices.

In my next mail, the draft board was calling,
The Maritime Union (for radio operators) telegraphed they
wanted me in the morning.
Now Wankel also lettered, "report on Monday,"
Choices, choices, Ayel This was really a dandy.....
I really wanted to go see the woild,
But seeing fotos of torpedoed tankers, cheez, my uniform
could get soiled - - -

So Wank greeted my Monday appearance,
I went to work after credentials and clearance.
Wasn't put into radio, Wank afraid I'd be drafted,
So sent me to the Lab, [thought I'd been shafted.]
Soon found myself in a soundproofed booth sorting radio
parts as a flunkie,
All alone, no window, not even having a bunkie.

Each day "Lab Scientists" taught me college,
Never anywhere, could I have gotten this kind of knowledge!
After work, I hung around in 980 til midnight,
Learning from Neuman, and Hoffmeister to keep the TV
"Jeep" looking just right.

Whatever happened to the cute guidette named Susan
Blakely?
Married, most likely.

Then there was Danish Elvi Daniels, who I had a crush on,
She married Dayton Allen — Oh well, mush on.
Now you all know Gloria Clyne,
She too was a guidette at that time.
Peter Tintle was the boss of those ladies,
Even far into the eighties.

Soon happy to see Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays,
heaven knows,
The Lab started putting on "Air Raid TV Shows".
In all the borough's fire houses,
Wardens watched small screens with their spouses.
—Most watched in case of emergency,
But some stopped by, because of an urgency.
From camera, maintenance, records and video —
Soon I was doing everything at Radio City-o.

With teachers like, Hammerschmidt, Monfort, Sommers,
Townsend and Fraser,
I felt like a king, like Julius Caesar.
[OK, so he wasn't a king] - -
Sommers, Monfort, deBaun and Clark
Taught me the "sync-generator" in MCR,
Setting "pulse widths" and the color Bar.

In the "field", Ed Wilbur showed me the ropes at Madison
Square "Jardin",
(That's French for "the Gard-en".)
I hated boxing at Madison Square,
Got sick from the cigar-polluted air.

In the Film studio, we had two cameras on rails,
Sometime on air, one of them fails.
Soon as the film reel was over, we faded to black,
Shoved the good camera to cover, and Zappo, we were back!
Charlie Townsend, George Neuman, Ed Hoffmeister, Robbie
Compton, et-al,
Were the masters there, always having a ball.

One day we no longer aired just the Bulova clock,
Paul Alley's Evening News would bring the audience
back.

A "newsfilm guy," whose name I can't remember,
Brought in a "calendar beauty" named November,
Proudly introduced us all to the cutie, Who was really a
beauty.
After the PM show, "News Film" called from the projection
booth,
I thought some gear had gone Sooth.

Alas, projected on the wall, movies of the "Calendar Lass,"
 Completely bare, right to her — uh, fannie.
 My Sunday school pin.
 Bowed in shame to this sin...
 Yes, she was told she would be made a star —
 Didn't even make it as an extra on "Paarl"

I owe a lot to those old timers,
 None even close to Alzheimer's.
 They were the TV's inventors,
 Around whom today's TV centers.

One eve in 3H we put on a musical Opera,
 Not unlike today's Soap Opera.
 That evening a piano virtuoso,
 Who played much better than so-so —
 Stomped off stage during a chorus, - -
 Incensed, being on the same bill was a hor-us
 (You probably spell it *horse*.)

Another evening we inaugurated the network
 to Philly, with Dinah Shore and Eddie Cantor,
 Doing his old rolling eyes schtik and old patter.
 His ego was big as his eyes,
 A pail of ice water would have brought him back to his size.
 Schenectady's G.E. station soon joined the network,
 Made possible by Bob Fraser and Lou Hathaway's lab-work.
 In a pasture upstate New York, they built a "rhombic
 antenna", you see,
 Never dreaming we would someday be owned by G.E.!

Finally, on TV, from 3H we celebrated VE and VJ Day,
 Soon Radio City TV expansion had its heyday.
 Shortly I was working in TV Master,
 I said thankful prayers with my pastor.

Reid Davis made me a T.D.
 Was so tickled I almost pee-peed.
 My first show as a T.D. was Howdy Doody,
 I started to wear a tie and a suit-y.
 TV was beginning to be real jazzy —
 Quoting Hank Bomberger, 'Howdy Doody for President, and
 Vivian Ferassi.'
 Everyone came to Howdy's rehearsals for the double
 entendre,
 Bob Smith and Dayton Allen, caused the kids minds to
 wander.

3H became a bustling location,
 Employing all sorts of vocations.

Soon 8G was operational,
 Philco Playhouse became a TV sensational.
 TD's by Pike and Tambourri,
 An assignment for which they were never sorry.

Robert Montgomery in 8H presented a drama,
 And Hank Bomberger was no longer a farmer.
 Frank MacArdle TD'd the dramas,
 Discovered new worlds, like Vasco de Gama.
 Cameras by Dave Geisel, Bill Haynes, Bud Shadel and
 Frankie Weil,
 They were the Best by a mile.

— Next I found a niche on the Show of Shows,
 People no longer listened to Major Bowes.
 Sid Caesar and Imogene were an overnight hit,
 The overflow audience had no place to sit.
 Live television sure was exciting, full of variety,
 Touched every part of society.
 The ball was now rolling,
 Saturday Night no longer was for bowling.
 Hal Keith, Greg Garrison, Bill Hobin, directors great,
 We all had some years, that paid our freight.
 Hal Flood, Joe Silva, Bob Johnston, audio pro's,
 Industry's top sound engineers, deserve ku-dos(e).
 The Sanner & Chapman cranes arrived soon,
 Mulvaney was making movies, Camoin swinging him to
 every tune.

None will ever forget the weekly joy we tasted,
 As long as the great Show lasted.
 RCA tested color at the Theater Colonial,
 No CBS color wheel, that was baloney-al.
 RCA had a better electronic deal.

The growth of programs became uncanny
 Like baseball, football, wrestling, and Toscanini.
 I remember TD-ing the first live concert by Toscy,
 Hidden under the balcony in a closet dark and dusty
 (Primitive when compared to Live from 8H with Zubin
 Mehta),

But much prestige for TV that had made-ah.

NBC spread out to 106th Street uptown,
 A much safer place then, than today it's known.
 Easy Does It, with Johnny Andrews and Francie Laine,
 Brought you indoors out of the pouring rain.

Studios grew at Columbus Circle, 106th Street, Center
 Theater, Hudson Theater — all overs -
 Made the public become TV — lovers.

In Studio 2A, Ivan Sanderson's "nature program," gave the producers a need for Alka Seltzer,
The animals, began wreaking havoc, helter skelter.
Ivan's Elephants brought meaning to "Live on TV",
For they decided it was time for a peel

2A also aired "Aldrich Family," the TV version,
Little me, once more at the console, still a virgin.
"Down In The Valley", an operetta by Kurt Weil,
Televised, with Kurt watching the tele, all the while.
From 2A- guitar playing and jazz from the Village Barn
Also News with John Cameron Swazey on The Camel
Caravan.

Then a scary mystery, Frank Gallop the host,
Of weird things and stories of ghosts.

Soon all of TV was to be color,
Black & White was too duller.
Max Liebman was to create "Color Spectaculars,"
Stay away from Count Almaviva or Draculars -
But Operettas, musicals and song and dance,
Nothing for anyone to look at askance.

Thus Brooklyn began an era of Color,
And Liebman made it bigger, not smaller.
Betty Hutton made her TV splash, singing pre-recorded,
Wasn't exactly what the critics had ordered.
She was nervous and high strung,
Wished more could have been live, when sung.

At least big color had started,
Even tho Betty had departed.
'Twas now clear RCA's Color won FCC's award,
And stockholders were singing, "Praise The Lord"

Next Epic was directed by Preminger, Otto,
He, about live TV, knew nado.
He treated the crew and me with dignity and respect,
Something his reputation didn't lead us to expect.

Two stars were Gloria Vanderbilt and Ginger Rogers
She left Fred Astaire with the Brooklyn Dodgers.
Mulvaney and crane crew made it look so realistic,
The control room was going ballistic.

"A Brief Encounter", at a train station, was a great
segment,
Seasoned actors, knew what every nuance meant.
The 3rd segment was in a theater set,
That color alone put the producer into debt.

"Red Peppers" was the next play,
And Ginger won our Oscar, and was so gay,
I Got a hug and kiss at the end of the day.
Goll - ly, kissed by a "Movie Star."
Couldn't wait to tell everyone, near & far !

Another Liebman epic, Jackie Leonard played
Scrooge and never stopped yapping,
He even "held court" while he was napping.
We rehearsed a Christmas number with 40 dancers and
singers, who were never costumed fully,
So, on air, they all appeared as Santa Claus, Cameras
couldn't tell who was who -by golly !

We rehearsed The Gershwin Show with scenery,
After the lawyers met in the local beanery,
We couldn't use scenery.
Only curtains, platforms and the cyc.
Thank goodness we had an orchestra, with piano, brass,
strings and the like.

The finale was Gershwin's piano concerto of course,
Beginning bap bap bap baaaaa - bop-bop-bop baaa with
force.
Ending with those cymbal crashes we shouldn't miss,
I was nervous, but thanks to Marcia Kuyper, we couldn't
miss.

(Back to 8H)

Clark Jones directed Your Hit Parade,
The show was loudly hurrahd and hurrayd.
Clark has received many TV kudos,
Probably many more than I or you-does.
TD'd by Bob Daniels, they called him "Moose" —
And no, he didn't write Dr. Seuss.
Klages on video and Bob Davis on lighting,
Made the show look 8 x 10 glossy and exciting.
Cameras, again, Dave Geisel, Buddy Shadel, Billy Haynes
and Frank Weill,
All I kept their cue sheets for the longest while.

(Back to Bklyn)

My favorite "Spectacular moment", was the beginning of The
Merry Widow. Rehearsed in full daylight, never seen at night.
Enough to scare one out of his tights... Elephant Doors
open, crane nosed to a set outside. Cue Charlie Sanford,
Cue the coach! Dissolve to DON MULVANEY on the Crane,
This fantastic night scene, with street lights and
pedestrians, Then cue in the Horse & Wagon, follow the
"stars" to stairs, track up to the lobby, move the crane up
across and follow the cast thru entrance, full of moving
people, to lobby, — coats to cloak room, Cue the star in,
track stars down & right across the studio to the Ball

Room entrance, Boy that looks great! — crane up and dolly back to reveal immense ballroom, just in time as the Merry Widow Waltz begins. Red McKinnon and the video men made the settings appear unbelievable-ly real, with all the trimmings. (*Sorry my iambic pentameter got lost for a while.*)

After two seasons, Liebman spectaculars were history,
Why it couldn't have continued, was a mystery.
But when NBC called them Spectaculars,
The papers were looking for miracular-s

I loved every minute of those shows,
A fantastic experience, goodness knows.
The studio loaded with scenery, 50 orchestra and people,
sum 160 totaling,
No wonder we all were a-gloat-alling.

Too bad they weren't giving out Emmys sir!
The show looked as good as Ben Hur.

During these days, many shows went through my fingers,
And the body went through a lot of wringers.
A day of Dry and studio setup and lighting,
Next day, tough but fun, and no fighting.
Saturday night, "Show of Shows" airing,
(With a censor-lady, checking on dresses that were too daring)
In 8G, Sunday, "Chevrolet on Broadway" dry.
Monday eve, air, with Gary Simpson, Gordon Duff or Barry Bernard-directing,
On air "Live," to be perfect, was everyone's cry.
Watching the cast enthusiastically acting.

Later on Brooklyn 2 was in service,
The sets filled the huge studio, enough to make one nervous.
Kraft Television Theater filled TV sets with excellent theater,
TD'd by Bobby Hanna with an excellent crew,
And a stable of Directors, excellent too.
Producer Maury ——— booked TD-me for a week,
To lessen the problems on air day.
Perfection and no delays he did seek,
Made everyone relaxed and not in a daze.

(*Lost my rhyming dictionary here*)
Joe Papp, of Shakespeare fame, brought in a major "movie" -
In one end of Bklyn 2, a lake, 3 story mansion, a gazebo, a brass band, and more scenery.
The other end, a village square, with a huge statue, an actor riding a horse, loads of extras as well as an interior set,
That was for the 1st day, so each day new ones were added, overnight, including cemetery, for a night funeral service, with fog and rain, going into the morning dawn. Lighted by Phil Hymes. It took over a week to tape.

As I retired, I tried to get a copy of this show, but RCA/NBC was just sold to GE, so 'twas a jittery time for all. I didn't have the nerve to ask new pres Bob Wright, so never did get a copy of what I considered our best "Grande Produzione".

Another spectacular, in Bklyn 2, was "The Cruicible",
Not a small throw-away play of Bits and Kibble.
Starring George C Scott and his lady,
A very stirring drama by both in their heyday.

The Center Theater, now torn down,
Was then given a brand new gown,
Even so, you'd hardly notice it,
For it blends with other skyscrapers, unless it was lit.

It housed a 5,000 seat audience in all,
Looked just like the Radio City Music Hall.
The control room was built center at the rear,
One could see the stage and all was clear.

"Macbeth" played there, from Shakespeare,
Also "Show of Shows" in its terminal year.
Even Arthur Godfrey aired there for General Motors,
Then went to Miami to fly his chopper with rotors.

"The Como Show" started at the Ziegfield Theater,
With a 5 million \$ contract. That sounded better.
The scenery, the scenic artists, the color, the lighting, the sound, the cast,
All hoping the show would last.
The producer, TV Director, TD, Conductor, Choir,
Each set the show afire..

Don Shirley, scenery. the color, 3 videomen.
Lighting, Dick Feldman, then Klages
Audio Neal Smith and Frank Gallop, best announcer for ages.
Producer, Nick Vanoff. TV Director Grey Lockwood, Then Clark Jones and Dwight Hemion were good.
TD Hank Bomberger started. Then H.Ripp to the end,
'Cause Hank retired back to the farm and the hens.
Conductor, Mitchell Ayres. Choir Chief, Ray Charles.
Helped to keep Stage Manager Ralph out of the bars.

Como needed a change of venue,
Can't blame him, can you?
So Perry took the show "on the road",
Traveled to get a different mode.
Included Minneapolis, San Francisco and Dallas,
But sadness met us there alas.
On Nov 22, Stu MacGregory and I drove past and

everything was shaking in the booth. Sounded as if the Spacecraft was directly above us.

I had the pleasure of working with the Burbank crews in California. They all were excellent in their positions, and couldn't thank them enough for their help and input. Almost like being on automatic pilot. Como in the large studios, Henry Fonda in "Clarence Darrow" — "Annie and the Hoods" with Anne Bancroft. Lorne Greene and the lovely lady from "I dream of Jeanie" in "Hopetown."

Once more Perry Como took us. Now to Guantanamo, Cuba for a Christmas Show. It's too long a story to write here, involving full loading an Army transport with tons of equipment and people and all the problems encountered. As it roared down the runway, like a turtle, I felt that my life would end right there. Somehow, as we neared the end of the runway we actually did get airborne. Did a live show in an outdoor amphitheater, and all worked out. Thanks to the crew members we took with us, who all were experts.

I can't leave out the jaunts to Hawaii. Once Pres. Johnson was to meet someone there. Martin Luther King was shot. Had an extra day in Hono, then Home. Next with Como. There was joy to work there, but some of the joy disappeared, when we cabled up our remotes, we had been sent bad camera cables. Harry Waterson and I went to Honolulu a day early to intercept the mobile unit and to see that we actually have a working one. The unit was ordered, cancelled, then re-ordered.

After finding the unit, I went inside and found that the consoles and rest of the equipment were wrapped in brown Kraft paper. Upon unwrapping them, found nothing was wired up. Same for the audio. etc. Harry & I decided to drive the unit to its first taping location. Shortly after our arrival, we were confronted with a group of men, who introduced themselves as teamsters, who wanted to know who the hell drove the truck here? It wound up that they drove our trucks to & from the locations. The rest of the day they played cards and ate and ate and drank.

Our 2nd location was a waterfall in a park. I had decided where we needed the equipment parked. We finished late at night, all our gear was loaded, I drove to the location. The "guys" had parked everything, but not how we needed it.

After quite a heated discussion in the very dark woodsy area, alone with a gang of grumpy guys—they had worked so hard that day. I made 'em stay one & 1/2 hrs moving everything. A bit scary: 3am in a dark park with a hostile group! Luckily I wasn't alone, for "Fear not, for I am with you always" was with me.

Finally returned to my bed only to shower and get going for the next day. In spite of the grief's, Don Ho and Perry did get a show.

Another joy at NBC was "Live from 8H". Concerts with Zubin Mehta. An "Evening with Jerome Robbins, Live from Studio 8H." Then, "Live From 8H, It's Saturday Night Live" — lasted almost 10 years for me, from its debut.

Lorne Michaels let me direct "The New Show" but it did not last too long for many reasons. It did however, make it possible for me to buy my current residence, for which I am very grateful.

Last but not least, Billy Klages and I worked CBS' Barbra Streisand's - "My Name is Barbra" from Bergdorf's in NYC and "Color Me Barbra" from the Philadelphia Museum of Art with Dwight Hemion directing. I hope these pages bring back some joyful memories for you.

Since Peacock North is about to fade out, I would like to thank all of you for letting me take you as a part of my scribbling. Thanks to our PN staff, listed on the last page, who all have worked very hard to have the editions filled with material you all might enjoy, especially each other's mutual adventures living them over, bringing you together again, even tho now separated by distance.

I thank all of you who have worked with me in TV for putting up with your TD in thick or thin.

I want to list each name, but we'd need another edition. I have always enjoyed your contributions at work, whether it was one minute news bulletin or the Big Extravaganzas we did together. How fortunate I was, being the TD, for with me were some of the best crew members, audio whizzes, cameramen, dolly men and audio boom men, class lighting directors, video men, all professionals. I must also include the very talented directors in making me a part of all these great events. You've added 7 Emmys to top my bookcase. I wish I could give you each a big hug, to add to my memories of you-all. So I wish you the best.

And may God bless everyone of you and keep you, Make his face shine upon you and be gracious unto you and grant you peace. Amen.

Love, *Heino*

*H. Ripp lives in Lake Hopatcong, NJ
with his wife Christina.*



Enid Writes

Dear Pete:

I guess it had to come, but how depressing! I want to thank you and Heino and Frank and Dan for all the hard work, long hours and dedication you've given to PN. I'm so grateful! But it's not just the end of an organization, it's the end of an era isn't it?

I spent 41 years at NBC. I came there about eight months after I graduated from college and I left with gray hair. I arrived with a reverence for the unlimited possibilities of this still baby TV medium that was to grow exponentially in the years that I would spend there and I met a lot of people who felt as I did; people eager to learn, bursting with energy and creative ideas. We took great pride in our work and we worked very hard. We had great fun, we loved what we were doing and, miracle of miracles, we got paid for it.

There were only three networks when we started and at least part of their announced mission was to educate, to bring art, drama, music and dance into everyone's living room as well as sports, entertainment and news. Remember when a network news anchor was the most trusted man in America? Of course you do!

But with the demise of Peacock North where will I hear the funny stories and the behind the scenes stuff of all the exciting things we did together? Remember the concerts in 8H, Jerome Robbins, Peter Pan, Hallmark, Philco, Prudential, Bell Telephone Hour, Wide Wide World, The Big Party, Howdy Doody? (Maybe it would be better if we didn't remember The Big Party.) And the Ford Anniversary Show. Do you think we'll ever again see one sponsor buying two networks to simulcast an entertainment special? And how about the Ethel Merman/Mary Martin duet? Somehow the Elton John/Eminem turn didn't quite resonate the same way for me. (Am I getting old?... Nah!) And who will share the memories of Frank Schaffner, Del Mann, Fielder Cook, Clark Jones, Dwight Hemion and Greg Garrison? And the pioneering we did - "Today," "Home," "Tonight." Remember "Hello, Europe, Hello"?

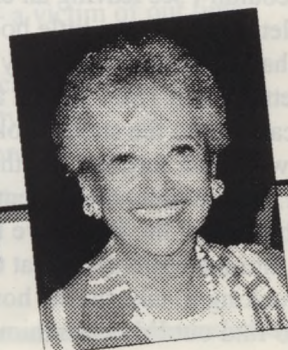
It's depressing to think that I have to say good-bye to so many people I've admired, that I've been so proud to work with, have so much affection for. I am grateful that some of us still have a mini Peacock East End. Dave Handler, Gene Waldstein and their wonderful wives Cynthia and Debbie, Lois Marino and Arlene Finkernagle Coulter and I still manage to get together. We've lost Dom and Mary Saviola to Florida but we've been recently joined by Cory and Walli Leible.

And I'm blessed with dear friends, women I met the first day on the job at NBC, February 10, 1952. I was hired to be Ted Cott's secretary and the two people who taught me the ropes were Barbara Horn (now Mrs. Roger Muir) who worked for Pete Affe, and Pat Richer Jeffery who worked for Dick Pack. When I became an AD, I babysat for the first born of one of my fellow AD's when she was working nights - now grandmother of three - Peggy Daniels. No longer AD's together but still close friends. When I moved from my home in Brooklyn a few years later to my first New York apartment, I teamed up with my still dear friend, Steve Krantz's P.A., Mary Noel Regan (now Mrs. Donald Eugene McDonough). And one other old buddy who came along just a little later, Pat Donegan.

Well, I guess that's a wrap. I look forward to seeing everyone at the luncheon and Pete, maybe you and the group could put out an up-dated e-mail list that you could hand out there. I'll even promise to get a computer so I can use it (that's right, I don't have a computer). So until then - hasta la vista, baby.

Love, *Enid Roth*

*Enid, retired AD/Director,
lives in New York City.*



DETRITUS MAXIMUS

by Beryl Pfizer

The only comfort I can take in the news that Pete Peterson is abdicating his Peacock (North) Throne is that since it probably means the demise of this estimable journal you are reading now, the stacks of them piling up at my house will no longer continue to grow. I know they should be in a neat row on my bookcase, or filed under "P" for Peacock (would I have a better chance of finding them if they were under "N" for NBC, or maybe even "O" for Old Friends?) but like all the rest of the detritus from my life and times at NBC, they are scattered about, ready and able to intrude on my non-working days.

Where I sit now, at my computer, I face a shelf full of memories, starting with the wooden desk sign from the first show I worked for — it reads "at HOME with Beryl Pfizer." Behind it are loose-leaf phone books from The Home Show, The Today Show, and Who's Who at NBC News that we used to get annual revised pages for — they'd have to do those every month or week now to keep up with the turnover! But who can throw out such rosters of early television stars like Garroway, Dave; or Huntley, Chet; or Francis, Arlene and Downs, Hugh? And the fearless but often feared execs like Werner, Mort; Small, Bill; or even Sarnoff, David or Robert. Of course most of the names are of those you worked with, competed with, fought with, or became lifelong friends with.

And at least half the books on my shelves are by authors I wrote interview questions for when they appeared on our shows, everyone from Betty Friedan to Arthur Schlesinger. The publishers sent two copies of the book, one for use on the set and one that the writer got to take home — unless a producer had dibs on it. My most triumphant bookgrab was when The Home Show was canceled. Our offices were in the shabby old Hotel Dauphin on Broadway at 67th Street, because we did the show in that great studio on Columbus Avenue with the circular turntables and the monkey camera. No other NBC offices were in the hotel, and I couldn't see leaving an entire Encyclopedia Britannica, complete with its own little bookcase there for the maid (who had never seemed to pay much attention to any dust that settled on it.) So I hauled all 24 volumes and the little bookcase out to the street, took a taxi home, and for a less than two-dollar fare had my then state-of-the-art information center. Just in time, too. I went on to another job at 30 Rock, but I heard that the Executive Producer, Dick Linkroum, came into the writers room at the Dauphin a couple of days later looking to take the set home himself and was pretty sore to find out I'd beaten him to it!

NBC slogans and logos in one form or another follow me everywhere. In the kitchen my blue denim apron reads "NBC Radio Network, Sound Years Ahead"... I drink from a glass etched with a peacock with eleven feathers, and rest that glass on a coaster from the set of four that promote the Radio Network, News on the Hour, Monitor, and Emphasis. They're kept on an end table next to the toy NBC Chimes we got for some anniversary.

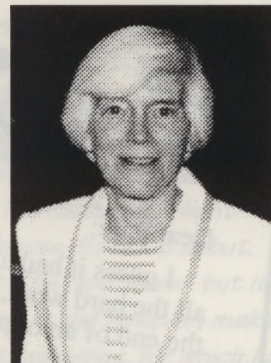
Marking other years are a clock that's not sure what time it is, and a pendant with the Nebraska on it and a tiny stone that Michael Fina & Co. claimed to be a diamond. A burglar got my 20-year camera and 25-year watch some time ago. Fortunately he saw no value in the Emmy for my show "Ask NBC News" in 1980 — probably wasn't even impressed by the picture beneath it of me getting it with Les Crystal, who was president of news then.

It would probably be possible for me to wear a different NBC T-shirt or sweatshirt every day for a year — well, maybe half a year. Besides the blue "Ask NBC News" shirts with the little hand raised to ask a question, there are Pink Panther shirts from my excursion into Saturday morning kidvid — even VP George Heinemann had to have one of those (extra large). Then there's the NBC Radio News shirt with the slogan "we do it hourly" — was that Jim Holton's idea of a joke?

There's no joking about the NABET shirts, reminders of a strike after GE became our boss, then later the red shirts that said "Mobilization '94, NABET-CWA." Much more fun to wear were the NBC Runners shirts, starting with the Nike jerseys with the proud peacock that NBC paid for, and ending with the shirt with the six-feathered bird that GE wouldn't pay for. Mostly any free shirts tended to be self-promotions like the "WNBC, We're Number One" that blustery Bill Bolster handed out.

My supply of NBC memo pads with my name on them has just about run out, but I still keep my silver WNBC pen and my red No. 2 National Broadcasting Company, Inc. pencils in my Decision '76 mug from the political conventions that year.

And then, of course, there is that most sentimental reminder of all — the monthly pension check! □



Beryl, Producer/Director, lives in New York City. In her NBC career she also wrote and moderated various programs.

We Get Letters

February 8, 2001

Dear Pete:

Jack told me the sad news about the impending loss of our beloved Peacock North.

Throughout all the years, it has been the highlight of retirement years for so many former NBC'ers. The annual luncheons will be sorely missed, as well as the PN magazine filled with updates on the lives of our erstwhile colleagues.

I'm enclosing a bit of doggerel to commemorate this unhappy event. Not having the talent of the late Dick Dudley, it is sent with the slimmest hope that somehow or other volunteers will step forward to take on the task of keeping it going — maybe just to have the annual get-together if the news letter must be cancelled.

With all the best wishes for health and good post-PN life. You deserve a good rest after all the fine work you, Dan & Heino have done over the years.

Sincerely,

Audrey Marshall



Audrey Marshall, Network Production Assistant, lives around the corner from La Maganette Restaurant in New York City with her husband, Jack.

We Get Poems

Pete Peterson

A PEACOCK NORTH LAMENT

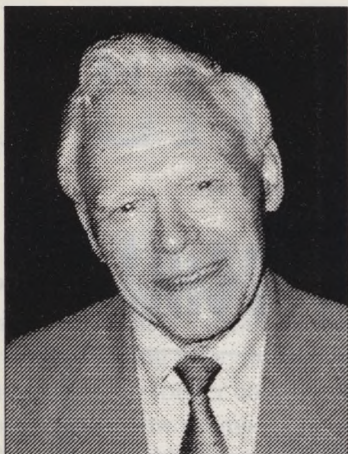
Say it isn't so Pete,
Say it isn't so,
No more Peacock North, Pete,
Then where are we to go
When we want to see old friends
All so true and dear
If there is no Maganette lunch
In Springtime every year?

We will feel so lost, cut off,
Lonely, sad —
And we'll miss all the happiness
We had.
When we met for lunch
And saw old friends of old
Remembering how it used to be
When silver hair was brown or gold,
Reliving all the memories
That made our lives such fun
Back in those "golden days"
When we all were young.

NBC was wonderful, and we loved it so
That when it was time to leave,
We didn't want to go.

Oh, the sadness of it all
The misery sublime —
No more news and stories
From PN magazine — a victim of our time,
Is there no one brave enough
To take the glorious chore —
To step into the empty space
Keeping PN ever more?

--Audrey Marshall



and Another Letter

Robert L. Rippen

21 Knollwood Lane
Colonia, N.J. 07067-3107

2/6/01

Dear Pete:

Your call last weekend with word that Peacock North might soon be a silent mike was indeed a sad one. I can understand the work involved in keeping the organization going, and in particular, the job of getting the magazine out. You fellows deserve a rest. You asked if I might have something to say about PN and what it has meant to me. That I do. PN has been all wonderful memories. The chance to read about old friends and learn what they are doing and then actually meet with them at the great lunches are moments that will stay with me as long as I'm around. I've had many jobs in my career, but if you asked me to pick, I would have to say that NBC was the best-of-the-bunch!

I started on Howdy in March '48. We were in 3H and for the first 2 weeks I directed we had iconoscope cameras! I can't remember who my first TD was, but he was older and very experienced and he frightened the hell out of me! After that they brought in the field crew with brand new TK10's. Whata difference!. On camera I had Moose Daniels on 1, Bud Yorkin on 2 and Carl Lindemann on 3. All young guys. A short time later another youngster joined us as TD. His name was Heino Ripp! (anyone know what ever happened to him??) The two Rips were a good team and we stayed together for quite some time. I have always felt that Howdy Doody was the best of the "engineer friendly" shows. At one point in time a sign appeared on the control room wall that said: "Howdy Doody, the happy crew!" Credit for that must also go to Roger Muir and Bob Hultgren.

Several fellows TD'd their first show with us. Jack Irving and Tom Smiley come to mind. Tom, of course, became our regular and stayed with us for a long time. We did a few TV firsts ... in '49 the first split-screen between cities (NY and Chicago) and we were the first regular scheduled program to switch to color. Other things followed for me. Gabby Hayes, Meet the Press and a long run on Continental Classroom. These are all memories that Peacock North has helped keep alive. They will continue but the focus will be a little softer.

My best to all.....

The other Rip

Bob Rippen, of Howdy Doody directorial fame, writes to us from Colonia, N.J.

BLACK WHITE REFLECTIONS

By Frank Vierling

As I contemplate the possible final days of Peacock North, I've been looking back at my early NBC years.

Fresh out of RCA Institute in late December 1948, I was interviewed by **Doris Ann**, and after speaking with **Reid Davis**, **Ferdinand Wankel**, and **Whit Baston**, I was told to report for work on January 6, 1949, as a "student." (*Bob Juncosa reported for work that same day.*) (In *Whit's office I met two lovely and charming ladies, Win Mullen, and Ellen Johnson.*

It's hard to realize, now, how crude TV was at that time. There seemed to be no immediate need for new employees, but television programming was about to burst out and we few 49'ers were a precursor to its expansion and the mass of employees that would be needed to cover "live" television in the next several years.

In 1949 NBC and CBS were on the air only a few hours each day. ABC had been divorced from NBC but still had studio space in the building, and was soon to leave.

The only live show we "students" could observe was "Howdy Doody" in 3H. Not too long after "observing," I was doing camera on Howdy in 8G. After Buffalo Bob had his heart attack we did part of his show from his Westchester home studio while he was on the mend.

All students took **Whit Baston's** audio course (**Jack Kennedy** taught us how to spin and segue records). My first show assignment was to report to TD **Frank Burns** in 8G. I was to assist Lighting Director **Hank Frisch** along with **Herb Greeley** on "The Lanny Ross Show." I had to maneuver a floor scoop from scene to scene. I managed to always be on **Leon Dobbins'** camera mark! — *so he said!* Those were the days when NABET shared lighting jurisdiction with the IA. I spent many hours on ladders hanging lights for "Philco Playhouse," among others.

My first work outside 30 Rock was to fill in for **Herb Oxman** on boom at Columbus Circle's International Theater. There were boom jobs at 106th St. and dollying **Bill Stone** and **Gary Iorio**. Soon after I was permanently assigned to Field where I spent the next 18 years working remotes — both in studio and in the field.

I joined an illustrious Field group that included: **Ed Wilber** — supervisor, **Bob Galvin**, **Frank McArdle**, **Bob (Moose) Daniels**, **Alfie Jackson**, **Ed Costello**, **Ogden Bowman**, **Carlos Clark**, **Bob Waring**, **Herb Reidel** (Herb later moved to ABC), **Allen Henderson**, **Andy Switzer**, "Big" **Bill Kelly**, **Frank Merklein**, **Jack Durkin**, **Jim Davis**, **Walter "Waldo" Mullaney**, **Felix Gerlando**, **Neil McCarroll**, **Fred Squires**, **Les Whitehead**, **Harry Samuels**, **William "Tiny" Carson** and **Dick Davis**. Did I forget

someone? Maybe.

Many new hires passed through Field on their way to permanent studio jobs. One of the more prominent ones was **Chuck Corcoran**.

In those early days TV Field was doing about 80% of all live programming. There were 3 sets of equipment — Blue, Yellow and Green. Later, a fourth set (Red) was permanently set up in Studio 3A, making it the third live TV studio after 8G and 3H (now 3K — K for color). The Blue and Yellow equipment were assigned to mobile units 1A and 1B. 1C, the "bakery" wagon, was pressed into service for one or two camera jobs, like the first Macy's Thanksgiving Parade I worked, in 1949. And there other parades — Easter and St. Pat's on 5th Avenue.

The Green gear was stored in Studio 6A's air-lock and shuttled from radio studio to radio studio. Saturday and Sunday were busy days. Saturday morning the Green was trundled to 3B for John Gnagy's "You Are an Artist." After all these years, can you believe Gnagy art supplies are still in stores? After "Artist" one camera was pushed across the hall to 3A to do "Storybook Time." A young actress dressed in a "Little Bow-Peepish" costume read stories from a giant story book.

Back in 3B, **Leon Pearson** did a noon news break in front of a two-fold. After lunch we rehearsed for that evening's "Phil Silver Arrow Shirt Show." Again, followed by Leon's news. Then we moved to 6A to setup for Sunday's "The Horn and Hardart Children's Hour." 6A and 6B still had stages and it was a brute-force muscle job lifting a Fearless camera dolly onto the stage. With very little sleep, we were back on Sunday morning with **Ed Herlihy** and the children; **Jac Hines** was the director.

After Sunday lunch the cameras moved across to 6B for "Leave It To the Girls," which aired Sunday afternoon. Then back to 6A for that evening's "Meredith Wilson Show" — followed by — Pearson's news.

There was "Who Said That" from 6B (**Don Pike**, TD) and later from 3A with the new Red gear. And there was **Henry "Coming Mother" Aldrich** from 3A and **Wendy Barry** and **John "Camel News" Swazey's** Caravan news from 3H (**Marty Hode** director and **Waldo Mullaney** TD).

During the week 6A was manned by Field for the 15 minute "Cesterfield Supper Club" with **Perry Como**. Many years later the Caddy went to Guantánamo to do a Como special. In 6D we did the **Kyle McDonald** show.

For a time there was a weekly remote from the Village Barn. After the Barn setup we did **Morton Downy's** Mohawk Rug show from 3A, **Carl Cabison**, TD. (Also there was **Roberta Quinlan**.) Then, back to the Village Barn with **Ray Forest** announcing; **Al Henderson**, TD. After that "good ▶

night" the gear was taken to the International Theater for Sunday's "The Lamb's Gambol" and later, "Your Show of Shows," **Walter Dibbins** was in charge of the theater technical facilities and **Heino Ripp** was our TD.

I did audio for years on the "Gillette Friday Night Fights" from Madison Square garden (Sports Directors — **Bill Garden, Jack Mills, Jack Dillon** and **Lew Brown**). Sometimes we traveled to Syracuse (or, was it Rochester) for Gillette.

Speaking of fights — in 1952 we covered the Ezzard Charles, Jersey Joe Walcott heavyweight title fight in Philadelphia. Charles was trying to regain the title he lost the year before. While the ring announcer was reading the judges' decision, a fan, wanting a better view of the ring, climbed a pole where our power box was strapped. Using the switch handle as a step he switched us off the air. Video went immediately to black! There is a bit of reserve power in the audio equipment, but it too faded to dead-air just before Walcott was announced the winner. (A pre "Heidi" event!)

I can't forget the other sports — baseball, wrestling, Forest Hills tennis (tennis great **Don Budge** announcing), college basketball, the World Series, the first NCAA football tour. We spent a month in Chicago to cover games at Northwestern, Notre Dame, U of Chicago at Champaign-Urbana. And while in Chicago we did a **Marlin Perkins** show from the Lincoln Park Zoo. Before NCAA we did Army football games (with only 2 cameras) from West Point (**Bill Stern** announcer). Army alternated with Yale games from New Haven (I only did one of those). Yale pictures were microwaved across Long Island Sound to a special receiver atop a water tower at Woodlawn, I believe. **Andy Switzer** was cautioned to be sure all power was turned off after the game to protect the one-of-a-kind equipment. Andy made sure of that. Woodlawn ran out of water that Sunday — Andy had also shut off the water tower's pump!

We covered flat racing from Belmont and Aqueduct and harness racing at Roosevelt Raceway. One Aqueduct pickup stands out — the first to be sponsored. Up to that time RCA was picking up show costs to promote TV receiver and station equipment sales. The sponsor was Carling's Black Label Ale. With minutes to "air" a disastrous equipment failure reduced us to one working camera. In one continuous zoom and pan, **Bill Rose** covered the race from crowd, to parade of horses, to starting gate and **Clem McCarthy's** "they're off," around the track to the finish line and into the winner's circle ceremony. Knowing nothing of the near loss of the whole show, the agency rep who had watched the race in the clubhouse, came to the truck and declared it was the best race he had ever seen. "It was so smooth," he commented, I never saw one single camera switch!" And we covered races from Monmouth Raceway in New Jersey. One race was nearly drowned out by a torrential downpour. Water was so deep in the paddock one of the jockeys donned trunks and went swimming. Camera-one's cable got soaked and caused image focus (tech talk) to intermittently go in and out of focus resulting in fuzzy horses running "up hill" and "down hill" as they circled the track.

We did five experimental dramatic shows on the streets of New York. They were live, groundbreaking and exciting to do.

Landmarks: To Detroit to commemorate the six-millionth GM car off the assembly line. To Lancaster, PA to mark RCA's one-millionth TV picture tube.

To fill airtime we did shows like the opening of the Grand Union supermarket headquarters in New Jersey. Or, to fill out an hour following the Friday night fights, bowling — sometimes as little as ten minutes of air time.

There was wrestling from St. Nicholas Arena and stock car and bicycle races from the Kingsbridge Armory in the Bronx. Remember the India Indian Kuda Bucks who claimed to be able to see through a blindfold? He put putty over his eyes and a blindfold over that and joined in one of the bike races. He did OK for about 30 feet before he created a major pileup.

Alan Handley directed a Saturday series, "Around New York" with shows from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, a Circle Line trip around Manhattan, The Museum of Natural History, Fifth Avenue Public Library, Bronx Zoo, Botanical Gardens and the Brooklyn Children's Museum.

Field had fabricated a camera dolly with a very narrow base dubbed the "submarine dolly," because it was first used in a submarine — clever name! **Ed Pories** was using it at the Children's Museum to navigate through the narrow doorways. His opening was to dolly in on the museum director. "Dolly in," I cued — I TD'd that series. All we saw was the floor rushing toward us as the camera went over! The lens was driven through the turret into the orthicon. With some scrambling and winging we completed our hour with two cameras. **Court Snell**, recently back in NY from Chicago, had replaced Wilber, our supervisor — I put the broken glass and metal on his desk for him to see on Monday morning with a note — "We had a little breakup in camera one."

There was a series of Sunday evening shows from the Astor hotel starring **Bill Stern** and "Candy," a variety-talk show. And **Arthur Murray's** Dance Studio, on location.

For an Eisenhower birthday we covered a \$1000 a plate dinner at the Astor Ballroom: **VP Nixon** was the speaker. And there was **Eisenhower** speaking at the Waldorf — **Robert Montgomery**, lighting and make-up consultant. **Roger Tuttle** was our announcer. **Carl Lindemann** finagled a dinner for us. Waiters set up tables next to our balcony control position and we were served fillet mignon.

Remember the subway strike and the jailed Mike Quinn? I spent that strike with **George Newell** (director) and **Jim Hartz** (announcer) in the Cadillac mobile unit. We spent the strike searching Manhattan Island for predicted traffic jams — we didn't find any! We did get to see Quinn as he emerged from jail. I think the temperature hovered around 20 degrees for the duration of the strike. We froze!

We did a pickup for "Today" from a subway repair shop out in Brooklyn. There were giant lathes to turn down the wheels to level out the worn spots. Another subway pickup came from the station below the Main Post Office. There was

a dance routine, I don't remember what show – maybe the "Hit Parade." The opening was entrance of a male dancer by sliding down a giant mail shoot. On his second try he sprained his ankle! A doctor was called. With multiple Novocain injections he went on. It was a "break a leg" performance!

We did a whole "Omnibus" with **John McKernan** and **Esther Williams** at the submarine base at Groton, Conn. That was a fascinating show. We returned to Groton when the submarine Thrasher sank. On another "Omnibus" we submerged under the waters of Long Island Sound in the submarine Albacore. (I with the microwave on the cliff above the Sound.) The Albacore was an experimental sub to study "flying" in the sea.

Computers were a new phenomenon when we did a show featuring IBM's giant computer in the IBM building on Madison Avenue. It took up an entire floor and couldn't do the job this computer can as I write this!

Our assignments covered countless inserts for the "Today Show" with a 12:01 AM in-time. A memorable quote from engineer **Bob Smith**, as we loaded the mobile unit for that first assignment: "To think, I quit a job once because my boss wanted me to come in at 8 AM!"

On several occasions we did the whole "Today" in the field. During one at Baker's Field there was some sort of panic in the show, the director shouted, "Siberia, Siberia!" To the studio crew that meant – **Garroway** to "home base." Everyone in studio would know this, but we interlopers had no idea what was going on. Otherwise all went well. There was one at Belmont Racetrack, another on board the aircraft carrier Constellation, then under construction at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. We boarded the submarine Nautilus for "Today" while it was in Brooklyn – there were only 2 secrets – how deep it could dive and the number of torpedoes it carried.

Another seafaring remote was a dramatic show aboard a docked cargo ship; the true story of a freighter found adrift with all hands and passengers dead. I operated the Creepy camera which was integrated into the show. **Don Mulvaney** was the cameraman. One super shot was his "boom up" in the cramped bunk quarters. Starting from deep knee bend, Don rose from the lower bunk to the uppermost – a great effect. (My knees ache thinking about it!) **Frank Caden** received a permanent injury when a light fell on him during that show.

Steve Allen left the studio to do his "Tonight Show" from the USS America prior to its maiden voyage (**RWD** Lighting Director). Many of us had to spend the night in luxurious staterooms. Field life, sometimes, was rough!

Many shows worked remotes into their formats. "The Home Show" at Coney Island – one bit was to load the old, monstrous black & white gear and microwave (including a gas power generator) into a couple of roller coaster cars. That resulted in a few seconds of airtime. When **Arlene Francis** took possession of her new home in Mount Kisco, New York we were there — **Hugh Downs** announcer.

Here's a couple of show stoppers — a "Today" spot from the Witty clothes factory when they made their first Dacron suits! And a hard boiled egg shelling contest!

And, of course, we went to the Statue of Liberty for "Today" and did another from Palisades Amusement Park where announcer/writer **Cunningham** went aloft in a hotair balloon – tethered, of course.

A standout experience was lunch with the Jacques Custeaus aboard the Calypso in dock at a midtown pier. A director (name forgotten) and I were to do a show survey and the Custeaus suggested we come for a "business lunch." The lunch was delicious, our hosts gracious and the tour of the Calypso was fascinating.

Many years after my hiring interview with Doris Ann, I came in contact with her when we did her "Frontiers of Faith" from churches around the metropolitan area. And while we're on religion, there was the historic Pope's visit to Yankee Stadium – I supervised cable installations for all the networks.

There was Schubert's Alley and "The Most Happy Fella" insert for the "Tonight Show." The crew was taken on stage behind a scrim ("Be very quiet.") – thus, hidden from the audience, we watched (within a few feet) the belly dancer scene. We were cautioned to "step lively," lest when they brought the lights up behind the scrim we would be *in* the show. On "Off-Broadway" we did "The Three Penney Opera." And there was a wonderful show from "The Eugene O'Neil Theater for the Deaf" in Connecticut.

Last Christmas I heard NBC had been covering the lighting of the Rock Center Christmas tree since 1952 – well, I was there. That was when I first met **Bob Mausler** checking out cables from the RCA building's sub-basement to Master Control. And one Christmas season several of us were sent to Washington for a Nixon tree lighting.

Christmas Eve's Midnight Mass was a favorite because it meant I wouldn't be out of town on the holiday. It did have one drawback – I'd get home in time to finish decorating our tree, assemble bikes and toys, fall into bed only to be wakened a short time later by our children's shouts of joy.

Another staple was New Year's Eve at Times Square. We rang in the New Year from the Astor Hotel marquee with **Ben Grauer** announcing. How many hotel kitchens have I moved equipment through? Too many to count. There's nothing like the stench of garbage cans standing on the loading dock filled with stale coffee and souring milk.

Eleanor Roosevelt did a series of talk shows from the Sheraton Hotel. Son **Elliot** was the stage manager. He was too attentive to his future wife, **Faye Emerson**, to cue his mother, so I made a "cue box" with lights to count down the time for her closing remarks. We also did a pickup from her city apartment where she presented each of us with a personally autographed copy of her book, "This I Remember."

After setting up the Sheraton we went to 106th Street to do "Don Winslow of the Navy" and the "Doubleday Book Show." Then back to Eleanor. Other 106th shows I worked intermittently were Ripley's "Believe it or Not," "Armstrong Circle Theater" and "One Man's Family." Also a nature show with **Radcliff Hall** – on one show a beehive filled with dormant bees thought it was spring under the hot lights. Soon the studio was abuzz. There was **Bob Elliot** and **Ray Goulding** and a wacky remote at the demise of the Polo

Grounds. There was **Tex and Jinx** and a remote from the Republic hanger on the Island; we ran out of script about 15 minutes into the show! That gave a new meaning to winging!

Oh, and "Chevrolet Theater" in 8G with **Dinah Shore** and another drama series with **Faye Emerson**.

One of my very first thrills was to do audio for a President Truman speech at Lake Success. I can't describe the feeling I experienced knowing the President's "electronic voice" was passing through the equipment just below my fingers! And we covered the dedication of the new UN General Assembly building. In those early days we covered many Security Council and General Assembly events when **Pauline Fredricks** was NBC's correspondent.

When Khrushchev came to New York we had a camera across the street from his hotel to catch glimpses of him through a window and when he held his "press conferences" on the marquee just outside his second floor suite – **Bob Long** was our TD.

So many more memories – **Johnny Andrews**, the "Three Flames," "Tavern on the Green" with the **Cy Colman Trio**, (later moved to Studio 3A), **Mr. Wizard**, **Paul Winchel** and **Jerry Mahoney**. **Harpo Marx** in Central Park. An early evening series with **Guy Lombardo** at the Roosevelt grill. (He hosted the crew at dinner and his aqua-theater at Jones Beach.) There were movie premiers in Times Square and the opening of the Americana Hotel in Miami – **Bob Sarnoff** stage manager – followed by a week of "Today" shows – jai alai, boat races and Cypress Gardens.

Remember the twist? During that rage we did shows from the Peppermint Lounge – **Mindy Karson**, sister of engineer **Ivan**, vocalist. **Jack Lescoulie** had a series from NY night clubs – "Manhattan after Dark" – a new night club each night.

We did a show from the Kovacs apartment. One bit was **Ernie** showing off his musical cigar humidor. He cautioned, "The only thing out of bounds in this study is this cigar box." Well, tell a gang don't touch and we will! We emptied the box. On the show **Ernie** opened the box to play the music and did a double take seeing the box was empty. He did a triple take when he looked up to see the whole floor crew with cigars in their mouths! But, they were cheapies we had bought as a gag. He loved it! Toward the end of the show **Edie Adams** made an appearance, in costume and makeup from her starring roll in "Lil Abner."

Political primaries in Manchester and conventions – **Stevenson/Eisenhower** (in Chicago, we covering a President Truman walking press conference – live), **Kennedy/Nixon**, **Johnson/Goldwater** and **Humphrey/Nixon**. And then their inaugurations viewed from my perch on the Capitol Dome where our microwave was located. That was a real lug job. The gear had to be hand carried up a spiral stair between the inner and outer domes. For Kennedy's inauguration I had charge of the creepy camera so I was spared the lug job. Following the inauguration the creepy was to move to an Inaugural Ball. In their great wisdom the company would not rent a car to transport the gear. "Take cabs!" was their solution. Those who were there remember the Washington

snow. It was dark, shoe top slushy, and not a cab in sight! Our little crew schlepped the gear through the streets – that was truly above and beyond. But, we made it.

Another event that took me to DC was Queen Elizabeth's visit; her motorcade from the airport was followed by our Cadillac and cameras on the Lincoln Memorial roof. And a Wide, Wide World put **Pete Peterson**, **Fred Smith** and me on the Sub-Treasury roof for a microwave pickup. Once we rushed down from an upstate Gillette fight to do a WWW insert from the stage of the Radio City Music Hall – that's a fascinating place!

Burr Tilstrom brought "Kukla, Fran and Ollie" to the Johnny Victor theater where I did the audio and my boom operator was new employee – **Gene Martin**.

When JFK announced his presidential candidacy, Truman declared him too young. We were rushed to a Kennedy press conference at the Roosevelt Hotel. (My brief brush with history – on my lunch break I was watching a Yankee baseball game when someone behind me asked "Who's winning?" I turned to see – JFK, "The Yankees.")

We did a lot of fill-in work when studio was short handed. At 67th Street we did **Gabby Hayes** and another cowboy show starring "Cricket" **Skilling**, a graduate from the "Children's Hour." Not being familiar with the talent, when the director asked camera-one to get the Cricket, there was wild close-up panning looking for a cricket! Live had its challenges! The opening of that show was a series of gunshot produced by sound effects man **Art Anderson** hitting a cardboard carton with a stick. Sounded great.

Field did **Toscanini's** first TV concert from 8H with the Green gear set up in the chair storage room below the balcony. Later I did one from Carnegie Hall.

A group of us (on our own) covered a Port Newark explosion which alerted the company to the possibilities of disaster news coverage. Soon after we covered three Newark plane crashes in the space of a few weeks. Also the Ryker's Island crash and a mid-air collision over Staten Island that added the town of New Dorp to my vocabulary. Another crash was at Idlewild (or was it Kennedy at the time). The following day we left for a remote and flew over the crash site and had a new perspective of the grim details of such a horrible disaster.

There was **Herbert Hoover's** funeral from St. Bartholomew Church, General **Douglas MacArthur** lying in state at the 7th Regiment Armory and his cortege to Penn Station. And **Malcolm X's** funeral service in Harlem.

I spent the night of November 22, 1963 on the RCA roof receiving "man in the street" reactions to JFK's assassination and again when brother Robert's flag-draped casket was returned to New York.

I worked a summer with the Audio Video Group designing a videotape truck along with several other jobs. I had the privilege of working under the direction of **Allen Walsh** and with men like **Sherman Atwood**, **Bob Butler**, **John Crampton**, **Red Donahoe** and **Jerry Hastings** (Jerry, coincidentally, was my Boy Scout Scoutmaster). The bad spelling in my design specifications was corrected by **Rita**

Stipo and Rosemary Dubois.

Probably the ultimate "I was there remotes" were the Cape Canaveral Space flights. **Clay Ackerson**, **Dave Hubby**, **Ed Procter** and I had built and equipped two semi-trailers in the Long Island City Field shop. They were parked just outside of Mercury Control at Cape Canaveral. **Warren Phillips** was the Tech Supervisor; **Stoddard Dentz**, TD and **Phil Falcone**, audio. Clay and I handled Master Control. Dave and Ed handled the maintenance chores. **Arnie Proner** manned the tracking camera and **Harvey Belair** was camera-one at the press site. **Fred Favant** handled the audio distribution to a host of radio broadcasters. Later **Big Bill Kelly** took over as TD.

I rigged a microphone high on a pole to pick up the rocket blast. A mockingbird chose it as a perch to daily regale the Cape with music – she/he made it useless except for an ornithological study.

Following Glenn's historic orbital flight, **Jim Smart** and I were hustled off to Washington to cover Glenn's hero's parade and then on to his home town in Ohio for his gala homecoming.

A particular highlight for me was Astronaut Wally Schirra's flight since he was a fellow Boy Scout in our hometown of Oradell. But I didn't make it to my own hometown when Oradell and NBC honored Wally!

As **Tom Brokaw** puts it, I was part of the "Greatest Generation." The Army Airforce sent me around the world and set me down in China for 18 months. NBC provided me with extraordinary experiences over my 34-year tenure.

The above are highlights that easily come to mind; there were so many others. They chronicle the "bit-part" I played in the Black & White days of television's "Golden Age."

And then came color.

I hope my chronicle has stirred some memories of your own "Golden Years" in the "Golden Age." — shows you worked and the great people you worked with. NBC placed us in a unique and rewarding position in communication history.

It has been my distinct pleasure during the past 7 years to be the publisher of Peacock North's magazine. It is heartening to know that Marilyn Altman, Jim Marshall and Len Stucker have stepped forward to resuscitate the gasping peacock. I wish them great success.

I also want to thank all who contributed stories and pictures to fill our pages these many years, and a special thanks to Peter, Dan and Ripp for making my job a pleasure.

Warmest regards to all, Frank Vierling



Beepers, cellphones, faxes, e-mail! Remember the days when you could reach out and touch someone who was not in your immediate area with either a phone call or letter? You could keep this information in a tiny address book. At MIDDLESEX COUNTY COLLEGE where I work, just within the last year alone I have had to toss out my rolodex and set up a database of our clients to include all the beeper, cellphone, office and home phone, fax numbers and e-mail addresses. This even extends to my own busy family. I am amazed at all the technology – including voice mail, message machines, palm pilots, call waiting, caller ID (and computer) I deal with during a normal day. Not to mention the Internet – I do research for my job and read all my newspapers online. How did I ever manage to exist without these marvels of the information age?

In an article in USA Today (10/17/00), it cited research groups that are studying the major impact of technology on older people (over 50): Harvard, MIT, and the Federal

Laboratory Consortium for Technology Transfer. At this moment in time, seniors are the fastest-growing segment of web users. Many are attracted to it to keep in touch with their grandchildren and families, and also just to keep in touch with other interests they have. One researcher discovered a study where older people were asked to participate on a research task force to give input on retirement issues. When volunteers had to travel to discussion groups, there were no takers; however, when they were told that they would participate through the web, interest remained high and productive. My own daughter is participating in a Princeton study which, aside from a one-day site visit, will be conducted for one year on the web.

In a CBS "60 Minutes" (10/29/00) interview with Lesley Stahl, General Electric's CEO Jack Welch talked about how he came late to the Internet. Even though his wife was prodding him to get involved he "just didn't get it" until about two years ago. Now he is on a mission to make GE "young and nimble" and would like everyone involved with GE to climb aboard the Internet express and get connected. Internet connection no longer requires the purchase of an expensive computer. One can now purchase an Information Appliance which is not as costly or as complex as a computer. You just take it out of the box and plug it into an electrical and phone outlet. I-opener and I-Compaq are two companies who are manufacturing these devices and there are many more coming on the market shortly. And, of course, there is Web-TV. There is a monthly charge for your service provider.

Here are some of my choices. I've tried to select sites that have relevance to our selective membership. *So, get caught in the Web.*

www.colortini.com

This is Tom Snyder's personal Web Site. It is simple, uncluttered, and attractive...easy to navigate. Tom expresses himself in his usual intelligent, witty and curmudgeonly way. Photos are displayed and you can even contact him by e-mail.

www.creativeplanet.com

A unique industry (movies, TV, music) Web Site that pulls together various other sites "that can serve as essential tools for professionals in the entertainment world." It describes itself as a provider of production databases and information services that can enable the production process. There are sections on events, organizations, producers, production services, talent, publications, training and education, and jobs. Frank Biondi and Jack Valenti are on the Board.

www.crewnet.com

An employment resource for the film and TV industry, providing quality job leads to below-the-line professionals. There is a monthly fee of \$19.95 to become a member where you can also create your own Website (put up your resume) and receive free e-mail. Crewnet claims that basically two days of work at the lowest level of employment would pay for years of membership. They have 10,000 members. From what I could discern, it appears crisp, sharp, and on target.

www.senior.com

An online community for seniors (*50 and older*) designed to meet seniors' needs. It offers intelligent interaction in chat-rooms and forums where you can find topics of discussion on the arts, technology, current events, family, health, finance/money, poetry, pets, entertainment, etc. In researching this site, I found some really enjoyable and intelligent responses in a forum on British TV Mysteries. It's very easy to navigate and believe me when I say, there is something here for everyone, no matter how obscure the topic. It can become addictive if you find a group who shares your interest. Easy to navigate.

www.bibliomania.com

This is an online literature library of classic fiction, poetry, drama, philosophy, and reference. Did you ever say to yourself, "When I retire, I'm going to read the Great Books." This is a Website that has many of these books available to read online: Austen, James, Bronte, Dickens, Joyce, Eliot, Hardy, Plato etc. Sometimes when I'm having dinner alone I read a chapter or so.

Here's something for your grandchildren, reviewed by mine, Samantha Popp, age 10:

www.neopets.com

Do you remember the Tamagotchi craze of the virtual pets? Well a new, similar and cooler fad has arrived called Neopets. You can now do so much more with your own virtual pet: open up a guild, maintain a virtual shop with virtual items, keep a bank account with neopets' currency, and learn how to set up your own html site. This site can help kids explore their entrepreneurial talents.

www.onlinenewspapers.com

Reach out and read the newspapers of the world or check on your hometown newspaper.

www.reversepronedirectory.com

Enter phone number, find out name. Does not work for unlisted numbers.

www.ipl.org

This is the Internet Public Library, with an online texts collection of 15,000 titles. Provides all the services of your local library - and then some - without leaving your home.

www.clickcity.com

Good site for data on US cities especially if you are interested in relocation, visiting, or vacation. Almost like having your own personal Chamber of Commerce at the snap of your fingers.

www.lcweb.loc.gov

The Website of the Library of Congress with a collection of 121 million items -- including the largest film and TV collections in the world.

www.xnbc.org

This is a very noble effort on the part of the Website creator to allow NBC employees to keep in touch. However, without input by NBCers, it cannot fulfill its mission. Please check it out and register.

www.monitorbeacon.com

A Website dedicated to all who remember "NBC Monitor" and obviously a labor of love. "Monitor" was the last great Network Radio show and you can hear audio clips of past shows on this site. There are some wonderful "Monitor" memories and an interesting interview with Pat Weaver.

I hope that you will find one of these sites of interest. I would especially like to hear from anyone who has a favorite site to share.

Email: jannette@iopener.net
jannette1@mindspring.com



Joan retired as a writer/AD/PA and resides in Edison, NJ.

NBC HONORS VETERANS

By Dan Grabel

When NBC hosted its 25 Year Service

Anniversary gathering last November there was one person honored for his longevity, but not for 25 years at 30 Rock. CEO Bob Wright marked his 25th year with GE in 2000, and that was good reason to present him with a silver plate commemorating that achievement. Wright has been at NBC for 14 years, and his success at the helm in broadcasting was recognized by GE CEO Jack Welch by adding Wright to the Board of Directors of GE.

Everybody else, other than invited guests, was celebrating 25 to 40 years with the company and enjoying camaraderie, hors d'oeuvres and the gorgeous view from the 52nd floor executive dining room.

Wright asked his audience to recall the big shows of 1975, the year they joined NBC. Number one was "All in the Family."

Jane Pauley-Trudeau was one of the honorees and Wright called off a long list of shows and awards she has won. She came from NBC's WMAQ in Chicago and started with the net with "Today," co-hosting with Tom Brokaw and later with Bryant Gumble. Other credits include "Dateline," "Time and Again," and filling in for Brokaw on "Nightly News."



Jane Pauley-Trudeau

Jane also covered the Prince Charles and Diana wedding in London, "Today in Rome," "Today at the Great Wall."

Her awards include: "Best in the Business, 1990" from Washington Journalism Review, an Ed Murrow award for feature reporting, and entry in the Broadcasting Hall of Fame.

At the microphone Jane got a few laughs. She said, "I see a lot of familiar faces I've worked with through the years." Also, "I'm celebrating a birthday this week, and I've been at NBC half of my life. Nevertheless, I'm on the young side of 'Today' show demographics. I also outweigh the average American woman. I guess that makes me above average!"

Bob Wright told the honorees that they and the industry are at an exciting point.



Bob Wright & Peter Peterson

Everything is going digital and that means everything is going to change in the way the product is delivered. Sony, for example he said, is marketing a self-programming video camera in Japan which is also a PC with full audio capability and will permit the user to shoot a story, edit it, and send it back to their network or their office.

Peter Peterson and this writer represented Peacock North at this gala gathering. □

The New Honorees

— 40 Years —

Anne Fitzgerald
Vincent Sarubbi
William Shand

— 35 Years —

Jeanette Ansaldo
Joseph Colvin
Walter Ryan

— 30 Years —

Barbara Alvarado
Vincent Bailey
Harry Baker
Steven Cimino
Jose Endara
Robert Ferlito
Madeleine Ferrante
William Freeh
John Gary
Ronald Gnidziejko
Pauline Gordon

Michael Greenidge
Willie King
Donald Macoun
Mario Martinez
Cynthia Ribinski
Kenneth Saczawa
Walter Schwartz
Frank Shanbacher
Lloyd Siegel
Harry Tucker

— 25 Years —

Rector Bailey
Everett Bassett
Wilfredo Bellber
Irving Brand
Robert Campbell
Charles Chin
Mary Crynes
Francis Cunningham
Lori Cuomo
Susan Degutz
Robert Dotson
Randy Falco
Ellen Fincke
Neftali Flores
Mary Flynn
Robert Gonzalez
Richard Greene
Richard Griffin
John Harty
John Hernandez
Veronica Jordan-Blondi

Judith Kerr
Willie Knight
Day Krolik
Marc Kusnetz
On Lee
Bruce Leonard
Donna McCarthy
Robert Natoli
Jeffrey Osias
Jane Pauley-Trudeau
Allen Reinhardt
Jeffrey Scarborough
Bruce Shachat
Andrea Smith
Carmela Tripodi
Dave Ubinas
Luis Vale
Angelo Vigorito
Jake Waldburg
William Wheatley
Brian Wickham



snapshot

Part two conclusion

by Cissie Lindemann

So many wonderful tales to tell

... and almost all filled with laughter. One year at the Kentucky Derby (interesting to note that this was at a time when civil rights protesters were streaming out onto the track) all dressed up for the big event, I had gone to the ladies' room before the Derby was run. I tried to go back to our box only to find myself locked in the bathroom by security guards. President Nixon had joined the people in our box and I was not allowed out until he left. I hear it was a great race! People were incredibly nice at most events ... sometimes it got to be a bit much and I can remember some of us NBC people hiding in a closet so that we could be alone. Once we flew up to Saratoga for the races in a small high powered jet that had a difficult time landing on such a small air strip. Taking off was even worse... we had to take off straight up ... I should have gotten the picture when the pilots had on cowboy hats. Anyway ... we didn't have time to go to the hotel before the race so we dressed in the truck.

Another hysterical event that you may all recall. We had a close football game that had run into overtime interfering with a showing of "Heidi." I was on one telephone ... holding the line with Scotty Connal and Carl on another line trying to get permission to "slide the network." He couldn't get through and as I heard the telephone turn around I knew we were dead. What a flap... strangers would stop me on the street ... I finally just handed out NBC's telephone number. It all culminated in a direct line for a long time called the Heidi phone.

I didn't travel a lot with Carl ... partially because we had five children and a large household but also because he was completely preoccupied with the job at hand. Going along could be interesting ... I was either the bride or the corpse. Sometimes I would be sitting up so high it was hard to see the field and other times when a VIP didn't show I would be right down front. During a particularly exciting baseball playoff, sitting in the commissioner's box we were literally lifted off our feet by security and taken out before the

tumultuous end, in case of trouble. In contrast up in Toronto we were sitting with Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau when I noticed that the security guards were nowhere to be seen. Curious, I asked where they were and was told they had gone to get hot dogs and Trudeau added "In Canada we do not shoot our public officials!" Whoa.

When I didn't go ... having been in the industry myself I understood. Besides ... I had a busy life.. You might wonder how much time he had to spend with us. Maybe the time was not always in abundance but the quality always was. Once in a while if I had to give a speech at a school or town event I would look up and there he was in the front row! And there were always the daily telephone calls.

At one point we moved back into New York City to avoid the pressures of commuting. We had a lovely little brownstone on the Upper East Side. It had a garden that backed up on Trinity Church ... it was like being in Paris. One Sunday morning one of our daughters and I were at church. During the sermon we realized that a voice was coming over the organ pipes. At first I thought it was probably from someone on the street but it kept getting

louder and louder overriding the poor minister ... I suddenly recognized the voice. It was Carl talking on his radio ... I sent our daughter scurrying off to tell him to stop. Trouble was when she came back, as I was helping to clean up after the service, she told the rector what her "ham" father had done. He was not amused. Oh, well, it made for a good story among his ham friends for years.

Further adventures included relationships with many people. Some of the most interesting were with Howard Cosell and his wife, Emmy. We were neighbors and good friends for a long time. To capulate some of the adventures ... on a trip to Hawaii for meetings (in those days there was a non-stop flight from New York)... Carl was operating his radio (with permission from the pilot) raising hams on the ground ... eventually Howard got in the act and when they wouldn't believe it was he ... he started bellowing "Let me give you the backfield (or something of that sort)." In the course of time they believed him and they had interesting



conversations across the country. Another time the Cosells and Lindemanns were flying in a small plane from Colorado to Wyoming for a dedication ceremony for Curt Gowdy. In the plane were long-time band leader Phil Harris and ourselves. It was a bumpy ride. Emmy and I kept imagining we were going to rescue Indians to make ourselves feel better about taking such a trip. Phil Harris kept screaming at Carl to get off his radio.

When we landed, in rather snowy weather, Emmy and I staggered into the ladies room. Emmy had had her coat stolen earlier and had bought a coat that was a bit long and had had no time to shorten it. When we went into the ladies room there was a large crowd outside to greet us and an entourage to escort us to the hotel. It took awhile to clean up and try to pin up the coat. When we came out ... the small airport was empty ... completely. We heard later that Howard kept screaming "Where are the girls" and he was assured that we had been taken care of. Well ... we took care of ourselves by heading down the highway ... Emmy's coat dragging in the dust. We were picked up by a man in a big car with a large number of children. We wedged ourselves in with the kids and after hearing our plight ... with much gusto on the part of the children, we were delivered to the hotel. At a dinner later we were awarded cowboy hats for our valor. There were so many other snapshots with them. Once driving up to New York from Maryland, Emmy and I sitting in the back ... Howard up front, with Carl driving. Speeding along there were popping sounds which I thought were from a car's backfiring but Cosell was sure we were being shot at. When nothing happened we stopped at one of those roadside things to get a cup of coffee. When the startled youngster pouring Howard's coffee realized who it was, he kept pouring ... Howard said "Yeah, it's me and you're burning my hand." So much for that trip. In Boston, leaving an event we went to get in a limousine for the trip to the airport and kids started rocking the car. Sports fans could be interesting. In the beginning often our meetings were peaceful ... as time went on they were not. I can remember a whole group of us having dinner and literally, if you wanted to say anything you'd have to make a sign of a "t" to be recognized. They were a lively group. Howard could always be counted on to make outrageous comments. One beautiful young waitress with a very low neckline leaned over him to deliver his dinner ... and without looking up he asked if she'd gotten her college degree from Vassar. ... At lunch with Emmy and our good friend Mary Hyman at a meeting in Arizona we were sitting on an outside porch with a beautiful peaceful view ... just us. We were feeling particularly euphoric about everything when Mary said solemnly "You know, I feel like we are sitting on the poop deck of the Titanic."

Maybe we were, for eventually, sadness came into our lives ... but it was far outweighed by the joy... As Carl said "we'd had a glorious run." His last great coup at NBC was negotiating the Olympics in Russia ... On picking up the

telephone one early morning a gruff Russian voice asked to speak to Carl. After some pretty heavy dealing Carl was told that if he could be in Moscow that night the Olympics would be his. I don't have to tell you how fast he got there ... I felt like I was getting a bride ready to elope. As you know ... they succeeded and Carl came back a hero. But both Carl and the Olympics were ill fated. No point in belaboring the downside. After a few untoward events, which included a Congressional investigation out of which Carl emerged as a knight in shining armor, he joined CBS. Unfortunately he was diagnosed with a return of a malignant melanoma. Like the cancer, Carl never really recovered from leaving NBC. However, at a dinner party in a New York restaurant, when Carl was sitting next to the head of CBS, I heard him thank him for CBS's kindness during his illness. The response was "Carl we are the ones who should thank you ... you saved our lives." It was nice to hear.

Like all of us, I could go on and on but maybe it's time to wrap it up. I can't speak for the kids directly but for myself and from what I hear from them nobody was more loved and respected than Carl in our family. When he was very ill everybody came home to help care for him. Sad though it was ... typical of Carl's life it had its levity. We laughed a lot. It seemed fitting that the last great party we had was a Kentucky Derby Party at our home off the coast of Maine where Carl died a few weeks later. Many of his friends came from all over. It's been a long time now ... but I still feel his joyful presence. I think he would be proud of his children. They are rugged individualists which he also certainly was. Interestingly enough one of them is married to a Russian and works in the capital of Siberia in non-profit endeavors. Of course, I still miss him, but I forgot to mention ... toward the end he was hell bent to have me get my ham radio license. I was terrified that I would disappoint him by not being able to pass the novice and then the technical tests. Well ... I did ... KI LGB (Little Green Bean). It was a great help in keeping in touch in those final weeks. Somehow I have never pursued it. That was his thing and without him at the other end calling "CQ" it just wasn't the same. Visiting one of our daughters the other day I saw two of his microphones on a table. I asked her where she found them ... and she said, "Oh, in a trunk somewhere." I was touched that she wanted them.

An added fillip ... at his funeral service the homily included some remarks about a new amplification system in the church for the hard of hearing. The rector concluded by saying "if you hear a distant signal...

...it just might be Carl."

Elizabeth (Cissie), wife of the late Carl Lindemann, writes to us from Portland Maine where she keeps busy at the Portland Museum of Art among other things.

Yet More Letters



Catherine Vukovich:

"Peacock North Closing — the end of an era & how sad for all of us! Pete, Rippie, Dan, Frank Vierling have served us long & well — unselfish with your time & talents. Thanks a million for the hard work & good job. PN was always interesting, informative & fun to read. We shall miss it...."



Perry Massey:

Perry met Hal Alexander at a Mall — got e-mail from Bob Garthwaite who has been acting for the past 12 years and recently had a big part in "Ed" recently.... He hopes new blood will take over PN. "You have done an outstanding job with Peacock North. It would be a shame to lose something that you and others have worked so hard to develop."



Helen Nicole:

A thank-you for publishing her letter to her granddaughter and hopes to make that thanks in person at the La Maganette luncheon.



Dan O'Connort:

"You (Pete), Dan, Heino and Frank deserve tremendous credit for the time and effort you have given over the years to the PN publication and all the activities connected with it... ..The efforts you and the others have put into this are unique and deserving of all the gratitude we can muster. They serve to underline the good times we experienced together at NBC. Congratulations on the fine, generous gift you have given to all your friends."



Ross Martindale:

"The news of PN's closing is sad indeed — and yet I understand that folks cannot go on forever giving so much of their lives to such a project. We are all fortunate that it lasted as long as it did.

I always enjoyed reading PN, and it seemed to get better every year. I hope you, Peter, and Rippy and Frank and Dan — and all those who contributed so much — realize how much the rest of us appreciated your efforts...."



Rosemary Dubois:

"I am so sorry to learn that the great efforts on behalf of the members has to end, but I can well understand. The memories will remain forever of the great NBC years and the wonderful friendships that have developed from the experience...."



Bob Newman:

"You founders did a wonderful job with PN, putting in tons of thought and labor. The luncheons were great fun, and the newsletter excellent, reflecting the past, while keeping abreast of events and former colleagues' activities. Sometimes 'thrilling,' sometimes 'meaningful' and always a pleasure to read... Thanks for the memories."



Mamye Smith:

"Thanks so much for getting NBC alumni together all these years. I probably would not have been able to see my old friends without your prodigious efforts. Your work was very much appreciated."



Joan Gifford:

"Pete, A very sad time — you have done a wonderful job holding PN together, you should be very proud. I sincerely appreciate it. My love to you and Peg."



Dorothy Brodine:

"Pete: Without you there would have been no Peacock North. Who else would have given those dedicated 14 years to keeping our NBC family together?... Three cheers for Peter Peterson! My hat is off to you... It's no wonder that nobody is attempting to replace you. It would be an impossible act to follow... Now as I dry my tears, permit me to sign, your friend — Dorothy Brodine"



Fran DeGennaro:

"Dear Pete: You and your "crew" have put in a lot of hard work and dedication — and have done a wonderful job — keeping Peacock North alive and well over all these years.

To you all ... Thank you very much."



Milt Wyatt:

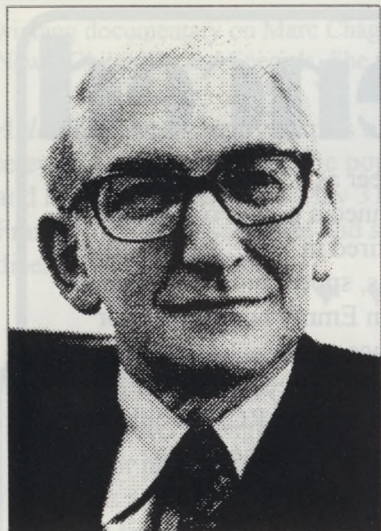
"All good things must end and life goes on with the new generation. I cancelled previous plans so I can be with the gang on May 20th. It will be a bitter-sweet reunion.



Gigi:

"Pete — I understand why this is happening. But, of course, I don't like it at all.

And so may more!



Reuven Frank

News Man

I started at NBC in late July, 1950, because my classmate, Gerry Green, had talked me into it. It meant leaving a pretty good job at the *Newark Evening News*, but it looked new and exciting.

Television news was then totally separate from radio news, and one reason I got the job, or so the man who actually hired me told me, was that no one any good in radio news would go up to TV news because they weren't sure TV would last.

By "go up" they really meant go up. NBC TV News was then in the Pathe labs building at East 106th Street and Park Avenue, just north of where the railway tracks from Grand Central station come above ground. By what I was later to learn was an unusual display of intelligence by NBC management, they decided to put the news offices and studios where the news film would be developed.

We had offices on the eleventh floor, film editing rooms on the fourth floor and our studio was on the fifth floor. There were two real studios on the third floor, from which came real dramas like *Armstrong Circle Theater* and *One Man's Family*. Sometimes real stars, like Raymond Massey or Faye Emerson, would come out of their cabs at our front door, and we would grab the cab to go to lunch. 105 East 106th street was miles from anywhere and the lunch counter in the basement would never have withstood the visit of a health inspector.

Walter Miller was one of the film TD's. He later became a big producer-director of specials out on that other coast. Gerry Green left 106th street when "*Today*" started. He was in charge of news and later became executive producer, and even later left the news business entirely to write novels and screen plays. He wrote the NBC "*Holocaust*" mini-series.

I wrote the "*Camel News Caravan*" with John Cameron Swayze. I wrote most of the live copy and all of the film narration. The way it worked was this: I would stand at a floor mike in the middle of the studio with two readers, usually Kenneth Banghart and Radcliff Hall. When John would finish his film roll cue I would tap whoever was reading on the shoulder and he would start on the film narration; I would tap his shoulder for every cue. When it was over, I would press a button on some kind of box hanging from my shoulder and it would flash a light hidden behind the dummy books on Swayze's desk, so he could start on his copy. It was primitive, but it worked.

The "*Camel News Caravan*" paid all the expenses of NBC television news, all the salaries of the management, of the writers and directors, of the cameramen and the film editors, everyone. But there was still no TV station in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. So once a week, we would have a kinescope made, to send to the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company so they could see what they were paying for. We tried to pick a good one, to show off, but if something went wrong, as with a switch out of town, we couldn't order a second kine, because there wasn't enough money in our budget.

Now, whenever there is some kind of retrospective show about television news, and you see pictures of John Swayze or some of the film we had, it comes from those once-a-week kinescopes that Marge McGlynn would order for us to send to Winston-Salem. Otherwise there would be no record at all of those early days.

We were always moving forward, learning a little more each day as we went along. There was no one to tell us how because no one had ever done it before. When color came, RCA tried to encourage color programming by giving a supplemental to a program budget. By that time I was doing a half-hour Sunday show with Chet Huntley. The budget was, as always, pitiful. Tin cup and pencils stuff. When it got too low, I would find myself some color film with some vague connection to news, run it for five minutes or so and get the supplemental to rescue my budget for another month.

Then tape came, two-inch, remember? It was edited with a single-edged razor blade and some kind of paint with iron filings in it to identify the pulse lines. The last legal use of single-edged razor blades.

Now, I come into town sometimes for lunch with an old colleague. When I get home to Jersey my wife asks, "Who did you have lunch with?" And I tell her.

"And what did you talk about?"

"Everything's going to hell." □

**"Everything
is going to
hell."**

*Reuven Frank, retired President NBC and
Network News President lives in Tenafly, NJ.*

Ken's Korner Silenced

Peacock North mourns the loss of Kenneth John Arber, our great booster and regular columnist.

Ken, 89, passed away February 15, 2001 in Boynton Beach, FL. Born 1911 in Far Rockaway, NY, the son of the late Emil and Lillian Arber. He grew up in Bogota, New Jersey and later moved to Upper Saddle River, New Jersey. In retirement he and wife Jaye retired to Florida.

Our regular PN readers know Ken was a World War II veteran having served in the Army in North Africa as a Tech Sergeant and First Lieutenant. Through the years his Ken's Korner column has chronicled experiences meeting entertainment personalities and NBC coworkers during his tour of duty in Africa.

Following the war he returned to NBC. Ken worked in many departments including Sound Effects and Air Conditioning. Ken's career culminated in a

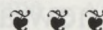


distinguished career as a Technical Director. Ken's career spanned a period of over 40 years when he retired in 1975. His career as a TD included news, sports and entertainment and earned him an Emmy nomination for technical excellence.

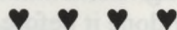
Before his NBC career he had an intimate knowledge of the RCA building he worked in. His father was one of the contractors and Ken gained some construction experience during the construction of Radio City.

He was a member of the William F. Burke Masonic Lodge in Bogota, NJ, for over fifty years. Ken was an avid HAM radio operator with the call W2ZYM.

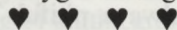
He is survived by his devoted wife of 55 years, Jaye; two sons, Kenneth, Jr. and Glenn and one daughter Karen Walsh and four grandchildren, Ryan, Blair and Kailey Walsh and Alexander Arber.



Eunice Smiley lost her battle with cancer in mid-November 2000. Eunice came to NBC from Burbank, and headed the Engineering scheduling office following her husband Tom's tenure in that office.



Elodie Dibbins, wife of Electronic Maintenance engineer Walter Dibbins, died in November 2000 from a lung disease in which the lungs lose their ability to release CO₂. She had been bedridden and on oxygen a long period

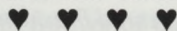


William Burr Smidt III, art director, producer and writer who worked in films and television, died at his home in Venice, Florida. He was 73.

Mr. Smidt received an Oscar nomination for his art direction of "Requiem for a Heavyweight" (1962), which starred Anthony Quinn. He was art director for "A Thousand Clowns" (1965), with Jason Robards, and the "Young Savages" (1961), with Burt Lancaster.

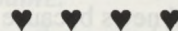
He received Emmy nominations for "The Power and the Glory" with Laurence Olivier, "Cyrano de Bergerac" with José Ferrer, and a production of the "Sleeping Beauty" ballet with the Sadler's Wells company. He also worked on "The Littlest Angel," broadcast annually on the Hallmark Hall of Fame from 1969 until 1981.

He had joined NBC in 1949 where he helped make the transition from black-and-white broadcasting to color.

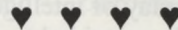


Leighton Todd Saville, died March 23, 2001, he was 71. Leighton was an NBC executive. He started in the Guest

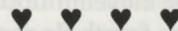
Relations Department as a page. He retired in 1972 after 28 years.



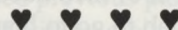
Mildred J. Dolan, wife of Jack Dolan (Engineering) died unexpectedly last November in her sleep at their home in Rye, New York. Besides Jack she is survived by two sons, John and James and a daughter Grace, among others. Before her marriage she was an executive secretary in Poughkeepsie, NY.



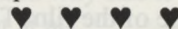
Irene Pliskin, wife of Engineering's Lee Pliskin, died April 25 of a massive stroke. She had been ill for over a year. She was 64.



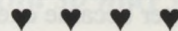
Ralph Files, died December 27, 2000 of cardiopulmonary failure brought on by Alzheimer's. He was buried with military honors at Calverton National Cemetery, Long Island, NY. Ralph retired in 1987 as an engineer in Broadcast Systems Operations.



Hugo Ripp, 79, brother Heino Ripp, died April 25 after a long battle with cancer. Hugo was employed by CBS as an engineer in their development labs.

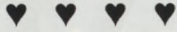


Mary Lou Fatovich, wife of AD/Director Peter Fatovich, died early this year. No other details at this writing.

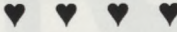


Catherine Faulconer Farris, died May 25th, just two days shy of her 77th birthday. Catherine wrote for the Emmy-Award

winning documentary on Marc Chagall, Monitor, Home Show .A-News, Obituaries and Specials. She retired in 1986.



Arlene Francis, witty actress of stage, screen and television, TV panelist on the popular "What's My Line?" and host of "Home" died May 31 at Kaiser Hospital in San Francisco. She was 93. She had suffered from Alzheimer's disease for many years



Perry Como, 87, died at his home May 12 after a lengthy illness. Perry was noted for his relaxed vocals, his Christmas specials and cardigan sweaters. In 1945, he had his first million-selling hit, "Till the End of Time." Some of his best-known numbers were light novelty songs like "Hot Diggity" and "Papa Loves Mambo."

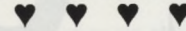


Perry made his television debut in 1948 on NBC's "The Chesterfield Supper Club." He moved to CBS in 1950 for "The Perry Como Show," which ran for five years. He returned to NBC for an eight year run with his variety show.

He gave up regular television shows in 1963 in favor of occasional specials. His career saw a resurgence in the 1970s with songs such as "It's Impossible," "And I Love You So," and several best-selling Christmas albums.

Pierino Roland Como was born in Canonsburg, Pa., May 18, 1913, the middle offspring of 13 children. In his

Imogene Coca, 92, comedian who teamed with Sid Caesar on "Your Show of Shows" in the early 1950's died June 1 at her home in Westport, CT. At the height of her success, Ms. Coca, who won an Emmy as the best actress of 1951, was making \$10,000 a week. In 1967 "The Sid Caesar, Imogene Coca, Carl Reiner, Howard Morris Special" won an Emmy Award for the year's best variety show.

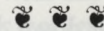


pre-teens he worked sweeping floors in a barbershop where he was instructed on cutting hair. At age of 14 he had his own shop earning \$150 a week.

In the early 30s he was singing with Freddie Carlone's band and in 1936 with Ted Weems' big band. In 1943, he began what turned out to be a 50-year contract with RCA-Victor Records.

Since leaving the TV scene, Perry lived a private, semi-retired life with his wife Roselle, whom he married in 1933. They divided their time between the North Carolina mountains and the Palm Beach County town of Jupiter. Roselle died in 1998, shortly after their 65th wedding anniversary. She was 84.

Perry periodically reappeared for Christmas TV specials from international venues. He retained his youthful appearance and casual charm to the end.



A few lines from: **THANATOPSIS** by William Cullen Bryant, 1794-1878

Yet not to thine eternal resting-place shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish couch more magnificent.

Thou shalt lie down with patriarchs of the infant world – with kings, the powerful of the earth – the wise, the good, fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past, all in one mighty sepulchre.

The hills rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun, – the vales stretching in pensive quietness between;

The venerable woods – rivers that move in majesty, and the complaining brooks that make the meadows green; and, poured round all,

Old Ocean's gray and melancholy waste, – are but the solemn decorations all of the great tomb of man.

The golden sun, the planets, all the infinite host of heaven, are shining on the sad abodes of death, Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread the globe are but a handful to the tribes that slumber in its bosom. –

Take the wings of morning, pierce the Barcan

wilderness, or lose thyself in the continuous woods where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound, save his own dashings – yet the dead are there:

And millions in those solitudes, since first the flight of years began, have laid them down in their last sleep – the dead reign there alone.

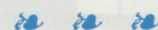
So shalt thou rest,

It concludes:

So live, that when thy summons comes to join the innumerable caravan, which moves to that mysterious realm, where each shall take his chamber in the silent halls of death,

Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night, scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed by an unfaltering trust,

Approach thy grave, like one who wraps the drapery of his couch about him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.



WE GET NOTES

Barbara Ponella:

"So sorry to hear the upcoming La Maganette luncheon could be the last. God bless you all for the hours spent on the PN magazine."

Ed Stozenberger:

Ed notes, he is still breathing, "Social Security wants me to give up...but the IRS wants me to keep the \$ coming. Ham net has converted to e-mail - hardly a substitute for me." He reminds us that he once published Broadcast Engineers Journal - 6000 copies a month, 1000 alone to Canada and some as far flung as Russia and Australia.

(A prodigious task, compared to PN. FV)

Mort Hockstein:

Mort's computer down, he hand writes: "Peter, I feel very bad about the end of PN. You and the gang did a fantastic job. Unequaled. The world feels that way!" He adds that he and Roland will be in Arizona in May and will "sadly miss the LAST SUPPER."

Bob Bader:

"Pete, It must be a sad moment for you and the members of Peacock North. I'm sure it took a vast amount of your time, also Heino Ripp, Dan Grabel, and Frank Vierling.

You guys did a great job and your PN newspaper was informative and humorous. It will be missed. Maybe someday someone will pick up the baton and it will go on again. You deserve, besides a lot of thanks, a rest and to do whatever will interest you, whether it is traveling and sightseeing or just sitting in a rocking chair reading a good book. Whatever it is, enjoy!"

Regards, **Bob Bader**

Edward Williams:

"Dear Peter, I was saddened to receive your letter that PN was closing down... it was something I always looked forward to... and renewing the friendships I had over the years at NBC. We reminisced about the past and people we worked with who are no longer with us. ...With this in mind, it's an old cliché but there is a song that sums it all up. It goes, 'Thanks for the Memories.'"

Sincerely, **Ed**

Pete —

Dan —

Heino —

Frank —

THANKS!!

Dick French:

"Pete, you made PN a great success."

Bob Garthwaite

Russ Tornabene:

"This is a toast to Heino, Dan, Frank, and you, Pete, for all these years. There are other names that elude me at this sad moment, so I acknowledge them too, wherever they are. Some have already gone ahead.

PN gave us information, context, news, opinion, photos that made us smile, reflections of a time that was and no longer is, and, always, fond memories. Thank you.

The Peacock is proud of those who produced PN. Stand proud."

Cordially, **Russ**

This is just a small sampling — there were so many more wonderful letters; too many to include. We thank you all for your kind thoughts.

A Message from Vic

There's been a lot of tragic news lately: earthquakes, hurricanes, deaths of prominent people...and now Pete Peterson tells us we are "phasing out or discontinuing PN's existence." How can that be?!! Peacock North has been the organization that has helped us keep alive the memories of the most productive parts of our lives...with annual get-togethers with those with whom we rubbed elbows for decades...and with news about them in the PN magazine...even though the section called "Silent Microphones" brought us very sad news.

Speaking of which, the news of the deaths of former Mayors John V. Lindsay and Abraham D. Beame bring back some of the most vivid memories of my three dozen years with NBC. For fourteen of those years I was host of Channel Four's Sunday morning "Direct Line" in cooperation with the League of Women Voters. In a 1965 pre-election hour-long broadcast which the NY Herald Tribune said "turned into a comedy hour," Beame and Lindsay appeared with four other candidates, one of whom was William Buckley Jr., who set off an on-the-air storm by calling three of the candidates "inhabitants of a zoo." Yes, we made the front-page headlines of the newspapers the next day.

Another favorite guest on Direct Line was Governor Nelson Rockefeller. After one of his appearances, a daughter of one of the League ladies asked for his autograph. Upon receipt, everybody in the studio heard her shout "Humph! Can't hardly READ it!!" I'm sure the banks never had trouble reading a Rockefeller signature... although they might have had trouble finding enough money to cash his check!

But getting back to the sad news: even though I can understand how it required so very much time and effort on the part of each member of the team of Peterson, Vierling, Grabel and Ripp, it is very sad that this phasing out has to happen. And here's hoping that "a new set of leaders" can be found... maybe some fresher retirees who have more time and who don't want to move to that Sunshine State with its impossible balloting system.

At least it's good news to read in the Peacock North Fall 2000 issue that Frank Vierling, our publisher, will continue on if someone steps forward to fill Pete Peterson's shoes. So it's not quite the end of the world – yet!

I'd like to sign off with this sincere wish:

Please, let's not let this be the end!

Let's keep alive our great PN!



Vic Roby

Following a broadcast of "Direct Line."

Jay Miller, Director; guest Nelson Rockefeller, Governor of New York and show moderator, Vic Roby.

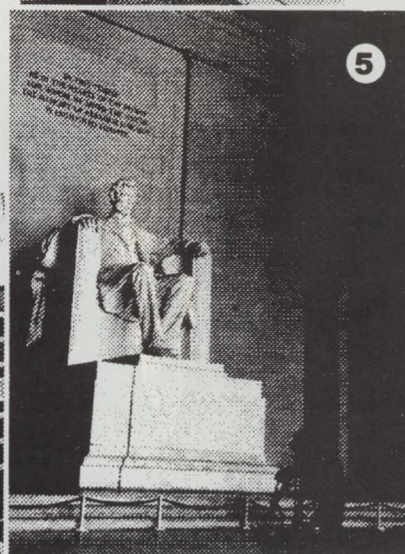
*Retired NBC announcer
Vic Roby lives in
Scarsdale, NY with his
wife Josephine.*

we get pictures, historic pictures

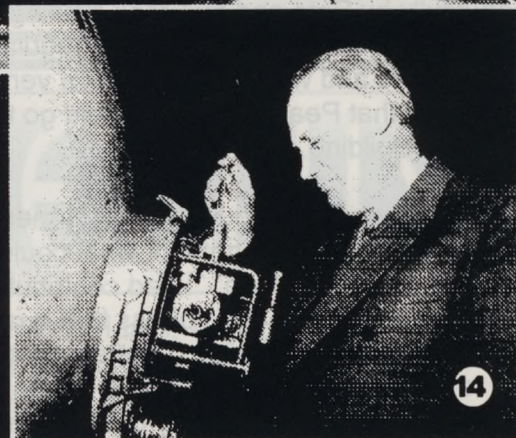
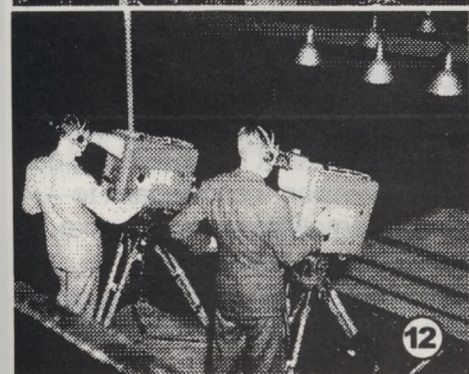
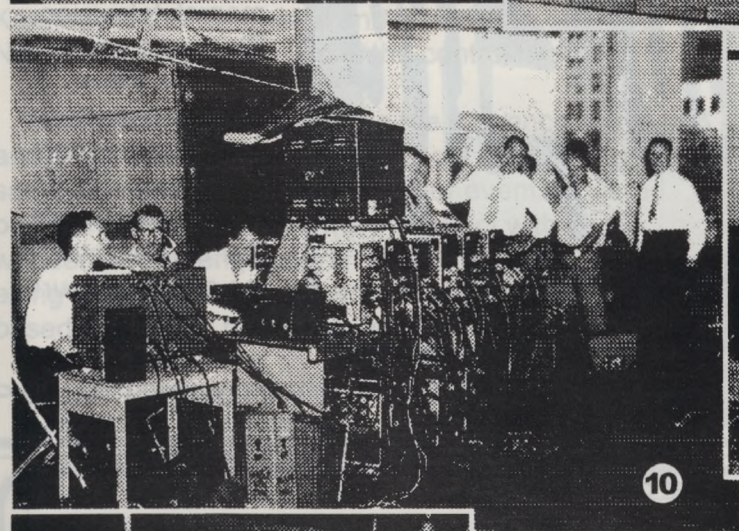
Everybody knew the late Jack ("Smiling Jack") Irving. His wife Florence, and son Jeff, recently sent us some 150 negatives Jack exposed, revealing a bit of early TV history.

Through digital "magic" and computer conversion (negatives changed to positives) we can share a few of his pictures on these pages.

Unfortunately very few negatives were identified. We thank Frank McArdle for his input in identifying many of the photos.



1 - Crew relaxes at an unknown site - Ogden Bowman, George Butler, ?, Tom Lyman, Bob Daniels, Bob Long, Steve Varley & Frank McArdle standing behind Ed Wilber. **2** - Washington, DC, Bob Long, Steve Varley, Court Snell, Harry Samuels & Carlos Clark. **3** - Alfie Jackson & Court Snell. **4** - Bob Daniels, Bob Long and Warren Philips. **5** - Bob Long. **6** - Bob Daniels & Frank McArdle carry Walter Mullaney.



7 - Court Snell, audio. **8** - Warren Philips in Washington - pre-WWII camera. - Carlos Clark post WWII camera. **10** - Big setup; Snell, "Tiny" Carson, "Doc" Potter and Steve Varley on right. **11** - Boston Fish Market. **12** - St. Nicholas Arena wrestling Bill Waterbury & Bob Daniels **13** - Art Poppele video with Ed Wilber, Snell at audio. **14** - Ed Wilber tuning microwave. **15** - Grand Central Station?, Bill States & Tom Lyman (center). **16** - Legion Parade passing the New York Public Library. And, the old WNBT test pattern which was seen on TV's for much of the day in the early years following the WWII.

It did not come as a complete surprise when I received a call early this month from Pete Peterson. He confirmed what I had feared as I read between the lines of his comments in the last issue of Peacock North.

Pete called to confirm the fact that 'Peacock North', both the publication and the organization, was running out of the kind of creative fuel that had kept it running for the last 14 years. Since no one had so far stepped up to the plate and offered to take over the work that, for the past 14 years, has been done so beautifully by Pete and by Frank Vierling and Dan Grabel and Heino Ripp and all the regular contributors and writers, there was a very real possibility that Peacock North would go the way of the RCA Building.

Pete was kind enough to ask former contributors to write a few last thoughts for what could be the final issue of 'Peacock North'. I had contributed a few items in past issues and I guess that qualified me as a 'contributor'. In any case, Pete's invitation caused me to think about the folks I have gotten to know in my 35 years with NBC, many of them people I see at our annual get-together at LaMaganette. I was so fortunate to have worked in New York and then at the NBC News bureau in Washington. I got thinking about my life at NBC.

When I got out of the Navy at the end of WWII, I enrolled in broadcast and journalism classes at Columbia University. Some of the broadcast classes were held at NBC and were taught by the likes of Sid Eigiss (press and publicity) and Pat Kelly (dean of the NBC announcer staff). In addition to the classes, I was also able to join the Guide Staff under Paul Rittenhouse. This was back in the late 40's. It is where I met my wife (of 51 years) Nan, who was also a guide. I loved taking visitors through the NBC Studio tour. The building was beautiful in those days...a huge lobby and mezzanine area...all art

deco. The studios had not yet been converted from radio to TV and Arturo Toscanini and the NBC Symphony still performed in wonderful, big Studio 8H, then the largest broadcasting studio in the world. Only one of the 6th floor studios was devoted to TV production. Our tour was 85% radio and only at the

very end of the tour did we go to the 'jeep' on the 9th floor to demonstrate the new broadcast marvel: television. Black and white monitors were 'jeeped' to a studio camera so visitors could see themselves on TV. Our big finish to the one-hour tour!

I loved the excitement of being in New York and working in Radio City in those years. But I wanted a career as a broadcaster and, with the help of Pat Kelly, I got that chance.

My broadcast career took me out of New York City and to a number of small radio stations in upstate New York where I worked as announcer and DJ. When it became apparent that I was missing out on the real explosion of television, I came back to New York, got a job with a small film company that was doing a lot of sub-contract work with CBS, which, in turn got me a job as production manager at CBS on the 'Twentieth Century' series with Walter Cronkite.

Then, one day in 1961, the late Ted Yates called me and offered me a job as Associate Producer on a new series at NBC with David Brinkley which was to be produced out of Washington. I first turned him down. I was doing fine at CBS and I really didn't want to move the family (by then we had two kids) out of a bustling New York and down to a rather provincial Washington, D.C. But Ted made me an offer too good to turn down.

It turned out to be a great move for us. 1961 was the beginning of John F. Kennedy's reign as president and Washington was just beginning to awaken to 'Camelot'! It was being transformed from a sleepy, southern town to a real first class world



capitol.

'David Brinkley's Journal' only lasted for two seasons in its prime time weekly format. At the end of those first two years, I left the unit to become Washington's Special Events producer. It was, for me, the best job in broadcasting. I traveled the world with every president from John F. Kennedy (I was in Berlin at Checkpoint Charlie when Kennedy was there) to George Bush. I worked the conventions and inaugurations and early on was part of Jim Kitchell's space unit. I covered the launches from Cape Kennedy/Cape Canaveral and would then go up to New York to work with Jim in the control room.

All of this experience gave me a chance to live in and enjoy the beauty of Washington, DC while at the same time being a part of the major events covered by NBC News. It brought me in contact with all the wonderful NBC engineering folks out of New York along with producers and writers who were New York based. It was the best of all worlds.

That is why I feel so close to so many of the Peacock North gang. We are all about the same

generation. It is the tail end of that wonderful generation Tom Brokaw writes about.

So, you see, Pete's call made me recall and appreciate the good life I enjoyed at NBC. It was a life greatly enriched by the friends I made with NBC people in New York and in Washington.

I guess there is a time for everything. Nothing can go on forever. So, if this is the last edition...if there are no more gatherings at La Maganette...we can say, as I often do, thank goodness for some wonderful memories. We got in at the right time...and

WE GOT OUT AT THE
RIGHT TIME!!



Bob is a former Executive Producer/Director of NBC News. The Asmans, Bob and Nan live in Washington DC.

HAL GURNEE RECALLS

Back in the early sixties when the "Jack Paar Program" went on the air (Fridays, 10 p.m.), Pete Fatovich and I were trying to explain to Jack why it took so long to edit the show. We overtaped 10 to 15 minutes on Sunday nights from 6B and then cut it to the required 59 minutes and 25 second air time, which involved many edits.

We told him about the cumbersome 90 minute 2" reels, iron oxide swabs needed to reveal the edit pulses, then the precise cuts with a single edge razor (a new one for each cut), white gloves for the editor to protect the Mylar tape, the audio and video pulses several inches apart, the narrow silver tape to join up the cut tape, and how often the editor would have to redo the edit to get it to play without breaking up.

One day soon after, Pete and I were on the studio bank elevator, Jack got on at the 6th floor and then on the 5th floor, Buddy Shadell stepped into the elevator. On the way down I introduced Buddy to Jack and told Jack that Buddy was the editor who did our show every week. Jack told Buddy he had just heard how difficult and time consuming it was to make all those edits on his show. Buddy paused, and looked over his glasses at Jack, shrugged and said "nothing to it." The door opened and Buddy left. The rest of the ride down with Jack was very quiet.



Hal is a retired NBC Director/Producer and writes from Sharon, Connecticut.

Marilyn's recollections of Steve Allen

By Marilyn Jacobs-Furey

My meeting with Steve Allen came about as a request from the NBC personnel department. They asked me to take a job as Steve's secretary for two weeks while his secretary was on vacation. "We know that you don't want to be a secretary, but it's only for two weeks," they said. So I agreed to do it. It was a local show, at that time housed in two tiny cubicles up at 67th Street, on its way to becoming a network show. The two cubicles were occupied by Steve, his secretary, Bill Harbach, the Producer, Dwight Hemion, the Director, Dale Remington in charge of prize give-aways such as foot long salamis, and I believe Stan Burns and Herb Sargeant, the writers on the show. That was it. These few people were putting on this show.

As I said, the show was shortly to go "network" as the original "Tonight" Show, and as I was out of a job after my two week stint as Steve's secretary, they gave me a job as utility secretary. Six weeks later when the show made its debut I became the production assistant, working in the control room with Dwight Hemion and Ginny Dunning, the then AD on the show. I was eventually to become Associate Director when Ginny decided to leave, and therefore on staff at NBC. During these fun filled years I even was given a chance to act on the show, which was my dream, appearing in "crazy shots" and in the ongoing sketch "Man on the Street."

These were the golden years of television; certainly they were for me. The show traveled quite a lot. We did the show from Florida, where I appeared in "Man on the Beach," Niagara Falls, Cleveland, Fort Worth, Dallas and best of all when Steve went out to Hollywood to make "The Benny Goodman Story." The whole show moved out there for the summer. These were exciting, dreamy days for me, the fulfillment of a dream.

Steve was a lovely person, but he was painfully shy and found it hard to connect with people. However, when he sat down at the piano he could release his emotions along with the music. And as the world knows, he could play the piano along with all the other things he could do. His great love for jazz meant that we had all the jazz greats on the show. One night was Louis Armstrong, another night was Ella

Fitzgerald, to say nothing of Duke Ellington, and Stan Kenton. Well, I could go on and on. They were all on the show. What an education I got! The man was multi-talented. In addition to his piano playing, as all the world knows, the man was a composer of renown, the most famous of his songs being "This Could be the Start of Something Big." Then of course there was his comic ability. This meant that we had every comedy star of the day on the show such as Bob Hope, Buddy Hackett, Shelly Berman and Mort Sahl. Steve started all the outrageous bits on the show, like opening the back doors of the Hudson Theatre and staging all sorts of gags on the street. One bit was to have a beat up dummy figure thrown out the window of a hotel across the street. There were many inventive gags such as this, one more hilarious than the next. David Letterman, who

admits to being a big fan of Steve's and to these sorts of bits, has followed in Steve's footsteps.

One cannot say too much about this man, whom many people consider to have been a genius, and I would certainly be one of them. For instance, he has written many books in addition to composing hundreds of songs. There was little he could not do and did not do. He certainly gets the credit for originating the Tonight Show and setting the format for the late night genre. It truly was the golden age of television!



Old newspaper photo from the Elizabeth (NJ) Daily Journal. Headline —

Elizabeth's Marilyn Jacobs Aids Steve Allen on 'Tonight' Show.

Marilyn, Director/Production Assistant, sometime talent, from Elizabeth, NJ, now lives in New York City.

Dear Peter,

It was with great sorrow that I read your letter with the headline "Peacock North Closing" but I knew it had to be done.

Little did I know when I entered the hallowed halls of 30 Rock on June 20, 1944, that I would stay until my retirement 40 years and 7 months later.

These years were among my happiest of my life.... I worked with the greatest people. We laughed a lot, and we all worked together for the good of dear old NBC.

In closing, I want to take this opportunity to thank you and your extraordinary crew for the 14 years of PN.

I have kept all my PN copies and plan to re-read them because to me, they are a great history of the early years of radio and television from the people who were there.

Thanks again and love to your dear wife Peg.

Marie Finnegan

March 7, 2001

Dear Pete:

It is with great sadness that I feel regarding the demise of Peacock North. Even though it was a burden of love for you and your associates, I cannot completely fathom the dedication and monumental effort you extended in our behalf. I am astounded and tremendously grateful for everything you accomplished throughout the years. The renewal of old friendships you extended, which has resulted into lifetime brotherhood and camaraderie, has been a wonderful *Mitzvah*. You, sir, are truly a very special *Mensch*! All of this and the wonderful memories you so magnanimously provided for all of us will never be forgotten. I shall never forget you and only hope those who remember me will keep in touch. Thank you, thank you, thank you for a job well done.

Only my best to you and yours for many years to come. Stay well. Stay happy, and God bless you.

Norm Blumenthal

and More Notes

George & Angela Wasielcke:
The timely news in PN of all our friends and the industry was surely appreciated and will be missed.

"Pete:

There are no words to tell how much pleasure we have received from Peacock North.

The luncheons were great. We have saved all the magazines for our grandchildren and friends to enjoy as the years go by; they are a fine record of a happy time. We hate to see PN close down while it still maintains a very high quality.

...Thank you for all the joy PN has given us."

Sincerely, Bill and Dorothea DeLannoy

Pat Donegan

Dear Pete:

I am truly sorry, although not surprised, to learn that the final curtain for Peacock North is soon to descend.

Aside from the truism that all good things must come to an end, I realize that the enormous workload that you, Dan, Heino, Frank and others have been shouldering, has reached the point where it must be put down. And since none of us is willing and/or able to pick it up, it must pass into history.

I recall the first time I heard of PN — it was at one of the last 25-Year Receptions at the Plaza Hotel (which, of course long ago passed into oblivion). You came up to me and told me that you were forming a group for NBC alumni. ...I was still working, and all the get-togethers were on weekdays in New Jersey. I did nothing about joining. I did attend a Sunday luncheon with Enid the first year after I retired, then later joined and have gone to the La Mag luncheons as often as I could make it.

It's been lots of fun getting together with old friends and acquaintances, and I, like so many others, will miss it. But aren't we all lucky to have worked at NBC when it was a great place to be, and where there was such an *esprit-de-corps* that even after all these years we still enjoy getting together, to remember the good times.

I want you to know, Pete, how very much I appreciate the tremendous effort you and others have made to keep it going for so many years. Thank you so much.

You and Peg have my very best wishes for continued health and happiness. I look forward to seeing you both on May 20th.

Fondest regards, Pat

2-28-01

kudos - we love 'em

Pompano Beach, FL.

March 13, 2001

Dear Peter, and Peacock North Members:

George and I are devastated by the passing of the Peacock!
I appreciate and applaud all the work that went into the conception and pursuance of this huge undertaking.

Pete, Frank, Dan, Rippe; you all have done a wonderful job!
Kudos to you and all the contributing reporters.

I also realize that as we grow older there are other priorities we must heed.

But NBC retirees — Please, please, don't kill the Peacock!!

Jane, June, Winnie, Gloria, Ruth, any female who worked at NBC; you have been through the maze and have been successful. You have made it despite the cliché "Women in Industry, HA!" (An engineer in Master Control said that to George in 1950.)

Why not try getting the Peacock to show its beautiful colors (columns) again.

I'm sure the staff will support your endeavors and help any way they can.

You certainly can take on a worthy cause and do a FAN-tastic job.

Maybe not as good as the men did — YET!

But with time who knows?

A Peacock Person, Francesca Peters

P.S. I'm really not a feminist, but I know the power of women — men will also be welcome, I'm sure.

February 26, 2001

Dear Peter,

I have just received your notice that Peacock North will become defunct after a final farewell issue. I am heartbroken, but not surprised. When I moved out of Brooklyn, I headed south and settled in the retirement community of Sun City Center, Florida. I belong to several organizations and find that getting volunteers to run these organizations is our most daunting task. Your letter referred to the old saying, "That's Show Business." Peter, a better old saying is, "That's Life." To you, Dan Grabel, Heino Ripp and Frank Vierling "Thanks For The Memories."

Respectfully,

Joseph Sturuiolo W2WLF
joradio@aol.com

MEMO



Feb. 26, 2001

Dear Pete:

Very sorry to hear that the Peacock is folding its feathers. But you, Ripp, Dan and Frank have done a wonderful job.

Fourteen years is a lot for a running show. Not too many shows get to run that long.

We'll all have very good memories of the luncheons in NJ, Westchester and NYC.

I hope we will be able to gather in smaller groups, even via e-mail.

73's,

Jack Keegan

Dear Pete,

How sad to hear that PN is closing its doors. PN has been such a great way to find out what's been happening with friends and acquaintances from NBC days, and to reminisce about the "good ol' days." Wish I could make it to LaMaganette, but the "commute" from Colorado makes it a tad out of the question.

Pete, I've edited a publication - MUCH smaller in scale and polish — but that experience gives me a bit of insight into how much you've put into PN over the years. On behalf of all who've enjoyed PN, THANK YOU for your efforts in our behalf.

Cordially,

Mary Sue Johnson

P.S. - Thanks to Gloria Clyne for suggesting that I subscribe to PN. It's been great.

LiBretto Reflects ON 30 YEARS

It seems like only yesterday...

July of 1968, to be exact. Could someone simply walk in off the street and apply for a job at the most prestigious and historic of all broadcast organizations, and actually hope to be hired? That's exactly what happened, after getting about 20, "We'll call you," at every radio station in New York City. But lo and behold, after a simple typing test, I was a Log Clerk in BOC on the 5th Floor, logging all those commercials for WNBC and for the Network, not to mention "outages." Isn't that a great word? Those are the mistakes that somehow made it to air; things like "Flash of Leader," "Chinese Tail," "Hash," and *my* favorite outage of all, "Heidi," in November of 1968. Now *there* was an outage, one that changed the way sports and prime time programming met each other on Sunday evenings.

Now, nearly thirty-three years later, I'm still at NBC, as Senior Director for NBC News, directing *Dateline*, News Specials and Political Coverage. In between were years in Broadcast Operations, some time as a Stage Manager, twelve years as an Associate Director, soaps, sports, entertainment, news, talk shows, and anything else that could possibly come along at a network. In addition to a tour of duty with the Air Force in Vietnam, there was a two-year interruption with *Good Morning America* at ABC (when the book gets written, that chapter is called "What Was I Thinking?")

A lot is made of the "good old days." I'd like to think that those of us who got started in this business in the sixties and seventies at least had a chance to witness the winding down of those days. We got here with a chance to work with the pioneers of the television business. They became our teachers. It took us a few years to realize that we were learning from the very folks who invented this industry. In the 1950's, every time a show or an event or a sport was put on the air, it was the first time. Before the NFL could be on television, someone had had to figure out *how* to put it there. The same for baseball, dramatic shows, the Academy Awards. *Everything*.

It's easy to take all this for granted now. Hundreds of channels, all doing essentially the same thing, make us all a little blasé. In fact, the challenge for us now is to try to make whatever we're doing look a little different from the other guy; a constant reinvention of the wheel. But truly, that's all it is... a reinvention.

In those formative years as an Associate Director, I had a chance to sit next to some of the true inventors of television direction: Paul Lammers and Ira Cirker on soap operas, and Ted Nathanson and Harry Coyle in sports. How lucky can a person be? Each in his own way made indelible marks on the way their respective specialties were handled. Each and every day was a learning experience. I can only hope that I retained at least a little of that knowledge!

A word about Teddy. The luckiest decision I made along the way was to work in sports and alongside Ted Nathanson. I wasn't the first person to be mentored by Teddy, nor the last. But no person has had a greater impact on who I am as a professional, and as a director, than Teddy. It isn't enough to want to emulate his style as director, but also as a person. He taught us to take chances, to work hard, and to always enjoy every single minute of it. He taught us, most importantly, that this is a total team effort, and to appreciate the contributions and worth of every single person you are with. Hardly a day goes by when Teddy is not in my thoughts.

It's no secret that the business has changed dramatically over the years. As mentioned above, the amount and level of competition has increased many times over. Those of us who have managed to stay with one company for such a long time are unique. So many people now have to go on to the next job, wherever that may be. It's hard to develop the kind of personal/professional relationships that the earlier generation was able to have. I think that's one of the reasons that Peacock North had so much success these last 14 years. Certainly growing up with and within the business as a group made for incredible lifetime relationships. That's a void that many of us still in the business feel.

So many young people ask how I started in the business. When I tell them, I wonder how relevant my experiences will be to them. It's harder and harder to stay around one place long enough to learn and grow within that environment. The only advice I give them is learn everything you can where you are; you'll probably get to the next step somewhere else. While the television business has changed, and our Company along with it, NBC is still a great place to come to work each day. □

John LiBretto, Director/Producer of sports and programming lives in Glen Rock, NJ his wife, nee Chris Stromquist, Production Assistant, WNBC-TV.

MEMORY SERVES

by Jack Marshall

"Memory is the diary that we all carry with us..." So said Thomas W. Wilson, who must have had us in mind as we wind down from the exciting days of live TV to its computerized grandson. My diary of the mind now comes to the fore as I reminisce with a few personal thoughts I'd like to share with you - my NBC family.

Before arriving at my second home at NBC, I had a long apprenticeship with its tangential roads. It all began with 3 years in the Air Corps in the ETO, college, 2 years of professional baseball, interning at WNYC, copy-writing at Cunningham and Walsh, a brief stint at local station WNBC-WNBT - then on to my 25 years and 13 days with National Advertising (A&P). It was worth the wait.

Hank Bomberger was my first TD. When I told him it was my initial job in the control room, he said, "All you have to remember is to tell me 'engineering five' every twenty minutes." I did as I was told and in twenty minutes the entire crew had disappeared. I was learning fast.

Remember Matty and Barney, the stagehands on the 3rd floor? Matty took me on the side and asked me if my boss (VP level) was trying to start World War III. He told me to look at the set where my boss was moving props from one table to another. I told the boss that what he was doing was creating a union problem and that he could not remove a prop. He nodded and immediately began to move the props back to where he found them, whereupon Matty let out a bellow that must have been heard on the 8th floor. The very chastened VP half-whispered in my ear, I relayed the instructions to Matty, the props were moved and Matty's Irish face had a grin from ear to ear. So much for power in the studio.

One day I walked into Edward G. Robinson's dressing room to hand him his script and introduce myself. One must remember, in doing these promos, we met the talent for the first time just before the walk-through and dress rehearsal. To make conversation, I catered to his ego, I thought, by telling him I was aware of his art collection - perhaps the finest in Hollywood. He grunted and never said a word. It was only later that I discovered he *was* forced to sell the Picassos and Reubens in order to obtain a divorce.

I had pub-crawled with Broderick Crawford many years before he arrived from Hawaii to host SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE. He was to record a voice-over promo for us but the studio wasn't ready. He suggested we repair to Hurley's. That was the first mistake. The second, third, fourth and fifth mistakes were the martinis he drank that morning. We finally went up to studio 5C to record the spots. They were funny. They were inventive. They were ad-libbed. They were never used. I still have the tape. Every other word, and I mean every other word, started with the letter

"F" and ended with an "ing."

On the political scene, which I loved, I remember sitting with John Chancellor and David Brinkley in the NBC booth atop the Kansas City Convention Hall. Far below in the auditorium, Tom Brokaw was preparing to tape a promo as he was one of the floor reporters. In one of those quiet moments when there really wasn't anything to say, Chancellor turned to me and said, "Jack - you're taping the guy who will be sitting in this booth before you know it."

And there was the sad memory of watching Bobby Kennedy leaving the ballroom of the Ambassador Hotel. A few moments later I heard the shots that left him mortally wounded. At that time, I could only think of my father who was murdered in much the same way.

Yes - our diary is a memory bank and with it goes the good and the bad. My diary is no different as memory takes me back to these thoughts. There was Jack Irving's bellicose laugh, the stentorian tones of John Patrick Costello, the quiet excellence of Bill Hildreth, the dignity of Ray Scherer, the ever present humor of Jerzy Damon and Wayne Howell, the considerate and professional manner of John Chancellor, the multi-faceted talent of Dick Dudley, the happy countenance of Bob Hanratty, the room illuminating grin of Freddy Lights, the humility of Lindsey Nelson and the winning manner of my AD for 23 years, Nancy Howard. And if you ever walked into Hurley's you probably saw a guy sitting at the end of the bar who always seemed to be writing a column in his head - Roy Silver. There was the sad-faced toiler Dorson Uliman, jokester Fred Manni, the compassionate Bob Priaulx, the misfit weatherman George Heineman, the always cooperative Frank Blair, the sartorial splendor of Frank McGee and the gentle competence of Christy Basham. There was the gentleman's gentleman Carl Lindemann, the fearless Ted Yates and the great team players Scotty Connal and Ted Nathanson. And you never really worked at NBC unless you were on the receiving end of friendly and occasionally not so friendly insults of Sam Kirschman.

So many more thoughts - so little time or space. I'm beginning to feel like a one-legged man in an ass-kicking contest. But there's no doubt about one thing.

***We were and still are —
a family.***

*Jack, was a writer in the
Programming Department and
now resides with his wife Audrey
in New York City.*



Radio Roundup

By

Lauren Krug-Grant

Receiving word that Peacock North is heading West......was indeed sad. All the folks involved over its fourteen year span did a wonderful job of keeping everyone up to date on the comings and goings of former, and current, NBC employees. The annual lunches and cocktail parties were something to look forward to. Yet, all good things must come to an end and my own feelings are that it is always better to go out while still at the top rather than dwindle down to a time when there is no longer any interest.

Looking back, I remember the excitement the late Al Reyes (then a news writer for NBC Radio Network News) felt in being part of the original group putting the first issues of the Peacock North Newsletter together. Al used his first computer; as a matter of fact he was one of the first people I knew to have a PC and pay his bills through the software (something I still am very hesitant to do!). Those fledgling issues on colored paper were so much fun to read, as were all the issues published in subsequent years. It was a treat watching the newsletter grow from 4 or 6 pages to the last issue this past fall which contained 48 glossy pages full of pictures and talk of people with wonderful stories to tell about their years with NBC.

During the 1980s, there was constant word of people being let go from NBC. People who had made invaluable contributions to the success of radio and television. Entire departments would fall by the wayside as the dreaded ax traveled through the halls of NBC cutting here and cutting there. Rumors were flying about who would be next, what department would be next, what division would be next. The Archives Department...cut. The Standards and Practices Department...cut. The Public Affairs Programming Department...cut. What happened to these people? A rule had been put into effect that those being laid off were not allowed to apply for any permanent positions within NBC. What happened to these people? What were they to do?

“What happened to these people? What were they to do?”

In 1984, NBC wrapped the Radio Network up in a brand new package as we settled into new studios and offices over at 1700 Broadway. This move certainly made us more marketable! Finally, it happened in the summer of 1987. It was the Radio Network's turn to take the blow. We were finally sold to Westwood One after years of rumors about who was going to buy us. It was during a NABET strike. I was Manager of Program Operations and doing what had to be done by management to fill the holes left by those out on the picket lines. As I sat at the ROD, with my eyelids drooping from lack of sleep and trying to cover too many bases with too few people, word came through that we had been sold. My first thought was that I was no longer an employee of NBC. The shock of it all was something that hit me like a ton of bricks. The day after the announcement was to have been my 25th Anniversary date with the company. It was a dreadful, dreadful time. The day after this word came through, I had to tell the Radio Network Director and Associate Director staffs that they were

terminated immediately, due to the wording in the last DGA contract which specifically stated that "...upon sale of the Radio Network, employment of Directors and Associate Directors would cease and desist immediately." What happened to these people? What were they to do?

On a more positive note, the one shining light that helped us all through those days of termination, was the Peacock North Newsletter. As each of us left the company, a different person every day, trying to figure out what to do with the rest of a life, we would look forward to opening the mail and finding another edition of Peacock North. It was a kind of lifeboat holding us together for what had been an important part of our lives. For those of us who weren't old enough to retire, it meant going through the process of "reinventing ourselves," reading books such as "What Color Is Your Parachute" to try and determine in which direction to head. They were hard times and affected people lives in many different ways. In answer to my earlier

questions, that is what happened to the people, that is what they did.

For those people I will say a sincere THANK YOU to all of you at Peacock North who provided many of us with fun stories, incredible reminiscences of a time in our lives which will never be duplicated.

Now that I have had my say, I would like to share with you notes from former Radio Network employees and their comments on the closing of Peacock North.

From Alan and Jeannie Walden we hear:

For Jeannie and me it seems like a case of "deja vu all over again." First we lose the peacock, now we lose Peacock North. It was good to read about the people we knew through the good years and about those we didn't know, except by reputation. In the past couple of months I've been advised of or happened upon a couple of web sites through which we may all be able to keep in touch: <http://www.xnbc.org> and <http://monitorbeacon.com> but it won't be the same. Our compliments to everyone involved in the publication. You did a great job and now, I guess, it's up to those of us who still care to stay in touch with the old guard. We gave good radio. Come to think of it we gave great radio; better than anyone else before or since.

Farewell, Peacock North. You will be missed. Alan Walden WNBC Radio, NIS, NBC Radio Network News

And from Peter Flynn, this reminiscence on a Peacock North Luncheon to remember:

Laura and I attended our first PEACOCK NORTH luncheon in 1998. Unfortunately we were at a family brunch earlier that day, so we missed the cocktail mingling and mixing opportunity. We entered when everyone had seated themselves for lunch. We found a spot at a table and there was Beryl Pfizer, Ed Gough and Catherine Faulconer, all veterans of the radio network days back in the 50's, 60's and 70's. Ed proceeded to deliver a really delightful talk from the podium on some of his memories of people and events. Beryl and Catherine, Laura and I had a great time catching up on each other. Then we started table hopping, and there was Gene Garnes, Bob Dreier and Louise Malcolm; three former crack engineers from 770 days when we were producing MONITOR and some wonderful documentaries like the IMAGE series...IMAGE RUSSIA, IMAGE AMERICA and IMAGE MINORITIES. Then we came upon the announcer's table...and my gosh! There's Vic Roby, Dick Dudley, Harry Fleetwood and Mel Brandt...guys I worked closely with as a P.A. on MONITOR back in the mid 50's...and then later on as director of EMPHASIS programs...all Radio Network. One of the high points was when Ed Herlihy arrived with his lovely wife. This was to be Ed's last appearance. He spoke hesitantly but eloquently and made us feel really fortunate...blessed...to have worked with him in any

capacity. Then, we saw Lillian McNaughton...a former close associate in Radio Traffic in the days of Sackett Miles and Rocco Tito at the Radio Network. My memory is a little faded from that luncheon...I know there were others but these are the ones that come to mind at this writing. Oh! Don Meaney was there from NBC News and Don Gogarty and his lovely wife from "Duplicating", later known as "Reprographics." I used to spend a lot of time with Don when I was Manager, Program Operations and then later as Director, Programs of the Radio Network.

So, thank you Pete Peterson and all who kept PEACOCK NORTH going. You sure made some memorable times possible. It really was great while it lasted!

In closing, I would like to share with you a little bit of radio nostalgia pertaining to the Red and Blue Networks. This segment is from a book called "Flags of Our Fathers" by James Bradley, the son of a soldier killed during the Battle of Iwo Jima:

From the NBC Newsroom in NY! Pres. Roosevelt said in a statement today that the Japanese have attacked Pearl Harbor. . .Hawaii from the air! I'll repeat that ... Pres. Roosevelt said that...

This bulletin came to you from the NBC Newsroom in NY.

As the afternoon wore on the bulletins multiplied and a vast radio audience built: as many as 80 million listeners by one estimate. Some of them heard an anonymous announcer describing the tumultuous damage by telephone from the roof of radio station KGU in Honolulu. After a bomb narrowly missed the broadcast tower the man screamed: This is no joke! This is real war!

The following day most of the same listeners including hundreds of thousands of children tuned in again to hear Pres. Franklin Roosevelt intone the 6 1/2 minute speech whose key phrases would resound in American folklore: Yesterday, Dec. 7th 1941 - a date that will live in infamy - the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan...

...With confidence in our armed forces, with unbounding determination of our people, we will gain inevitable triumph, so help us God!"

This is the type of thing we will be missing out on with the closing of Peacock North. Thanks again to all of you who gave us some stimulating and cherished memories for a good many years.

All the best,

Lawrie Krug Grant

Lauren was a Writer/Producer NBC Radio and for Monitor. She and her husband Jack live in Cutchogue, NY.

Don Blair Types

Peacock North

Hi Pete,
Sad... but certainly not unexpected. When last we talked (I think I was asking about Dan G.) you said that if the bills for the magazine stopped coming we wouldn't have to ask why. On a much smaller scale...as radio was winding down...we got into a pattern of annual get-togethers in mid-Manhattan...then, the last few years up at the St. Moritz penthouse on Central Park S. I was doing the last few years with help from my wife, reluctant to boost prices when I should have, and so we took a fair financial bath the last few years...over a grand on the last one in '93. Everybody loved them...lots of thanks...but no offers to step in. The '93 affair meant flying up from down here and all that goes with it.

It was then we decided to fold it. Friends still talk about it...but nobody has offered to step in and assume the work and the risk.

This winter we've had a steady stream of old cronies stopping by...from the Alan Waldens to Fred Kennedy (NBC London radio bureau) and John Grimes of ABC. I never tire of talking old times...or reading about them. Yes...a GREAT RUN...and you'll all be sorely missed. I wrote a recollection of the Iran hostage crisis (Fred Kennedy in London broke it. I anchored the bulletin in NYC) to Laurie Grant-Krug who thought it might end up in the next edition. Never thought it could also be the last one. Cheers to all of you.

Don Blair

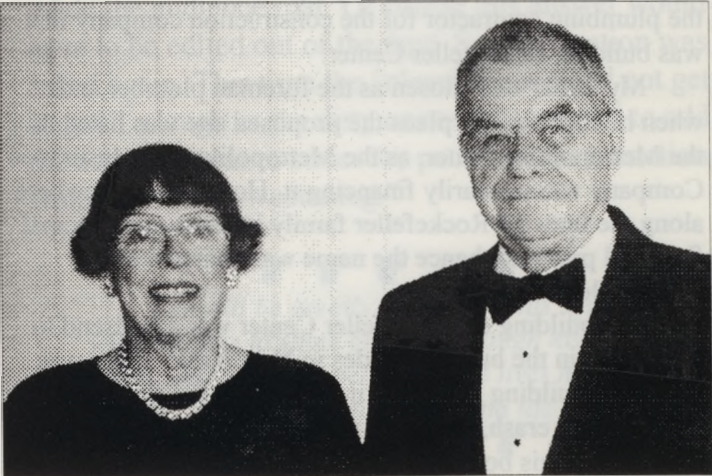


Perry Massey drops Pete a line:

"It is with great reluctance that I write this note. We had hoped we could plan a trip to the East Coast this spring. However, for family reasons we have committed to a trip there this fall. ...We had looked forward to seeing many friends who made such an important part of our lives for so many years."

"Beryl Pfizer recently hosted a group of retired NBC folks who worked on the "Home Show" in the fifties at the Directors Guild Awards Dinner in Century City. Hugh and Ruth Downs were in the group. Hugh, at 80, is as vital as ever. We attended a brunch hosted by Phyllis Adams in Santa Monica the next day..."

All the best, Perry



The Masseys – Pam & Perry

KEN'S

COLUMN



by
Ken Arber

Before Ken's unexpected passing, Pete Peterson phoned him to tell him that they were preparing for the final issue of Peacock North. Ken said he would start working on his column right away. Below is the story he was preparing. Ken was blessed with an incredible mind and the ability to remember so many details of his full life. He was very proud of his father's contribution to the building of Rockefeller Center, and felt very fortunate that he was a part of this process as well. For these early days were the beginning of a long and fascinating career with NBC -- and 30 Rockefeller Center became a "home away from home."

*Thanks, Ken, for all the wonderful memories.
The Arber family.*

HOW ROCKEFELLER CENTER CAME ABOUT ACCORDING TO MY MEMORY OF OVER 60 YEARS

In the early 1930's my father, Emil, received a great deal of blue prints from his employer, James McCallaugh, the plumbing contractor for the construction company that was building Rockefeller Center.

My father was chosen as the foreman plumber and when he received the plans the proposed site was listed as the Metropolitan Center, as the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company was primarily financing it. However, somewhere along the line, the Rockefeller family became the principal financial provider, hence the name was changed to Rockefeller Center.

The building of Rockefeller Center was a godsend to the people in the building trades in New York. There was very little building going on; it was during the time of the stock market crash, and there were lots of people out of work, when this bonanza of work came along. It was reported that the building of Rockefeller Center employed

over 15,000 people throughout the states to supply the men and materials to build a development, such as Rockefeller Center.

Material came from all over the country; cement, limestone panels, window glass, steel beams and columns, water tanks, elevator cables, miles of electric wiring, light fixtures, plumbing pipes and fittings, toilet bowls and basins for the rest rooms, everything you can think of for the building. This was just for the building of the RCA building alone; the other buildings came along later.

I remember the area where they would be excavating for the RCA building. It was rows and rows of four or five story buildings on 49th and 50th streets, between Fifth and Sixth Avenues. I was able to watch the blasting of rock down to the third basement level of the building. The entire area around the hole was shielded from the public by an 8 foot wooden fence. The public could look down at the hole through openings in the fence known as "Sidewalk Superintendents" openings. The openings were protected with what is known as "Carpenter's Cloth," a woven mesh to prevent rock and debris from injuring onlookers.

There were several layers of different types of rock; they kept drilling deeper, until they struck bedrock, the material upon which the whole island of Manhattan rests. This bedrock resembles granite and lots of flecks of mica which sparkle in the sunlight. This I was told was the "backbone" of the island of Manhattan. Large steel base plates were fastened to the granite and huge steel columns rose from this base to form the backbone of the building.

My father was in charge of all the fountain and water displays at the Prometheus statue and the Channel Gardens. He had all the decorative bronze fittings and sprays cast at the New York Brass Foundry at Broome Street in New York City. I often thought of my dad when I passed the fountains. And now my son Glenn, who works at NBC, thinks of his grandfather when he's working at the Rockefeller Plaza skating rink.

Prometheus, giver of fire

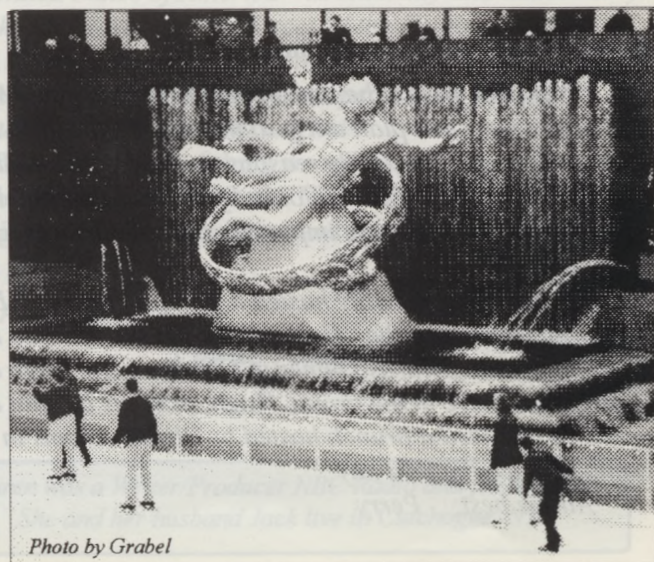


Photo by Grabel

Famed Channel Gardens



As the RCA building was nearing completion, the thought came up that the name of the entire development would be more inviting if it were called Radio City. And of course, the new massive theatre being built on the corner of 50th Street and 6th Avenue was called Radio City Music Hall; that would lend importance to the name Radio City. It was hoped that all of New York's radio stations would relocate to Rockefeller Center.

Eateries in Rockefeller Center

I remember all the little places to eat in and around Rockefeller Center. On 50th Street, there was a small place called "Bickfords," a coffee and bun place that before the war served me a cup of coffee and a bun - in the cup was an old cigarette butt. When I complained to the manager, he apologized, but said he could not talk to the counter man about it. When I questioned him why not, he said it was impossible to get him fired, which he should be, but because of the war there was a shortage of men and he was lucky to get him. Then there was "Childs" on Fifth Avenue below 46th Street, a little more expensive, and "The Redheads" in another Radio City Building, and a coffee shop on the main floor of the RCA building.

After the war, we all were financially better off, and started to frequent places, like "The Headquarters," which was run by General Eisenhower's mess sergeant, also "White Turkeys," and occasionally, The Rainbow Room at the top of the RCA building. And the Chinese restaurant "Dingho's," the place that Producers and Directors called "the place where promotions were made."

President Roosevelt

During all this time, President Franklin D. Roosevelt was in office. He had four sons: James, who was always photographed at his side, helping him stand; then there were Elliot and Franklin, Jr. The fourth son, John, was the only son who was not a Democrat. He never became involved with politics and married a daughter of one of the owners of the manufacturers of Lee and Perrins sauce. The last that I remember of John, was that he became the manager of a New England store that resembled a small Macy's or

Gimbel's.

One of the other sons, decided that he would like to own and operate a Radio Network. Around that time, the Federal Communications Commission decided that there should be no more than one broadcasting station operated by a company in any one city. So NBC had to get rid of one of their two networks. They sold the Blue Network, with WJZ as its headquarters, to the man who owned WMCA, his name was Nobel. (He also owned the Life Saver Candy company.) Roosevelt's son planned his network so that he would have stations in New York, Chicago, Washington DC and Philadelphia. The telephone Company would not give him the same low line charges for his four cities as they charged NBC, ABC and CBS for their national networks. Consequently, the President's son dropped the idea of having a little network.

Over the years, I have had the honor and privilege of meeting and working in radio with Franklin Roosevelt, Jr. as well as his mother Eleanor Roosevelt.

The following story was included in the last e-mail Ken sent to his two sons, Ken, Jr. and Glenn on February 7th 2001.

JONATHAN WINTERS AND "SWEETENING" THE APPLAUSE.

I just finished looking at the life of Jonathan Winters, with whom I worked in the late 50s and 60s. I sat between him and Art Carney, who was Jackie Gleason's partner, during a production meeting. During the meeting, they kept kidding around with me, and the director had to ask them to stop and go on with the show's business.

It was the first time I was involved in "sweetening" the applause for their show. Winters had made an unsavory, or "dirty" answer to a question, that made the audience roar. Of course this answer would have to be edited out of the tape. So the question was asked again. This time the "clean" answer did not get as good a laugh as the dirty answer. So we had to add the audience roar to cover the poor audience reaction, which was the "sweetening."



*Ken will be greatly missed, but his spirit
will continue to shine brightly through his beloved
family and the many people whose lives he touched
throughout his wonderful life.*



A Man For the Time and the Situation

Joe Mehan

It took an act of extraordinary creativity to bring Peacock North into being.

This was not a case of getting a bunch of dock workers or street sweepers or furniture haulers together and deciding to have a few beers at the neighborhood pub.

NBC retirees are an incredible mix of highly-skilled individual personalities. We range from the technical to the administrative to the wordsmiths. But we all worked together in an endeavor which was vital to its time and was constantly pushing forward to new horizons. It took someone with an extreme sensitivity to the heartbeat of such a varied conglomerate of individuals to take action. It took someone who really recognized the singularity of such a group and realized that it had potential for dynamic interaction if all these individuals were brought together. That person was, of course, Pete Peterson.

Pete is a marvel of intuitive reaction. He had it when he founded Peacock North 14 years ago. He had it over the years when he watched the membership grow from a handful to almost a thousand. And he had it in each of the meetings he scheduled and arranged.

Pete's intuition rubbed off on some of the people he worked with – Heino, Frank, Dan, Roy, Mort, others. But in the long run, we are now learning, not on enough “others.”

I want to express my personal disappointment at my fellow staff writers/producers. Announcers turned out in force. TD's, audio people, tape and film editors were all strongly in the ranks of Peacock North. But where were the staff writers? the directors, producers, talent? Their presence could have made a big difference in the pool of help to take the load off Pete and prolong the life of our organization. It's a pity they didn't show.

Pete's extraordinary sensitivity is still at work. He expressed a profound observation to us at *our* last gathering about the casualty list among the group's ranks and how that reality was becoming a much more regular event now Pete is, unfortunately, on target again in the letter he wrote to us that none of us wanted to receive, and that Pete didn't want to write. His fantastically accurate intuition about Peacock North, however, compelled him to face the new reality – no one wants to pick up the reins – and to tell us just that.

The kind of leadership quality that Pete has demonstrated is a rare and mysterious thing. Something is innately within people like him that activates them to seize the moment, to recognize an opportunity and to swing into action – while the rest of us sit around without a clue.

This phenomenon happens on varying scales. It can be a Churchill rising to rally and save his homeland. Or a Martin Luther King to lead a historic social movement. Or a Jim Fassel to turn around a football team. The common ingredient in all of this kind of person is a deep insight that *something* has to be done and the inspired determination to do it.



We all owe Pete an incalculable debt of gratitude. It was a great privilege to have done the things we were able to do in our NBC News days – to be a part of history – but Pete gave us a second reliving of those exciting times. Peacock North enabled us to get together and re-experience a fantastic period of our own lives, and a time which will go down in history as one of the most dramatic, important and fast-moving periods ever.

Wars, Presidential assassinations, the reshaping of American society, the introduction of the atomic bomb, the Sputnik satellite, men walking on the moon, and the whole new world of cybernetics; not only were Peacock North members alive during this incomparable era, they were *there* at these epic milestone events, bringing them into the living rooms of the American people so that the public could know about and react to them.

We shared these experiences and memories with each other at our gatherings and enjoyed an additional pleasure reliving them again through the pages of the PN Newsletter which again, Pete labored to make happen.

It is sad that the unparalleled era of Peacock North appears to be coming to an end. But we did get a bonus which we never thought we would receive and it was the gift to all of us from one man: Pete Peterson.

The Romans used to say on such occasions; “Ave atque vale.” Peter... hail and farewell! From all of us. □

Joe Mehan was an NBC Network News senior writer and producer. In retirement he and his wife, Margaret live in Stamford, Connecticut.

A Message from

Pete Peterson



Early this year I wrote the membership — *"The moment I have dreaded has finally arrived. After 14 years of enjoying our happy group, (over 900 members), and because we have no replacements to lead Peacock North, we must close our doors. In our most recent*

newsletter I have outlined the need for new leadership. I have made over 20 personal contacts, but for one reason or another, all have declined. I have enjoyed these many years heading up Peacock North and I speak as well for our extraordinary crew, Dan Grabel — "at 30 rock," Heino Ripp's — "PN People" — and our exceptional computer/publisher wizard, Frank Vierling. We all worked very hard to make it enjoyable for you. We had a "GREAT RUN" serving you, our wonderful members. It's sad to say we are closing down, but as the old saying goes, "That's Show Business." I have received many notes and letters from members expressing their feelings about NBC and Peacock North, as we close down. You may join in giving your expressions too, that may be published in our final PN newsletter at a later date."



That was the message I had transmitted to our membership early in 2001. The response was overwhelming disappointment by the membership that Peacock North's demise was almost inevitable. We, the PN staff, were distressed as well, as the realization set in. We continued to get ready for our final get together at our annual luncheon in New York. It was time to prepare a message to say:

A Message from Peter — FAREWELL

What a magnificent day was May 20, 2001, the day of our last Peacock North luncheon. People came from far and wide to be with their friends and co-workers one last time. It was the largest turnout in our history with over 230 in attendance.

At the luncheon, over the phone and in notes and letters I've received, the question everyone was asking was "WHY? Why is Peacock North closing?" I pondered a long time about "Why." I lost a lot of sleep over that question. I came to the conclusion that although we are advancing in age, the problem was "Them," not "US." Everything has undergone tremendous changes in the work force. Today companies are terminating long term employees. They are

being replaced by short term part time or free-lance workers, in an attempt to save expenses. The esprit de corps built up over the years that existed in our time and bound us together, has frazzled away today. It seemed nearly impossible to find the right dedicated person to carry on the leadership of our group. Preferably people who are slightly younger by years but yet at NBC long enough to bridge the gap relating to our "Golden Years" times.

But hear this! Peacock North is not going to "DIE" or "PETER-OUT" for lack of Peter Peterson and staff. During the intermission break in the luncheon festivities, former Technical Supervisor Marilyn Altman, a twenty seven year veteran of NBC, came to me and said, "We can't let this thing die, it is so wonderful and I want to do something to keep it going." She continued, "I have just discussed this with two of my friends at my table, Len Stucker and Jim Marshall. We three have decided to volunteer our efforts to keep Peacock North going." I was immediately overjoyed. I realized my tormented hopes would be remedied and satisfactorily fulfilled! WHEW! The Gods *are* on our side! A reprieve was coming! I thanked them for their courageous dedication and welcomed them to their opportunity to serve. Those in attendance were thrilled by the announcement and cheered the volunteers for their action.

This issue of the newsletter is to be our last. It is the farewell edition of the present administration. When you read the sampling of letters and postcards sent to us by our membership, you could read the message loud and clear,

"PLEASE DON'T GO AWAY!"

Therefore, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for the privilege of serving as your CEO for all these years. I want to say thank you to everyone who helped in ANY way to make this organization thrive. That includes all the people who came from near and far to attend the luncheons at LaMaganette and our mini-luncheons in Ft. Lee. And to those who took time out from their busy schedules to write articles and to send pictures for our Newsletter. Thanks to those who read the paper and saved them to re-read at a later date.

Once again, I want to thank our great "crew," Frank Vierling, computer/publisher, Dan Grabel, our amazing "at 30 rock" guy and senior editor, and Heino Ripp, NBC's best TD and the editor of his "PN People" column.

I want to thank NBC, the best Company anyone could work for.

I want to thank all the ladies of NBC and Peacock North who made the system and things work so efficiently. Peacock North would be nothing without your help. Thank you.

I want to thank the NBC wives, you know who you are. You kept the home fires going while your mates were thither and yon. We worked days and nights, weeks and weekends, sometimes months in strange towns and in some cases strange countries, all for the sake of bringing news

and entertainment to America. PN people, the core of "THE GREATEST GENERATION" once again triumphed by the excellence in their work endeavors and succeeded. It made NBC the number-one network in the nation. What we did at NBC, was to bring the WORLD to the WORLD!

Thanks also to Tony and Nancy Nelle, and Dolores Parylak for their help on their computers. Don Gogarty for improving printing matters. Thanks also for those who served quietly behind the scenes. Notably Don Veirling for his P/N luncheon photography. Katherine Lessersohn (a friend of PN) for proofreading our newsletters. George Peters, who was in charge of the audio at our luncheon affairs, and his wife, Francesca, who helps at the hospitality reception desk along side of my wonderful and supportive wife, Peg. Without this type of support there would have been no Peacock North, as I see it!

I want to thank volunteers such as Joe Mehan (Dr. Joe) who jumped right in to write about our luncheon last year when Dan Grabel took ill, and thanks to Mort Hockstein who also stepped right in to do Dan's column, calling himself "The Poor Man's Dan Grabel."

I want to thank all those who responded over the fourteen years to my requests to write articles, hundreds of them, and send in pictures for everyone's benefit. Nobody ever refused an "assignment," Thank you.

And a special posthumous thanks to Dick Dudley and Ken Arber, who wrote wonderful columns in every issue of the newsletter. There were many others who contributed articles and columns of interest such as Don's, "Traveling with the Luftig's," feature stories such as Cissie Lindemann's and Gloria Clyne's. Too many to mention, but all wonderfully offered for your pleasure.

Thanks to all those wonderful speakers at our 20 or more major luncheon affairs that brought information, joy, and humorous stories for our enjoyment. Thank you all.

We remember and thank all those wonderful people who are no longer with us, who have joined the world of the "SILENT MICROPHONES." Over 150 have gone. We miss them dearly.

Thank you also for all those people who sent notes and messages and cards along with their yearly dues. It was always most appreciated.

A mention in praise of Lee Carlton, who started The

NBC Florida Retirees group in Florida, for those heading South. It was a grand idea. It still continues. Thanks, Lee.

A new group in California headed up by Joe Strauss called Peacock West is actively functioning at this time. All good attempts at keeping contact and good graces with all.

Thanks also for far sighted people like my old buddy, Sam Sambataro who left us way too soon and who typed up the very first newsletters on an old Executive typewriter with all the item #1, item #2, etc. mostly 2 pages long.

It was Sam who assembled 30 guys to give me a retirement party. The event was held at Picco Lissimo restaurant in Ft. Lee, NJ, on August 12, 1987 (it is no longer there). I was overwhelmed at the thought of separation and loss of long time friends. Reacting to the reality, I proclaimed we should form a club. A desire to hold our relationships into the future. I chose to name the group Peacock North. The Peacock, symbol of NBC and North, as we were not heading South to Florida. At the first meeting from those humble beginnings of 30, we grew to close to 1000 on our roster over the 14 years, and into a great



Pete & Peg

retirement organization. It is with pride we salute the workers of NBC, we are the envy of all the other networks and broadcasters, thanks to you, our membership.

To the new administration, I say welcome, thanks, and "GOOD LUCK" for a long run. You will be hearing from them before long. It takes a while to adjust to the newness of it all. The newsletter and financial costs may be different, but the differences will reflect the composure of the new leadership, and should be welcomed. The important thing is, these three people, Marilyn Altman, Len Stucker, and Jim Marshall, all extremely proficient in their work ethic and managerial talents, are to be congratulated for undertaking this huge task. They will be looking to you for your help and cooperation. Please give them all the support you can.

We are a fortunate group in many ways.

Thank you all and God bless you all for your past help. Love you all,

regards,

Pete

PS: Now, happily, I can look forward to again saying, "See you all at the next luncheon."

Thanks for the Memories

by Peg Peterson

Thanks for the memories

For NBC in Spring

For NBC in Fall

All those years together

It really was a "BALL"

We thank you so much

Thanks for the memories

For Howdy and his props

"NIGHTLY NEWS" that never stops

From World affairs and politics

Steve-arino was the tops

We thank you so much

We were young and eager

We traveled o'er the land

From Football, Baseball, Golfing

And conventions... that were grand

Thanks for the memories

For Hit Parade requests

Carson and his guests

Chet and David, Milton Berle

Sid Caesar was the best

Thank you so much

Thanks for the memories

To Peacock North adieu

With a tear and maybe two

Awfully glad we had the chance

To work along with you

And thank you so much



Pete

Dan

Ripp

Frank

Thanks
for
the
Memories

Keep
in
Touch

Peacock North Staff

Peter Peterson, C.E.O.

30 Ann Arbor Place

Closter, NJ 07624

201-768-1009 - Fax 201-768-8727

E-mail: peterp5579@aol.com

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Frank R. Vierling, Publisher

494 Prospect Avenue

Oradell, NJ 07649

201-261-3669

Dan Grabel, Managing Editor

31 Cohawney Road

Scarsdale, NY 10583

914-723-8625

E-mail: dangrabel@aol.com

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Heino Ripp, Editor

12 Elizabeth Place

Lake Hopatcong, NJ 07849

973-663-2929

E-mail: hchripp29@aol.com

Fax: 973-663-4113

Gloria Clyne

Lauren Krug-Grant

Mort Hochstein

Tony Nelle

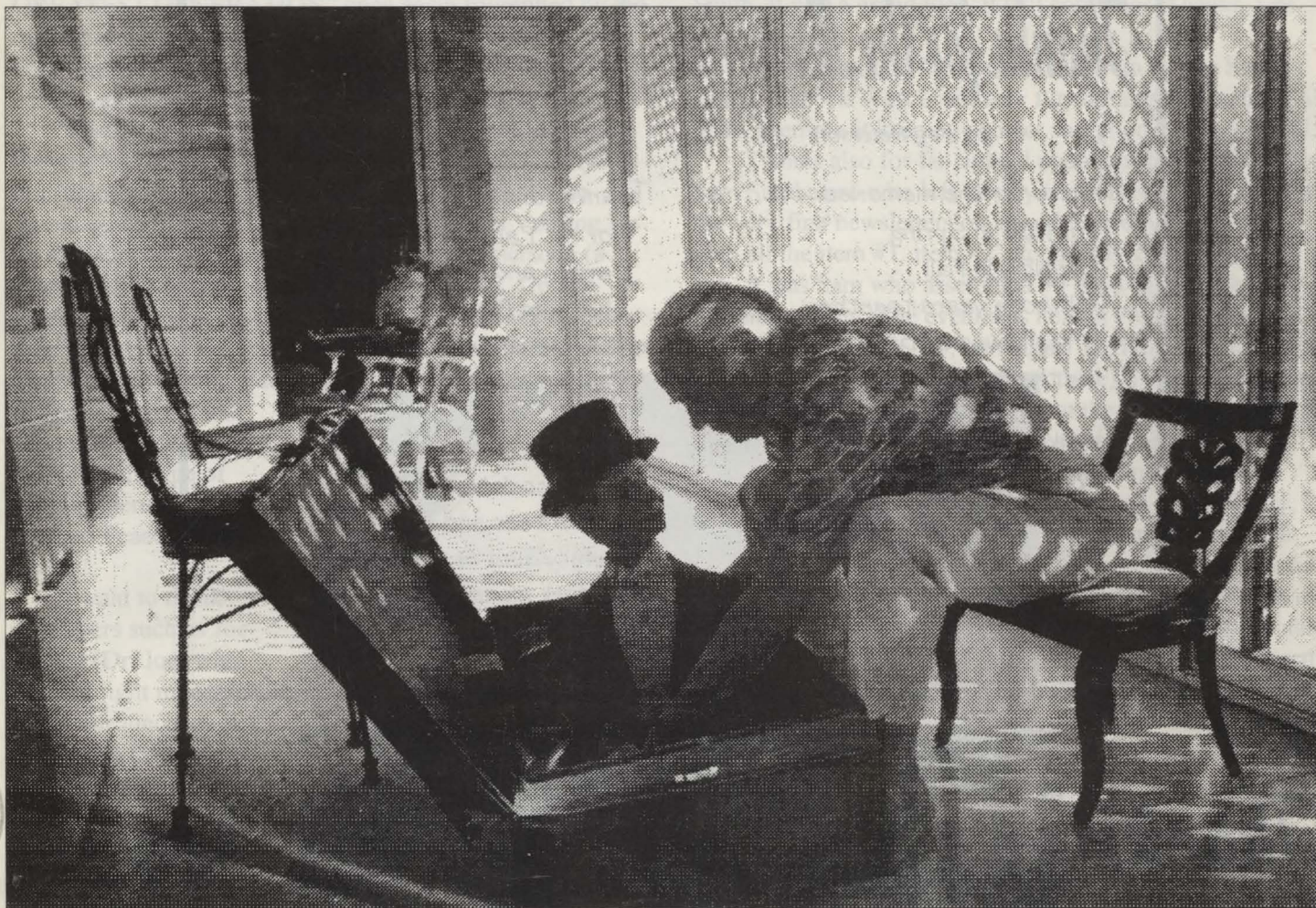
Cissie Lindemann

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With special thanks to Peg Peterson
and our many contributors.

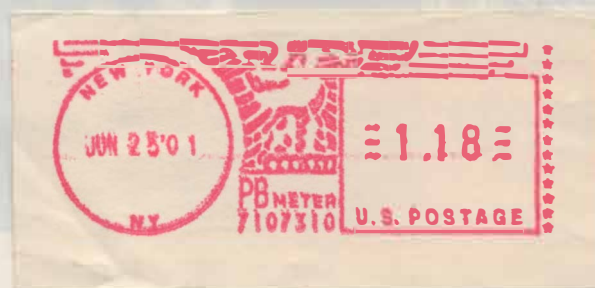
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A PICTURE FROM OUR ARCHIVES



"Goodnight Charlie — sweet dreams!"

**Peacock North
30 Ann Arbor Place
Closter, NJ 07624**



First Class Mail