

Peacock North

Summer, 1999



Volume 8 Edition 2

Record Crowd at LaMag Luncheon

By Dan Grabel

A dozen guests stood up Sunday, May 23rd at LaMagnet restaurant in Manhattan when PN'S CEO **Peter Peterson** opened the speech-making part of the annual luncheon and asked, "Who is here for the first time?" They were not alone. More than 200 paid their way into the lunch meeting which was warmed by nostalgia. Close inspection might have revealed a few more wrinkles on the suntanned, smiling faces.

This was the 12th anniversary of the NBC alumni organization and, as usual, it attracted guests from far and wide. Many really do plan their travels so they can be in the Big Apple that weekend and again the guest list reflected that fact: P.A. **Ann Kramer** in from Albuquerque, newsman **Doug Davenport** up from Cary, North Carolina, producer **Bob Asman** and newsman **Sandy Goodman** from Washington, producer **Walter Miller** in from L.A. with son **Paul**, who will direct the Tony Awards which Walter will produce, and daughter **Deborah** who directs the "Rosie O'Donnell show," producer **Roger Muir** down from Wolfeboro, N.H, stage manager **Jim O'Gorman** from Deerfield Beach, FL, engineer **Arnold Rand** from Winthrop, Maine, engineer **Bob Juncosa** from Arizona, and from New Jersey, audio engineer **Jim Geraghty**, announcer **Don Pardo**, and

director **Bob Rippen**.

More? Add engineer **Michael Gilligan** from Lyme, NH, director **Don Ellis** and wife from Cape Cod, producer **Jim Schaeffer** from Burlington, VT, director **Peter Fatovich** from Charlestown, RI, electronics wiz **Gene Frisch** from Ruckersville, VA, PA **Rhoda Grady** from Noank, CT and from one unforgettable place name — Willow Street, PA — announcer **Dick Dudley**.

As usual there was an announcers' table (with **Dudley**, **Pardo**, **Fred Collins**, **Fred Facey**, and **Mel Brandt**), the "Today Show" table with **Kramer**, director **Lilly Russo**, America's first weather girl, **Muriel MacPherson**, and **Marie Finnegan**. The writers were represented by **Joe Coggins**, **Mort Hockstein**, **Joe Meehan**, **Sandy Goodman**, **Doug Davenport**, **Ed Gough**, news vice president **Bill Wheatley**, and myself. Engineering, advertising, production, administration, and other groups similarly collected with their own old buddies.

CEO **Peter Peterson** greeted the throng and said that Peacock North's roster includes 851 NBC veterans, including about 500 who are still members of the organization. Deaths and other events have reduced the ranks. **Judy Murray** is the latest recruit.

Even some of those who could not make the bash phoned in to express their regrets, including **Scott**



CEO, Pete Peterson



Bob Asman, up from DC.

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Joan Gifford and Lois Marino



Howard Atlas



Roger Muir

Brinker, Jack Dolan, Peter Tintle, Bob Hanna and Roy Silver. Peter also publicly thanked the major contributors who put together the PN magazine — publisher and compositor **Frank Vierling**, columnist **Heino Ripp**, Managing Editor **Dan Grabel**, also the regular contributors — **Mort Hockstein**, **Dick Dudley**, **Ken Arbor**, **Don Luftig**, and special helpers, **Delores Parylak**, **Tony** and **Nancy Nelle**, and **Roy Silver**.

Speaking for the announcers group, **Dick Dudley**, slowed by a hip replacement and other physical ailments nevertheless made the trip up from Bucks County, PA and acknowledged the longtime help of scheduler **Lillian Hickson**.

Joan Gifford and **Lois Marino** offered a mini tribute to retiree **Gloria Clyne**, and Gloria, herself, told how she squeezed a few bucks out of NBC when they surprised her this spring and offered a buyout after 55 years.

Howard Atlas tried to explain GE's new offer of membership in an HMO. In essence, the deal is you can switch to selected HMOs, or remain under the present GE plan. If you switch, you can return to the GE plan at any time. Still confused? Atlas invites all to phone his 800 number: 1-800-9ATLAS9.

Roger Muir, who was executive producer of the "Howdy Doody" show 30-plus years ago said that GE will make a new effort to merchandise the freckled-faced puppet. There is a 300 member Howdy Doody Historical Society which will hold its annual convention and swap in October

and there may be a 90 minute special recalling the character who was an early TV phenomena. Muir said that at one time the US Postal Service wanted to create a Howdy stamp but NBC and King Features, which own the rights, would not permit it without compensation. Finally, there may be a Doody-ville theme park created in California.

Peter Fatovich offered some light comedy and said that when he looked around the Florida community where he had bought a condo, he thought he was at a wax museum.

News VP **Bill Wheatley**, now a PN member, said that some of the proceeds from **Tom Brokaw's** historic book will be contributed to a World War II veterans memorial that is being organized in Washington. He said the spirit of camaraderie that was created at NBC during the golden years is something that NBC today is trying to preserve.

Before parting **Pete Peterson** tried to get the sense of the crowd if they would be interested in a PN lunch in the fall, in addition to this traditional spring gathering. If you have any suggestions, let him know.

No gathering of 200 plus is possible without a lot of behind the scenes work and so the help of **Peg Peterson** and **Francesca Peters** was acknowledged as the day came to a close after 4 hours of nostalgia and the exchanging of business cards. □

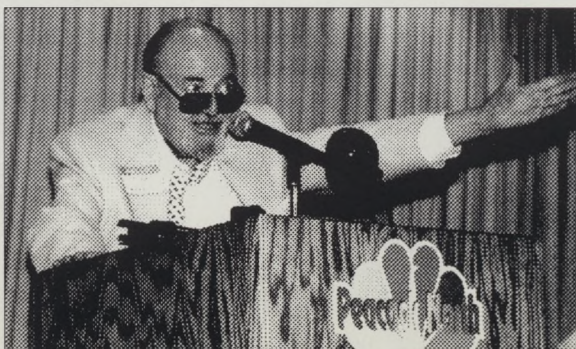


*News VP Bill Wheatley,
"I'm impressed there is a
Peacock North."*

More La Maganette on Page 13



Gloria



Dick Dudley



Peter Fatovich

at 30 rock



by Dan Grabel

Make-over

We were at 30 Rock in early Spring and noted the huge amount of construction. The channel gardens are covered over with a row of low temporary buildings and we did not find out what was going on inside.

Prometheus' golden statue has been picked up and deposited on the roadway in front of the main entrance to the GE building while the wall behind it, at the ice rink, gets rebuilt. We understand GE wanted to place the huge statue elsewhere in the plaza but the NYC Landmarks Commission said no!

There's a huge sign proclaiming "NBC, Experience Rockefeller Center," and "Shop the Store," "Take the Tour."

New restaurants will have windows on the Prometheus side of the ice rink plaza, giving them a better view of the area, and probably adding a buck to the price of the coffee.

Many small merchants were put out of business so the stores in 30 Rock can be rebuilt. But Dextor Luggage is still on 49th street, and on 50th, "Godiva," and the jewelry shop that has been there for eons remain in place. Otherwise, it's pretty much a morgue, store-wise.

We bet it will end up with shops for Disney, Gucci, the Yankees, Warner Brothers, etc, so it will look like every other high priced mall in America.

Labor Tactics

ABC NABET employees had been battling the Disney giant for more than a year to settle their contract and some of the engineering staff thought they'd put a zinger into the stalemate, according to one inside story we heard.

When **Barbara Walters** taped her **Monica Lewinsky** special, guys working on that job taped their own audio copies of the not-so-revealing show. Their intent — to leak it to the press the morning before the show aired. The scheme did not work.

The engineers' audio tape went to the Daily News and maybe elsewhere. But the ABC promo people apparently had the same idea. They also sent pre-show copies of the text to the print media, hoping to build the audience. We saw the NYPost's version of the story and it clearly

attributed the Q & A to the "20/20" production.

To tighten the security, ABC switched from studio cameras to field cameras which use cassettes. That way, they knew, by picking up the cassettes after the taping, that no unauthorized copies could be made.

Local People

Magee Hickey, still a cute little redhead, got back on the tube in April when she joined the MSG Learning network which is shown locally in the tri-state area. Magee is doing a half hour daily show titled "Metro Parenting" which appears at 9 p.m. She's qualified for the job since she has two kids, aged 8 and 12. Magee lives in Manhattan ... Sometimes tart-tongued reporter **Dave Browde**, now with CBS radio and TV and a new bridegroom, is attending Fordham Law School. A nice fall back, just in case, or extra insurance for his present career ... Anchor **Jack Cafferty** is



Jack Cafferty



Tony Guida

the latest recruit at CNNfn. He wasn't idle too long after WPIX let him go and he'll join ex-NBCer **Tony Guida**. Sez Jack, "The chance to deal with information that's a little more grown-up is very appealing." He'll be a

correspondent for the financial network. In the past 22 years in New York, Cafferty has worked at NBC, WNYW and WPIX

... **Carol Jenkins**, ex-NBC, now is also ex-WNYW. Her contract at Channel 5 expired in February and Channel 5 had cut her noon newscast to half an hour. Jenkins said that after nearly 30 years of reporting and anchoring, she was looking to other fields and will produce TV movies with **Gloria Steinem**.

Tall Tales

Chuck Scarborough was exchanging stories with **Ed**



Chuck

Newman at the **Gloria Clyne** retirement bash. Looking around studio 6B Chuck remembered a little game played on **Tom Snyder** when he was doing the "News On the Hour" shows in that setting.

Snyder was perennially late for the cast, arriving moments before airtime.

One day when the show was cancelled and before Snyder had been informed, the crew decided to shake him up.



Tom Snyder

The crew put a sign on the 6B door saying the show had been switched to 3B. Then they printed a second sign saying the show had been switched to 5E and put that on the door at 3B.

Snyder was right on time — that is, late again — ➔

and started his dash from 6B to 3B. Meanwhile, the crew gathered at 5E, the third venue, and greeted a huffing and puffing Snyder as he dashed there to learn the show had been cancelled.

A'Lelia

Some retirees who worked with Chicago local news may remember reporter/editor **A'Lelia Bundles**, a staffer in the 70s and 80s. We came across her name in the Winter '99 issue of *City & Suburban Styles*, a magazine aimed at the African-American market in New York. The article told the story of **Madame C.J. Walker**, America's first black millionairess. She made her pile early in the century manufacturing cosmetics for black women and built a huge mansion at Irvington-on-Hudson. A'Lelia is her great-great granddaughter and has authored a biography, "Madame C.J. Walker, Entrepreneur."

People Say the Funniest

An ABC manager, proud that the net had stayed on the air despite losing the services of 2,000 NABET members during the strike said, "Cameras are so foolproof these days any monkey can operate one."

Willard Scott, commiserating with ABC's morning weatherman **Spencer Christian** when he was axed after 12 years, says he likes to be the substitute weather-caller on "Today." Willard is still under NBC contract to send greetings to 100 year old viewers. He said, "I probably would throw it in as a bonus and do it for free." Yeah. Yeah. A



Willard Scott

Disney consulting psychologist, explained the background in the cartoon monolith taking over the sweet music radio station WQEW, New York, for its own kid programming network. He said unlike adults, kids don't divide the media into radio, TV, books, magazines, etc. "For kids, it is more oceanic." It is frightening to think that Disney runs its marketing ideas through a developmental psychologist We were shocked to see an informational at midday on CBS one day, believing those schlock shows with hired audiences were relegated to the fringe times. Then, we discovered, the "Tiffany" net also runs those paid half hour shows on all 13 of its O&Os to peddle rotisseries and diet pills in prime time, from 7 to 8 p.m. A CBS voice said "It was a decision on our part based on situational factors." (Meaning: "We need the money.")

Stars

If **Tim Russert**, the "Meet the Press" moderator, completes his contract in the year 2004 he will become the longest running host of that show. Russert now has seven years under his belt and viewers of the Sunday morning show have increased 58 percent since he took over in 1991... **Bryant Gumbel** may yet be back right where he started — on early morning TV, if plans go through to assign him to

the CBS "This Morning Show." Gumbel, who gets \$4 million a year, even though his "Private Eye" show went belly up, spends a lot of time on the golf course. The tabs say he is in a long-drawn-out divorce negotiation... Gumbel was the best man at **Matt Lauer's** wedding and turned up arm and arm with a blonde girl friend... **Marv Albert** continues to expand his role in the medium. Turner Sports signed him to do NBA games beginning in April, and later he'll do boxing, the 2001 Goodwill Games and football if the Turner-NBC football league gets off the ground... That football league, and the teams, to be owned by Turner and NBC, will have individual investors operating the 12 franchises. May 2000 is the kickoff date if this happens... Remember **Gary Coleman** the diminutive TV star who made a splash in "Diff'rent Strokes" some years ago? He's 30 years old now, still tiny at 4 foot 7, and a security guard in a California mall. He had a run-in with a 205 pound lady bus driver who wasn't satisfied with the autograph he signed... NBC will capitalize on the spill-over audience from "Today" with a new talk show to be called "Later Today." It will be anchored by **Jodi Applegate**. Jodi does the weekend "Today Show," and "Today in America" on MSNBC... **Jack Perkins**, former DOC producer at NBC, has been eased out of his chair as host of "Biography" on the A&E network by **Harry Smith**, formerly of CBS. Perkins will have an "ongoing role" with the show.



Jodi Applegate

Trimming

CBS has reduced its news staff drastically....cutting 132 jobs in the past six months... At ABC its "pack or perish." Some 240 execs in the New York office have been ordered to move to Burbank, to be closer to the main Disney office. Some 4,500 others will remain in the Big Apple.

GE Biggie Departs

The moral must be, "Don't Mess with GE's **Jack Welch**." **Gary Wendt**, who was the chairman and CEO of GE Capital Services, no longer has that title. Or a GE job. Wendt, on the job 12 years, was responsible for 40 percent of GE's profits from things like credit cards and leasing equipment. Wendt's area ran 29 businesses and increased the assets from \$24 billion to \$300 billion. Steamy, public divorce proceedings, which ended with Wendt's ex-spouse getting \$30 mil, probably upset Welch. Not the image to replace Welch when he departs the top GE spot.

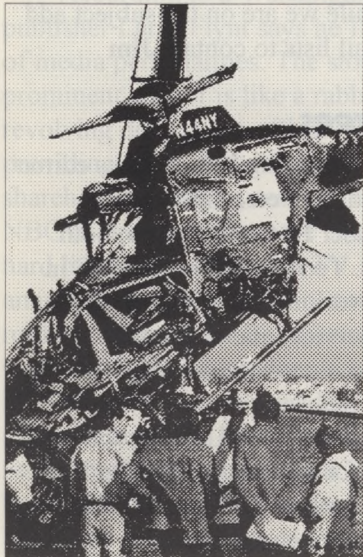
Welch, by the way, did well as chairman and CEO of GE in 1998 — a gross of \$56 million. That was \$10 mil in salary and bonus and \$46 mil by exercising stock options.

Foot in Mouth

When **Geraldo Rivera** challenged his CNBC audience to provide proof of a criminal prosecution for lying about

sex — this during the **Lewinsky** headline days, two lawyers came up with evidence and claimed the \$10,000 reward. When Rivera balked at paying the money, NBC decided to avoid lawsuits and paid the dough. One lawyer also collected \$170 for the cost of filing the suit.

Fly Boys



Chopper 4

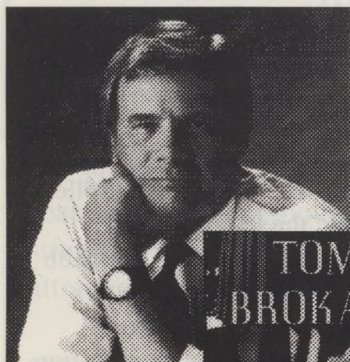
Riding around in those News 4 helicopters might be a nice, fast way to get to the scene of a news story, but that's not the case when you end up being the story. That's what happened to reporter **Kai Simonsen** and pilot **Terry Hawes** enroute to Newark. The copter got into mechanical trouble at 700 feet and Hawes, 38, managed to avoid a nearby shopping mall and crashed into the Passaic River. Simonsen, 28, had the presence of mind to open the cockpit

door just before they hit the water. With water covering them, both got out and swam 30 feet to shore with only minor cuts and bruises.

In 1986, a WNBC-radio copter crashed into the Hudson River killing traffic reporter Jane Dornacker. The pilot survived.

Author, Author

Tom Brokaw's "The Greatest Generation," was at the top of the NYTimes' best seller list for more than 25 weeks and then remained number two for 15 weeks. **Peter Jennings'** "The Century" led the list then slipped, but was on the best seller list for more than 19 weeks this spring.



Dust jacket photo and art from Tom's best seller book.



Explaining the Brokaw book's surprising success, one book industry person said, "There's a curiosity about the past."

Profound.

TV personalities who are writers often create best sellers:

Walter Cronkite's

"A Reporter's Life," and four of the five books by **Dan Rather**, for example.

Tom's "Nightly News" was the most-watched network

evening news show of 1998.

The Biz Side

NBC, always seeking new ways to generate income, has discovered mail order sales of music connected with TV shows is paying off. The net sold tens of thousands of CDs in connection with the mini-series "The 60s" and will continue to pursue that market.

Black & White

Ethnic taste in video shows obviously is very different and that shows clearly in surveys of which groups watch which shows. The head count was done by TN Media. It reports black households watched 40 percent more than nonblack — 70 hours compared with 50 hours per week.

"Audiences go where they feel they can connect," one spokesperson said. For example, seven of the top 10 shows among black viewers had black casts or black leading characters.

Here are the top three shows among black audiences, and their rank among white viewers: 1) Steve Harvey Show (white-127), 2) Jamie Foxx Show, (120), 3) NFL Monday Night football (6).

Here are the top three shows among white audiences, and their rank among black viewers: 1) ER (15), 2) Frasier (90), 3) Friends (88).

Channel 4 remains the number one money maker in NY local TV — earning \$290 million in gross revenue and accounting for 23 percent of the TV ad market.

Is GE selling NBC? Answers one GE voice, "The spin-off idea gets tossed around here from time to time." But one economist has noted that spin-offs occur when cash flow is rising. It is not rising at NBC.

Musical Chairs

Garth Ancier, former president for Entertainment at WB, joined NBC in March as its Entertainment president. He's an old chum of **Scott Sassa** and briefly shared that title with Sassa when he joined NBC. In June, Sassa got yet another title, replacing **Don Ohlmeyer** as NBC West Coast president, and Ancier, 41, assumed the Entertainment presidency exclusively.



Garth Ancier

Seinfeld Lives

Well, not with new network shows, but with new network commercials for American Express! The credit card financier will do a series, each one minute long, with an evolving story line. The first has him departing LA for NY and members of the cast from his old show also will appear. That will take some keen scripting — storyline for **Seinfeld**, and commercial message for American Express, all in sixty seconds.



Chili-gate

A little investigative reporting scheme by **Diane Sawyer** has backfired. She invited fellow ABC employees to her penthouse for a chili lunch, deliberately making it so salty that it would draw comments. She walked out of the room after serving the food, hoping to surreptitiously videotape their remarks for a segment on an up-coming "20/20" show on people being polite, but lying.

Most of the diners offered only polite remarks when Sawyer asked how they enjoyed the chili. When they discovered the hoax, most guests joked about the incident. One, however, complained about being duped. ABC dumped the episode and did the story using children in another situation.

Sounds more like Tom Sawyer than Diane Sawyer.

Big Bucks

So how much is **Imus**, the "I" Man, worth to MSNBC to fill its morning time? He does the show on WFAN radio and adds little or nothing to make it a simulcast. His new deal, it is said, calls for doubling his present \$1.5 million for the TV portion.... Acerbic radio commentator **Bob Grant**, who was dropped by WABC, quickly moved to WOR where he'll get \$550,000 a year for the next two years. Said Grant, "I was seriously thinking of retiring." Oh yeah?

Anniversaries

ABC's "Eye Witness News" celebrated its 30th anniversary this spring without fanfare. Officially, NBC's 25th anniversary of News 4 NY was similarly ignored. Nevertheless, the rank and file had longer memories, and warmer ones, and marked the anniversary with a bash at an eastside restaurant organized by **Patricia Lynch** and **Gerry Solomon** (see story on page 22) **Chuck Scarborough** also marked an anniversary — his 25th year as News 4 anchorman. Chuck arrived in NY by way of Biloxi, Hattiesburg and Atlanta.

Invective

Radio sounds exciting these days going by excerpts from the WABC **Sean Hannity** show where he and guest, Harvard law prof **Alan Dershowitz**, exchanged these phrases: Dershowitz - "You're a horse's ass, a wimp and a liar. You'll be off the air in two years!" Hannity - "You're a gutless, spineless twerp. A character-assassin, a bully, and a coward, coward, coward." Dershowitz, "You'll be working for McDonalds in a few years because you're playing ball with racists."

Retired? Don't You Believe It

One newswriter retiree thinks maybe he should go back to work to find free time. He does not have much free time in retirement. In 1998, he had four articles published in NYTimes Westchester section, three in Westchester 60 Plus Magazine, currently has four more assignments from 60 Plus, is researching two others, and this is the 14th winter

that he is writing a weekly newspaper ski column. Oh, and a few pieces regularly in *Peacock North*.

Will that writer please stand up. Okay, it's me.

Correction

We have been known to make an error now and then, so to put one right — **Peter Flynn's** e-mail address is: plflynn@acornworld.net — while we are on the subject add jholton@talon.net to your e-mail lists to contact **Jim Holton**.

Retirees

Add two more recent ones in spring '99 — news editor/producer **Ted Elbert** and EJ Editor **Peter Gilmore**.

According to our source, producer **Patricia Lynch**, both were feted at retirement parties. Ted started out at NBC in Chicago, I think in the 1970s, working for the local O&O and then with News Program Service, and eventually headquartered in New York and elsewhere, as is the lot of field producers.

Peter started out as a film editor with Local in the more raucous days when it was hard for a writer to tell film editors what scenes to put into a story. And just like Pete were lovable types such as **Bob Sorensen** and **Clay Cassell**. Journeymen cutters, were they, and not bashful about letting you know how the story should look. Usually, they were right. All graduated to EJ and hung up their scissors and magnifying loupes.

That, my boy, is nostalgia. Remember those publicity shots when a guy would hold up a couple of yards of 16mm film over his head, catching the light, to pick out a scene?

Reunion at PBS

Let us reel off the names, then we'll tell you how they are connected:

Mary Alice Williams, Bob Abernethy, Betty Rollin, John Dancy, Arthur Lord, Steve Delaney, Gerry Solomon and Patricia Lynch. An illustrious group of pros, and what has brought them together is a weekend show on PBS titled, "Religion & Ethics."

Pat Lynch told us about it, although we had spotted Abernethy only the Sunday before. The show is bankrolled by the Lily Foundation. Abernethy, the longtime NBC Washington correspondent, is anchor. The rest of that mob has produced or reported stories for the show which airs Saturday mornings and Sunday evenings on PBS.

Pat recently did a story on Peru, so that's an indication the show has a nice budget. She said they frequently use former NBC camera crews for the jobs.

Olympics Sales

NBC Sports Chairman **Dick Ebersol** is confident about time sales on NBC's coverage of upcoming Olympic games. He says, "We're half sold for the 2000 games in Sydney, Australia and have another dozen big advertisers lined up." NBC paid \$3.5 billion for the biennial games through 2008.

Fortunately the scandal regarding Olympic officials has not tarnished the games.

TV times sales, generally, were hot this spring with rates up 25 percent.

Notes from Here & There

According to a Washington Post story, Hustler publisher Larry Flynt says he'll start investigating the lives of media personalities. The story said "apparently one prominent anchor is like a rabbit — I mean he's got a revolving door to his office." Divorce transcripts are providing some of the information....GE's annual letter to its shareholders, employees, and customers did not mention NBC or broadcasting... the Clinton administration is against hard liquor advertising on TV. Beer spends \$718 million annually, wine \$67 million, and stuff like Kiluha spends \$10 million... **Steven M. Bornstein**, the new president at ABC was a one-time cameraman for ESPN, joining that operation in 1980 and rising to president of ESPN by 1990. NBC had a cameraman who had a similar rise to prominence — remember **Carl Lindemann**, the Sports prexy?.... big bru-haha in the direct TV industry. They aren't supposed to broadcast satellite signals to homes which can pick up local stations with a simple roof antenna. One direct TV operation went black after illegally sending out CBS and Fox network programming in March. Hundreds of thousands were affected... Industry people are saying there's a dire need for new writers to fill the needs of two new networks and more original programming in syndication and cable. Yeah, but the writing biz is tough — as much rejection as acting.... More on Gumbel: one report says he wants a piece of the action if he returns to early morning TV for CBS. Chances are slim. Meanwhile, CBS is finally following the lead of

NBC and Fox and is building street-level studios in the GM building on 59th street. It will cost \$30 million. Pat Weaver did that for NBC with "Today" back in 1952 when the show was in the RCA exhibition hall on 49th street. Hmmm, that's 47 years ago.

Money, Money, Money

King World, the distributor of "Oprah," "Jeopardy" and "Wheel of Fortune," among other properties, was on the block for \$3 billion. That's billion! The operation earns \$200 million a year. By our calculation, it would take 15 years to earn back the nut, less cash on hand.

We've noted elsewhere that the nets are getting more for ad time this spring. Here are a few specifics: NBC's "Just Shoot Me," 1998-30 second spot = \$240,000. 1999 price = \$405,000. ABC's "Drew Carey" 1998 \$375,000. 1999 = \$460,000.

Olympic Dad

The Wash. Post did a real professional job investigating Un Yong Kim, vice chairman of the International Olympic committee from South Korea. His son got a job, briefly, with NBC Sports. When he departed NBC, Salt Lake City people got young Kim a job and paid his salary.

Kim has a daughter who is a so-so concert pianist but she has recently played with the world's top orchestras including the Berlin Philharmonic, the Melbourne Symphony, also Nagano, Atlanta, Salt Lake. Three days before another soloist was to appear with the Moscow Symphony, young Miss Kim substituted for her. The Post also said Daddy tried to fix the 1990 International Tchaikovsky competition in Moscow.

Final straw — Kim got the daughter of a



"Another World" Goes Into Space

Well, there's no more suspense about the future of NBC's "Another World." The show was axed this spring after almost 35 years on the air. 35 years! The only NBC fixtures older than that are "Today" and "Tonight," and both of them have had so many make-overs that only the titles have lasted almost 50 years.

Nevertheless, "World," was extraordinary, NBC's longest-running daytime serial drama. It was the first soap to air in a one-hour format (in 1975), and later a 90-minute format (1979-80). The change was made to strengthen the net's two-hour early-afternoon lineup. The show had ranked 9th out of the 12 daytime dramas, attracting 2,960,000 viewers, according to Nielsen.

There's always the possibility that another net will pick it up. One future home could be ABC's new all-soap cable channel.

Among the stars who had played characters on "Another World:" **Harrison Ford**, **Charles Durning**, **Anne Heche** and **Morgan Freeman**.

The demise is a major labor debacle. It could mean the end of 120 jobs at NBC's Brooklyn studios where the show is taped. For actress **Linda Dano** it was a shock. She has worked the show for 15 years. But, as we all know, "dream situations" never last forever and you gotta be grateful for a long run like that.

CBS is still running its two senior shows, "Guiding Light," and "As the World Turns," which have been aired since 1952 and 1956, respectively. "Guiding Light" actually began as a radio serial in 1937, so that is truly the grand-daddy of all TV. (DG)

Moscow recording company exec into a Utah college with \$12,644 in aid. Kim's daughter then made her first compact disc for the Moscow company. It is all described as "no quid pro quo," merely "coincidence."

Travelers

While **Tom Brokaw** went on the road to interview Russia's prime minister, Yevgeny Primakov, in Moscow in mid-April, which we could imagine as being a dull spot despite its possible importance, "Gunga Dan" **Rather** did better. CBS' man went to Belgrade in April and did reports from the sidewalks. Despite the bombings, the locals were listening to a rock band and were putting up a stiff upper lip.

Roy Is Busy

Retired (?) correspondent **Roy Neal**, whose anecdotal stuff appears elsewhere in this issue of PN, is busy, busy, busy. To wit: he does oral history video tapes for NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, does PBS-TV video series on trains, is an occasional lecturer, and continues as the anchor for the annual Tournament of Roses parade, which is satellited around the world on New Year's Day. (PN'er **Dick Auerbach** is the producer).

Oops

One more Neal bit. In correspondence with PN, Roy recalled an experience with cameraman **Dexter Alley**, one of the early Hollywood cameramen who worked for NBC news. They covered the feature race at Santa Anita track one day, edited the material and then Roy did a voice-over for the feed to New York. They saw the material transmitted and were about to leave the studio when a projectionist called them into his room. There, on the floor, were small strips of 35mm film. An inexperienced film editor did a poor job of gluing and as each snippet came through the projection gate, the splice popped open! Fortunately, on air the material was okay. It was the split second later that everything fell apart.

Memories Stirred

I like to read journalists' biographies, so when I came across **Robert MacNeil's** 1982 book, "The Right Place at the Right Time," I borrowed it from the local library. It is a good read.

Over the years, MacNeil has called himself Robin and Robert, the first being his original, I believe, but the second a better choice for a by-line. A Canadian, he never wanted to be a journalist but when he got sucked into the profession, he decided it was neat to have your wanderlust satisfied, and your travel bills paid by the Company — Reuters, NBC, whomever. He's one of the few to walk away from a major TV anchoring job to pursue other journalistic efforts.

As I read, I shared some of MacNeil's exciting adventures in the 1960s and '70s — some with NBC personnel: cameraman **Louis Hepp** in the Congo, for one.

Then I jumped out of my easy chair when MacNeil told about a visit to Devil's island, French Guiana. His crew were two New Yorkers — **Gene Broda**, camera, and **Jim Geraghty**, sound — old friends I had worked with on many filming assignments, both probably known to many PNers.

TV Device

The AP has reported the invention of "TVcycle," an experimental device created to get TV viewers off the couch and on to some exercise, because America — already too fat — is growing fatter. The National Institute of Health says 55 percent of U.S. adults are overweight, and so are 13 percent of youngsters.

Now, the "TVcycle." It was created by an engineer who re-wired a TV set so that it only worked when a viewer is pedaling the bike. The N.I.H. ran a ten week test and, of course, the kids who used the bikes lost more body fat than those who stayed on the couch. The kids on the couch, however, saw more TV.

Writers Forum

Well *forum* is perhaps a bit overstating it. Maybe, lunch? Retired news correspondent **Chuck Quinn** came into New York in April for a Columbia U. reunion and started that weekend off with lunch at the Carnegie Deli. Quinn, now living on the eastern shore of Chesapeake Bay, is writing a book about his experiences...well, it's something to keep him away from the crabs and lobsters. There too, **Ed Gough**, who is doing some video work for the Port of NY Authority. And **Herb Gordon**, who has just turned out yet another book on camping, and he will be doing that again this summer when he takes a small group of canoers into the Canadian wilds. Herb always seems to find his way back. Remember his red-headed twins who were in the Harrison Ford movie "Mosquito Coast?" They have just graduated from Bates and Hamilton colleges. Another diner, **Joe Coggins**, who has his own web page. Also **Ed Bowers**, late of "Dateline," who insists he is retired and doing nothing other than reading Henry James novels. Your reporter also attended, and you already know what he does.

Jobs

NBC has merged its electronic and print publicity department, cutting ten jobs, sez Variety. It also says News will cut as many as 25 people.

Jobless

Reports from the war in Kosovo somehow brought back memories of the affair in Iraq when **Peter Arnett** and **Bernard Shore** of CNN, and their satellite telephone, were America's main source of first hand reports from the scene. Shore is still going strong on cable, but Arnett was shown the door in July after 18 years at CNN — probably because of a wildly inaccurate report on the alleged U.S. use of nerve gas in Vietnam.

But Arnett is not alone. ABC has cleaned house too,



CEO, Bob Wright

dumping **George Strait**, **Mark Mullen**, **Tim O'Brien** and **Jim Laurie**.

All those constant network firings is the reason we see so many experienced correspondents on cable.

And there's so much confidence in cable that **Bob Wright**, the NBC CEO, has said. "In the not-too-distant future, CNBC will be the largest profit generator at NBC. The NBC-

TV network is coming down, and CNBC is coming up." CNBC recently celebrated its tenth anniversary.

Buyouts

NBC apparently is constantly in a buyout mood. EJ editor Lou Castro, who is just approaching 60, told us he has accepted a bid to say adieu. Another momentous event — he's taking a bride and moving into a condo at Tuxedo Park....All 20 members of the NBC affiliate relations department have been offered buyouts, too. NBC doesn't expect all 20 to accept. But if the net doesn't get its quota, some will be pushed. A mini-Affiliate deptpartment will remain, but "expect significant changes," said Ed Scanlon. For one thing, NBC wants to stop paying out \$200-mil a year so that affils carry NBC programs. Can they do that? Bob Wright seems secure. He said those who object "have no place to go."

The NBC Store — Glitz & Logos

For weeks, during construction, 30 Rockefeller Plaza had a huge sign reading "The NBC Experience" — it was heralding the new NBC theme store. Warner Bros. has them. Disney has them. And eureka! NBC has one. Now, we can all taste that experience. We did on a quick run-through

shortly after the April 27th opening. In a word, it can be described as "glitz!"

Unfortunately our color photo is in black and white in PN, but walk into the massive (20,000 square feet) high-tech store on 49th street and the Plaza and you don't know where to look first. A blazing rainbow greets you and if you ever hungered for a shirt, a cap, a button that carried the peacock and the color spectrum, you've got 3,000 choices.

The NBC tour is back. It starts in the shop.

And then the simulations. The virtual realities. You can do a spot with Conan O'Brien, spar sports trivia with Bob Costas, do the weather with Al Roker, sit in Jay Leno's guest chair, or crash the sets of "Saturday Night Live," and have your photo taken. The photo will cost you \$12.95. A tape, where it appears the visitor is chatting with the stars as you read from a Teleprompter, will cost \$15.

The stars, of course, aren't there in person. It's more electronic magic.

There are 250 TV monitors scattered around the two floors. Some beam current TV shows, others have snippets from Jack Benny, Sid Caesar and Groucho Marx. NBC says 88 million people a year pass that corner, and the net expects half a million of them to take the tour. One news story said the place cost \$20 million to create, but we bet they did it for a lot less. If it works in New York, expect it to be duplicated elsewhere.

Conan O'Brien might have been biting the hand that feeds him, but an AP story we read quoted him with this: "\$10,000 worth of useless crap right here at NBC."

Recognition

Again our thanks to **Roy Silver**, our personal news clipping bureau, and to resource help from **Cindy Mercer-Hur** at 30 Rock. □



The NBC Store — a House of Mirrors.

Our at 30 rock columnist is retired NBC news writer Dan Grabel who along with his wife Pat resides in Scarsdale, NY.





P.N. People

Dearly beloved: I hope you all are not putting retirement "on the back burner!" I'm sure you've all asked, "How did I ever get the time to do the things I did whilst working full-time? Who sleeps a full eight hours? However, a bit of my retirement is going to good use. Did you ever want to conduct a symphony orchestra? Well now you can, if you have a computer, a music keyboard and computer programs. For my church at Easter, from a 40 page conductor's score, I managed to compose a 4-minute Rippo rendition of Handel's Hallelujah Chorus, with about 20 instruments and choir. Hallelujah! DAVE WILSON searched for days for a tympani roll for me. He found one on a tape made in Brooklyn. Without that, the piece lacked a distinctive build to the ending.

LOOKS AS IF Peacock North is oozing into the West Coast. BILL PALMERSTON writes from California that the West Coast has heard of the Newsletter. He mails it around to various people on the amateur radio net on 40 meters, who meet at 9am on 7208 kHz. *(It's really nice to hear from the West Coast, Bill. H)* Ditto Jerry Weiss, who writes he discovered our magazine and devoured it...DICK WILLIAMS from Washington State, has just discovered how tough computers can be, but he says it's forcing him to think and learn. Dick expects a summer gathering of the Clan of over a hundred relatives. He thanks PN for helping him keep up with the REST of his family — the ones he spent most of his life with at NBC...SHERM HILDRETH (Wash, DC tech Boss) sends greetings from Alexandria, Va. He was just heading for Amelia Island, Fla. to commune with the Pelicans....*A note from the desk of VIC ROBY:* His check for the PN Luncheon would have arrived a bit sooner, but he was busy reading the Spring Edition. (Seems like the slower one reads, the more one gets to savor its pages, and might lead him back for delicious seconds.) Vic liked it. But noted that it would take Higher Authority than PN to diminish the silent mikes who have been silenced as

the years pass...GUY LeBOW writes from his penthouse on 63rd street. He's a charter member and hasn't been able to make the luncheons. Guy has a very good reason. He's a polio victim, and those steps leading down to the dining room are a dilly...GINO GUARNO is retiring at the end of June after 32 1/2 years — says it's time to call it quits! Guess most of us also knew that feeling. The best, Gino...JOE ROTHENBERGER says hello from Ocala, Florida. We're sorry to hear that he lost his beloved Jinny 18 months ago, after fighting illness for 8 1/2 years. Joe says she won a lot of battles, but lost her war. I can hardly believe that Joe left NBC in 1958! He went to CBS and several ad agencies to produce several soaps. Joe sends his best regards to all of you, even those who are still in Brooklyn. *(It was always a pleasure when in Bklyn, Joe. H)*...CISSIE LENDEMANN "How could I do without you PN guys?—The Best."

Before the last issue, NORM DAVIDSON mailed me a story, which I carefully put in the drawer and lost! Alas, (it's like, where did I put my glasses?) Now it is found, so here it is.

"The Wall Phone"

The NBC shop and design department on 18th Street and Sixth Avenue was a magical place. The sets during the golden days of television were designed, built and painted there. The building was the old Cooper-Siegal building — a department store, an historic landmark. The Sixth Avenue El had a special entrance into the building on the mezzanine and another into the Hudson Tubes underground. Today, when you ride the Path trains going uptown, you can still see the dimly lit entrance at 18th Street.

The design department was located on the mezzanine. Three of us were located there. Bill Riva, Bob Whiteman and myself, Norm Davidson — we shared a wall phone. I happened to be next to the phone. Every time it rang, I answered it.

One day the phone rang — there was a husky voice on the other end, asking for Bill Riva.

"Oh, Bill, there is a guy on the phone for you."

Bill answered the phone. When he got finished, he turned to me and said, "That wasn't a guy on the phone, it was my mother-in-law, Marlene Dietrich."

The phone got a lot of use by all of us. When a pad wasn't handy, the wall was put to use. Everybody wrote phone numbers and notes on it, until the wall got its revenge. We all went home for the weekend. On Monday morning — came the shock. Over the weekend the wall got painted — a bright white — all the phone numbers were gone. The end of an era; we all got note pads.

ROY NEAL (<k6due@nr.infi.net>) e-mailed this thank you:

- For Pete for kicking me into doing something.
- For Dan for getting me organized. Also, the editorial comments!
- For Frank for setting up a couple of very good looking pages and handling my pictures with care.
- And, to Rippie, it HAS been a long time!

Nice doing business with a bunch of pros. The finished product was a delight.

Welcome to new member AL ROBBINS...

ED ROSSI didn't come to the La Mag bash 'cause Linda's Miss Universe Pageant this year was on May 26. It originates from Trinidad and Tobago in the Caribbean. Ed had a very pleasant surprise as they visited with Lee Kravitz (Walter's wife) who was in the area to have a few rounds of golf. She looks great and still lives in Hobe Sound, Florida...ARTHUR ZARAKAS (TV control) sends regards to us all. (*Miss you Zarak!*)...As of May 03 SENOR ROBERTO JUNCOSA and DIANE will be at: Junnl@aol.com and new address is: 65329 E Rosecrest Court, Tucson, AZ 85739, Tel: 520: 818 2211...LAUREN KRUG GRANT writes from Cutchogue, NY. (*You pronounce that.*) — "It's always nice hearing what former co-workers are up to. Having worked with Russ Tornabene, Jim Holton, Ray Weiss and Peter Flynn, to name a few, in my radio days, seeing if their memories are at all similar to mine is very interesting.

"I recall many a time getting Log Supplements to the studio just in time to go on the air for various space shots, press conferences and other events the radio net was covering for affiliates. I felt like the person in the movie 'Broadcast Network,' jumping over obstacles as I ran from the 8th floor down to the fifth floor with paperwork for the AD. In those days, the doors to the stairs were still unlocked and the stairs were very popular when rushing and helped avoid the long waits for elevators."

"I hope more radio people will send in their recollections in the hot seat. The feature on Monitor was very special because I was the AD calling the

shots in studio 5B Control during the last hour Monitor was on the air."

JOE MEHAN COMES OUT! DISCLOSES TRUE NATURE ABOUT HIMSELF—Joe writes:

In the last issue about Jim Gerahty mentions being on the Pearl Harbor 25th Anniversary filming trip at Pearl — this struck a resounding chord with me.

Of course, it was good to hear from ole Jim, a stalwart lad if there ever was one. Jim listed among those there as "FRANK DeFELITTA, JOE MEEHAN and JOHN RICH" Jim, like thousands before him, put an extra "e" in my name. He was trying to make an Irishman out of me.

I guess it's okay to reveal now, to come out of the closet, at this late stage of things, and reveal that "MEEHAN" is not Irish. It is Polish. Ellis Island took care of that spelling of MEHAN for my grandparents.

A great offender in this area is Dan Grabel. He's only known me for 40 years. We used to see our credits roll every Friday morning for two years on the "Today" news unit. But Dan, to this day, tries to make me the Irishman. I retaliate by sending him stuff addressed to DAN GRABLE, but it doesn't have the same effect.

OK, there we are, out in the open. And I feel so liberated, unburdened, free at last! Warm regards,

I (Heino) was asked to attend an evening at the "Newseum" on Madison at 57th Street by TV author, Jeff Kisselhoff. The occasion was a glimpse of early important people who were the groundbreakers of TV. Sponsored by the Gannett Corporation, some 100 TV people were interviewed and taped. The idea was to capture the "legends" from the early TV pioneers in person.

These tapes will be made available on the Internet, on CDs for schools, libraries, Museum of Broadcasting, etc. so the World would have access to the rise of TV in the USA. It was a fun evening. The storytellers were stars, producers, engineers, writers, etc. (all showing their age.) I wish they had started off with the interviewee's photo when they were in their prime. At the cocktail party afterwards, I ran into BOB and RUTH RIPPEN of Howdy Doody fame, Howdy's puppeteer RHODA, makeup artist DICK SMITH and his wife, STEWART MacGREGORY and his missus), TOM SARNOFF, CBS's 60 Minutes host, MIKE WALLACE and many others I didn't recognize.

YOU NEVER KNOW how a small item in PN can touch people. I received an e-mail early this year from Lancaster, PA. — The message came from "out of my past!" 'Twas someone I had nicknamed 'the Clunk' and with whom I had talked about the 'Kinks' (a group from Hullabaloo). I, she says, phoned

dad, a red head. Her name is Sharon TRACHTE. That name didn't help. I wasn't getting close to recognizing her. Peeking further into the letter, I realized her dad was "RED" REED, former NBC cameraman.

She got my address from a PN Newsletter, which her mom, Bee, receives on a regular basis. "Mom enjoys reading the newsletter and is thrilled to have news from some of the guys. I read them when I see her. Since I am now a Prof. and do research, I have often thought of the importance of keeping archives on the early days of NBC. I'm so pleased to know that someone is maintaining records."

"As you can imagine, the 'Kinks' no longer mean as much to me now. Instead, I have replaced them with some HEAVY METAL artists. At the ripe old age of 48, my musical tastes are more radical than those of my students!

Fondly Sharon Reed Trachte, alias HEADBANGER."

(PS. Sharon, please accept my apology for my tardy response. I wish everyone in the world could be the beautiful person your father was. I've missed him a lot. Sincerely, H. Ripp)

ARNIE PRONER sent me this as e-mail (vidcom@juno.com) "Time sure flies. I guess I've turned into a vegetable down here, but I love it. I keep busy with the ham club, computer club and UFO Club. Mostly they are overloaded with northern transplants that retired and prefer this climate and lower taxes.

My house up north cost over 7K a year in taxes. Down here it has been less than \$500. It's just been reappraised and guess it'll go up. The natives are screaming about it but us Yankees are laughing at it.

It's been lonely without Irene so have been going out with native women. They are all Baptists and one wanted to go on a trip to the outer banks. She decided that I should get baptized so that we could share a motel room and it wouldn't be sinful. I asked if we could take a shower together as that ceremony is a water rite. She said OK if the minister would be in the tub with us. I told her to forget the whole thing and go by herself.

I hear from BAILEY (STORTZ) and FRARACCIO once in a while. I am afraid to go up north now because the last time I was up north I got tagged for speeding and never paid or showed up for trial. By now, my picture is hanging up in the Post Offices.

An old flame keeps calling me on Sunday when the rates are cheap. She lives in Santa Monica now and wants to come down here. It's kinda scary because I don't know what she looks like after all these years and she won't say how long she plans to stay. The local Hams tell me that I need a live-in

companion. I really feel my dog is enough since an old lady shows up every couple of weeks and cleans the house. I wish the dog would learn how to cook. It's not all bad since there's no back talk.

So, this is what life is down here. You-all come down. The best, Arnie (W2OMU)

A follow up on WARREN ZITO

Aug 9, 1923 - Nov.27, 1998

From Gene Martin:

Memorial services were held on Dec 11, 1998 at Corpus Christi Church, in St. Augustine. The 9 AM Mass was attended by about 150 people —family and friends, NBC was represented by Gene and Jenny Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Al Finelli, Tom Smiley and members of the police force that Zito was assigned to.

After the service all were invited to the Zito residence for brunch. Warren died of a sudden severe heart attack in his home.



Warren Zito's network pass to the 1976 Republican Convention.

CALVIN SIEMER (Attorney, Shrewsbury, NJ) "Peacock North is always a welcome read when it comes to my house...(It's) a wonderful way to keep up with doings of old friends. As for me, I continue as an attorney and as an adjunct law professor at Fordham's School of Law."

Cal hasn't forgotten what they taught him and from where he came. He is to receive an award for his pro bono work for indigent clients of the non-profit group, Network for Women Services. "Although I have won some important cases and received other recognition for my work, I am most proud of this award and wanted to share it with friends."

NBCFR (NBC Florida Retirees) held their reunion April 6 - 8 at the Cape Coral Golf and Tennis Club. Unfortunately only 35 attended — but from the reports we heard here in the north those 35 had a great time, swimming, golfing, sightseeing along with "great food." So much so that NBCFR's leader, HARRY KATZMAN, has reserved the same fun spot for the year 2000. Tentative dates, April 2 - 4. Harry says, "Mark those dates on your calendar and *come on down.*"



Joe Coggins & Jack Marshall



Surendra Kumar



George Corrado



Hank Huestis & Arnold Rand



Marilyn Furey

PN People at "La Maganette" May 23, 1999

Fred Wagner wants everyone to know that the La Mag luncheon was superb! Gives thanks to all those who made this annual banquet the success it was. Due to knee replacement, Fred didn't skate around the La Mag basement as usual, so **Bob Higgins** took some pix with a digital camera. It puts pix onto floppy disks. These smart engineers. (We can't get along without them!)

Speaking of knees, **Herb Oxman** was doing a slow waltz for he had *two* new knees for Christmas. He's going to run a 3-minute mile this summer. Actually he's doing quite fine. He brought his lovely wife (nee en France) to the very heavily attended bash.

Last issue, you saw **Jim O'Gorman** dancing on the Great Wall of China, with cocktail glass in hand. This summer, even as you read, he's heading for Bulgaria. Bet you can't tell me where that is any more. After he's exhausted the best of the Bulgars, he's following his Global Positioning System to Ireland, assuming that the Yugo's haven't scattered those carbon wires into the GPS's path. But Jim has been on autopilot many times, so I have no fear of his getting lost. Nice trip, Jim.

Don Pardo, still voicing Sat Nite Live, will be vacationing in his Florida home - AND - with great pride, Grand Paw Don is thrilled with his newest grandson, Jack Dominick, who is visiting them from Pompano Beach.

Speaking of announcers, we were graced by the presence of the announcer of two successful NBC News programs, TODAY and Meet The Press, **Fred Facey**. Says Fred, "I didn't realize being at one of the Peacock North celebrations was going to be so enjoyable. But it is really a privilege to be in the

company with such an august body of present and former members of the National Broadcasting Co.- and now, my daughter **Erika Facey Palmer**, a special projects producer at WXIA in Atlanta, Ga. is serving the NBC family." (*Fred, you're a class act! H.*)

From the TODAY table, **Muriel MacPherson (Kirkpatrick)** exclaims, "What a pleasure to see dear friends again and remember all the funny, happy events of 'TODAY.' We reminisce about those no longer here whom we loved so dearly. And, suddenly the years melt away and the fog clears and it's the fifties rolling before our eyes (*Cue in the harp gliss:*) Back to reality, today in May! John and I are expecting. No, not us, but our 7th grandchild in June. Now we're practicing our Windows technique to join the Internet generation and looking forward to another great summer at the Jersey Shore.

Welcome to **Miriam LeClair** and to **Bob, Vivian Mausler, Delores Parylak**, and husband. Glad you all could come.

Mary and Herb Polak are still working on their house. (*It never does end, tho, does it Herb?*) The outside looks lovely. Inside there is a lot of paperwork to get rid of. It is difficult, especially since Herb is a pack rat. Some notes Herb has found from an old engineering project amaze him - "Did I write that?" - "How did that work?"... "We do enjoy this luncheon, especially since we are at a 100% engineering table."

While at the same table, **Ray Lafferty** complains about his memory prowess fading rapidly. At an engineering meeting he was talking to another engineer and asked him where he lived. The gent replied, "Montclair" - Ray said, "Perhaps you know my old friend Elliot Harrison?" The gent looked at Ray for a moment, and then said, "I *am* your



Gerry Savich, Don Luftig, Dave Riley & Pete Fatovich



Bill deLannoy & Jim Sunder



Collins, Engler & Facey



Dave & Roberta Wilson



George & Fran Peters



Moyantcheff & Williams



Jack & Irene Keegan



Bill Rose & Fred Wagner



Vierling & Finnegan

old friend Elliot Harrison." *OK, let's see a raise of hands of those who have never had such an experience!* **Louis Marino** spends more and more time in NYC and loves it. She's looking forward to September 2000 and the Sydney Olympics. Doesn't know her assigned venue yet, but hopes it's boxing, which she managed in Atlanta. *(Was Atlanta as it was in Barcelona?)*

Joan Gifford is still working at Flemings in NY. Joan gives a special thanks to all that help Peacock North and this great get-together. She is having a great time, and not planning retirement yet!

What a pleasant surprise to see a first time attendee to La Mag, **Arny Rand**. Great Group he exclaims! *(And he's right)*. Randy's wife Barbara has improved dramatically and is back to giving orders, "I love it," sez Randy. A shunt installed in the brain has made a fantastic improvement for her, and I am thankful they could accomplish this feat" *(Randy summers at his lake in Maine and winters in sunny Florida, and he looks younger and healthier than when employed!)*

Earlier we mentioned the **Juncosa's** moving to Tucson. Now they're passing slowly through the East *(trying to remember is it*

TuScon or Tucson) on their way to a train tour package through Europe. Expect post cards from London, Paris, Switzerland, Venice, Florence, Rome, Naples and points in between. *(We all hope when they return to the USA, that their "Tucson" home at least has a roof!)* ...Their table was a potpourri of engineers -- **Jim & Florence Sunder**, **Bob Juncosa**, **Tony and Nancy Nelle**, **Howard Atlas** bearing tidings of **GE's Health HMO's**. Also mixed in were **Randy and Lee and Irene Pliskin** from Long Island. *(No not N.Y. - but Joysee.)* The Pliskins are "Happy to be here - and all's well for us."

Vic Roby pronounces: "This is the year's most happy day! Let's all be here for Y2K." Vic, who after 15 years of retirement, wonders how he ever found time to announce for NBC. Oh yes, part of the reason is my alarm clock in those great days, went off at 3:30 AM!!!!

Marilyn Jacobs Furey couldn't wait 'til she retired. For now, yes, she can go back to school. In this past year alone, Marilyn has gone to college in England — Oxford & Cambridge — and Southampton College in, yes, Southampton, NY. Last but not least she attended NYU in NYC. Marilyn mentions that it's been Fascinating and Wonderful! Bless you. *(Marilyn, I'm jealous, I never went to college. H)*

It's **Kay (Aspland) Diggins'** 2nd time to La Mag as a guest of **Lilly Russo**. Most enjoyable time! Kay worked at NBC from 1944 (Guest Relations) and later on the Howdy Doody Show until 1953. Hope we'll see you again in Y2K.

Lilly Russo loves to come here each year to reunite with "my old NBC family." Each year comes dearer and more enjoyable. She wishes the best and may the Peacock North go on forever! Love ya, Lilly.

On May 1st, 1999, **George Peters** had the honor of being inducted into the Bishop Laughlin Memorial High School Athletic Hall of Fame for Track and Field. His specialty was in the shot put for which George had won several CHSAA titles. It was wonderful seeing his former classmates and some teachers.

George received a lovely plaque and won a raffle, which consisted of a Bishop Laughlin Bear among other prizes. It brought back many



Don Pardo & Noel Engler



Bob Mausler & Herb Polak



Dot deLannoy & Gary Iorio

memories, as does the dinner we have every year at La Maganette. *(It's really nice to get a teddy bear when you're 70 plus!)*

Ann Kramer is planning a Peacock Southwest - can't take this air travel anymore. P.S. She would *walk* to NY to see all the good old timers!

Arthur White is a partner in a videotape editing business "Valkhn Film & Video" 1650 B'way. And now HEAR THIS: Arthur biked across the USA for the American Lung Assoc. (See page 34.) It took 48 days for the 3,254 miles, then celebrated his 65th birthday. Art finished the "Montauk Century" last week - for the longest one-day ride, 140 miles. Congratulations!

Patricia Millman spent lots of time exploring the Southwest: Santa Fe, Las Vegas, and Sedona, Arizona lately. Last summer Pat did a cross-US trip, then returning across Canada in a single engine plane, with lots of fascinating stops all the way! *(Bet you had a great trip! I had dreamed for years of piloting to California in a single engine plane, taking the whole vacation for that; Alas, even tho I have the license, never did -- big disappointment. A big thrill tho, was piloting the Goodyear Blimp in Miami, putting 14 hours in a MASH type helicopter, popping into a parking lot in Pa. for a cup of coffee and doing co-pilot in a submarine search aircraft out of Floyd Bennett Field. Not to be dismissed lightly, was flying a boat-pulled parachute over Acapulco Bay in Mexico. Got up, rode around, and landed without getting wet onto a floating platform in the Bay. H.)*

Milt Wyatt doesn't think he'll leave the country this year. However, he said that last year and wound up in Southern France. His personal autopilot always leads him to the Southwest part of France. He visited Mont St. Michel, *(Probably got stranded there when the tide came up and drowned the road that leads to the monastery; he never tells us the good parts.)* then did a visit to a chateau in Burgundy, followed by a jaunt on the Riviera.

Unfortunately, he missed Monte Carlo, 'cause he followed the signs north and not south. He didn't have his laptop with him so couldn't log onto Yahoo for the correct headings. So much to his delight he wound up this time in Liverpool. He then managed to navigate perfectly to Wales. And thank goodness he



Newshound Grabel



Pat Millman



Poet MacPherson



Jim Schaeffer & Heino Ripp

got home in time for La Mag. Soyez bienvenu chez nous, Milt. Toujours un plaisir.

Milt doesn't think he'll do any of that this summer, but is getting charged up to take his granddaughter, son and daughter-in-law to London and Paris, by way of the channel in year 2,000.

Joan and Joe Dicso just returned from "a wonderful two-week trip to London, Paris, Firenze, and Roma. BUT, sez Joe, There's no-oh place, like hooome! Still he's gung-ho for Ireland next. Happy retirement you two.

Don and Sandy Luftig soon on the road again. They'll be roaming around the woods of Tanglewood, Mass to attend a few concerts, then to Las Vegas in September (see page 26 for travels with the Luftigs).

Hear This! **Bob Van Ry** is headed for China carrying absolutely no nuclear secrets whatsoever, except that "Gingko Boloba" is good for the restoration of memory. You see, he memorized the secrets and destroyed the papers. Van is leaving June 4th for 20 days, w/o tux a la O'Gorman last year, and is determined to visit THE WALL nonetheless. Bob Van Ry and **Gene Martin** reveal that the **Smileys** have moved to Murphys, Calif as of June 1st to be near her daughter and granddaughter.

From **George and Ethel Corrado**: "Still at NBC, am coming up to my 33rd anniversary. After years of audio mixing, and just finished another season of the SNL audio crew, my main job is in Network Graphics. I just finished a graphics job for the Olympics that will be part of the upcoming NBC Olympics coverage.

Son, David was hired by NBC to do 3D animation work for the war in Kosovo. In June he'll be on the road for NBC Sports golf coverage. Son Greg is graduating from Princeton with a physics major. Greg is headed to Stanford for a doctorate in Neurobiology. My bookkeeper wife and I are trying to make a plan for our eventual retirement."

From **David Handler**: Another year - more travels to Southwest, this time from Miami in February for a fast weekend in Santa Fe and Albuquerque, then back to Fla. For summers, Dave continues to enjoy the "Peacock East" group, which has been assembling in the east end of Long Island. There you'll find **Lois Marino, Enid Roth, Gene and Debbie Waldstein**, and ➡



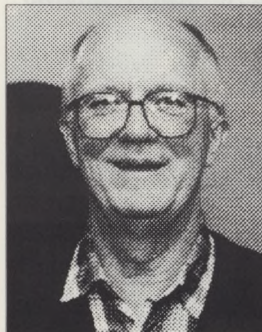
Buddy Sadel



Fred Facey



Melba Thomas



Bob Van Ry



Joe Coggins

they hope to welcome Cory and Lollie Leible to their ranks.

Dottie and Bud Shadel: Last July they celebrated their 50th anniversary by taking a cruise to Alaska -- visiting Ketchikan, Juneau, Sitka and Anchorage. In August, they were given a surprise 50th anniversary tea party by their children, Susan and Nancy. 30 people stopped by - What a total surprise!

Randy Stiles granddaughter Julia starred in the NBC Mini Series, *The Sixties*. Son, Josh, is a monthly guest on the WNBC Business Show and NBC Morning Business.

Gene Frisch @aol.com moved into his new house on 53 acres near Charlottesville, VA just before last Thanksgiving. The house has three sections -- one for Gene, another for his older sister from New Jersey and the center connection for both. Gene has been active in an all-volunteer theater as a member of the board, set constructor, designer of posters and programs and for the first three months this year, as co-producer of *Oklahoma*. All NBC-ers are encouraged to e-mail Gene and stop by if you're going to Monticello.

Fran De Gennaro noted that she was sitting next to **Roger Muir** (Howdy Producer) -, he keeps pinching me in the back, and my arms go up and down. Wonder why? The Howdy Doody Syndrome.

After 47 years, **Irene and Jack Keegan** have sold their house. No more mowing lawns, raking leaves etc. They've moved to a senior citizen complex only a few miles from the old house. Owning a home has its nice moments, but it is a pleasure doing some living and not having to be a slave to its

mandatory chores.

Enid Roth: Recently appointed to the Advisory Council of the American Theater Wing and is having a wonderful time, going to all the Broadway shows. Enid's attending a seminar at Oxford University to study Shakespeare in September. Then going to meet PN-er Pat Donegan in guess where? Dublin ov-Karse, followed by a lot of tootle-ing through Ireland.

Roger Muir and Barbara (Horn) Muir: "We've greatly enjoyed our visit to the NBC Peacock luncheon. We left the Network in 1960 and were amazed and delighted to see friends and co-workers from 39 years ago." Did Roger mention the possibility of a new Howdy appearing?

Charlie Davidson: Amateur Radio call: K2DPS. E-mail chdavidson3@aol.com — Retired January 1st this year after 38 years with NBC and WNBC. Charlie started with NBC field group, worked many years at the WNBC AM/FM and TV transmitters and ended up working with WNBC News doing local remotes with all the local and network mini cams and chopper-4 remotes. (*Charlie, you took good care of yourself. You look too young to retire. H*)

Jack Weir can't get out of Show Biz. He's working on organizing an equestrian World Championship at Gladstone, NJ in October of 2000. They divide time between their NJ farm and an apartment on 57th St. NYC. **Barbara Weir** has sold her animal talent agency and is now feeding just born animals in their New Jersey farm.

Helen Rachel Nicole just lost her dear husband last October. She's "keeping going." "What better place to be - than with so many of my former NBC friends."

Jean & Don Ellis enjoyed being at the Luncheon and re-living some of the "old stories." Don notes that it's funny how so many young people remember so far back in history. Don's very happy to hear all of those old stories, so they can re-tell them to the folks on Cape Cod.

Vince Vacca brought with him a lot of curly graying beard. Looked very distinguished. He's recently bought a condo in Washington DC, while still living full time on Nantucket. "Life is fine & having a great time renewing old NBC acquaintances and friends."

Roswell & Blanche Bigelow can't get enough of old TV friends. He flew to Cape Coral for 3 days to be with Florida retiree friends.

Ginny Seipt recently returned from a visit with **Paul and Jayne Sheinfeld**. Paul sends "HELLO" to all his NBC pals. Ginny is still freelancing at NBC and ABC 2-3 days a week. Is staying in NYC expanding her apartment so people can come visit.

Madalyn & Joe Gilligan — "still enjoying life in the



Bob Hickey, Susan Drury & Mayme Smith

hills of New Hampshire and keeping busy with gardening, bicycling and a little tennis. This will be our 10th year since leaving NBC and NY. Time flies when you're having fun!" *(Slower when you're not having any fun.)*

Jack Marshall sends us a bulletin. Declares 10 on the Richter scale. Long live Gloria Clyne! Audrey Marshall warns that she hopes that everyone is preparing for Y2K! "Even the 'experts' aren't sure what will happen" - but she notes "a word to the wise is sufficient." Put aside 2 weeks of food and water. Get the best information you can and be prepared! Got that folks? *(Audrey, you get the best penmanship award. I didn't have to squint and screw up my face trying to read your yellow page notes. H)*

Another Patricia Millman note: Great to see so many folks from the announcing staff and to have the opportunity to meet "new" ex-NBC-ers as well. Certainly brightens this rainy day.

Aavo Koiv regrets not making the La Mag Bash, for he was in Europe vacationing and business. One stop was to be in Estonia of course. The Koivs have bought their first house in Jupiter, Fla. and plan to leave their Mass. condo. Aavo would like to send greetings to all via PN, since he couldn't be here today.

Renee and Herb Oxman had a great time at the Florida reunion in Cape Coral in April. The all-inclusive price of \$200 per person per day included 2 nights, 3 days; breakfast & dinner, pre dinner cocktail party and golf and tennis and pool, all in a beautiful location. Unfortunately there were only 40 people including companions. Same place next year. P.S. Harry Katzman did a great job of organization.

Bill McConnell retired from TV, Net A&P on April fools day 1999, after 20 years at NBC, and 20 years at HBO. Now Bill is enjoying the new life! *(The best, Bill, and thanks for coming.)*

Noel Engler is learning golf. *(Learning is good, but playing is better.)* He's now retired and living in Sunny Florida and loves it! New E-mail address: nolde@home.com

Rose DeRenzis: "Happy to be with all my friends from NBC."

Dorothy Brodine: It's good to see the folks from "the good old days." Am retired but working on TV scripts *(fiction? couldn't quite make it out, Dorothy, H)* Wish me luck! (Rose De R. finished Dot's note with "Good Luck." *(Include us in that post note H.)*)

It didn't take long for Lillian Hickson to find out — she says, "As a recent retiree - Oct 1, 1998, I can honestly say retirement is wonderful. Time still flies, but with things you want to do." This is her first luncheon, but quickly adds it certainly won't be her last. "It was wonderful seeing so many familiar faces and actually remembering their names! Looking forward to next year."

Marge McGlynn still enjoys seeing old friends. She's having fun travelling. Was in the Canary Islands in January, and would you believe - it snowed! First time in 40 years - Marge went to Costa del Sol and on a side trip ran into Buddy Fleck's twin brother. *(I saw the pix - a spitting image.)* In Oct, she's off to a cruise around the Hawaiian Islands.

Fred Collins is still looking for work because he says he has no other talents, especially golf. "Have to keep working, so Margot and I can visit



Host & Hostess — Pete & Peg Peterson
The electronic age of still photography is upon us.
Bob Higgins took this and the pictures on the next page with a digital camera.



Jack Keegan, Gene Frisch, & Ethel & George Corrado

Last but not least, was great to schmooze with Paul and Debbie Miller and their Dad, Walter, who is celebrating his 50th year in Television. Also, Debbie won a Daytime Emmy for best Director. (*Rosie O'Donnell, I think.*)

Welcome to Judy Murray after a long absence from NYC .

Well the fat lady is about to sing, so keep those e-mail and post cards coming; otherwise you'll have to read the rest of my life stories. Bless you all.

Heino.

friends in foreign places.

Saw Gene Cesa, scenic designer extraordinaire, looking great, obviously enjoying doing what he wants with his time.

Pietro Fatovich was in good humor as always, but he has to take lessons blowing a tuba before he can imitate my "Man The Gear" trumpet call. (*The use of the trumpet blast was of necessity on remotes, Political Conventions and places where I couldn't yell loud enough to muster the crew. I gave a toot and they all knew I needed them at the truck or control room. By the way, it's a B flat note.*)

Dick Dudley writes this classified ad:

If anyone would like a used spine with cracked bone, I can sell you one at a cheap price and throw in a few fractured bones.

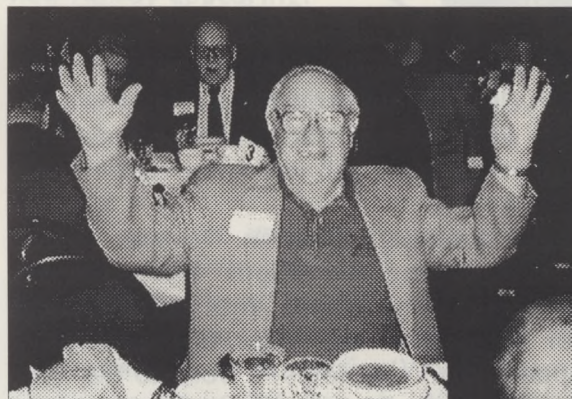
Elmer Gorry looks like he's enjoying what he wants to enjoy.

Dave Wilson still is a late night person. Most folk get up at 7 am or so, but Davey I think tries for noon. Different folks with different strokes? Dave, Van RY, Gene Martin and I have been getting together at the Pancake House in Parsippany, with sometimes Jenny or Roberta W. popping in for dessert.

As usual it was nice to see Jim Sunder. He and Florence slowed down their foreign jaunts.

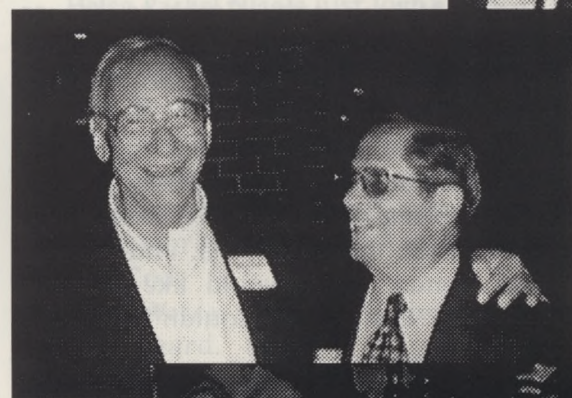
Bumped into two old friends as I tried to get into the luncheon room I said, - "RWD I want you to meet RD" — Bob Davis to Roberta Wilson.

Irving Messing marks this year as his EIGHTIETH. Still looking great, always full of energy. Dolly didn't come, probably staying home preparing all those healthy meals to keep Irv young. Happy Birthday OI-VING! Irv was a major lighting person in many road shows - i.e.: Como, Grand Old Opry Country Western Awards and many others.



Hank
Huestis

Digital
photographer
Bob Higgins



Bill
Rose
&
Dave
Handler



Lillian
Russo
&
Kay
Diggins

TV from The Fifties

By Heino Ripp

The Producer of these first Class Dramas was a young Fred Coe.

I know that one reason we all get together is to re-live our "Golden" days. I ran across some pictures of TV in the 50's. The Philco Playhouse was a masterful "Play every week" program. Know who wrote the Requiem script? Rod Sterling, for which he got an Emmy, one of his 6, I believe.



Here from "Requiem for a Heavyweight"- starring L. to R: Keenan Wynn, Jack Palance and Ed Wynn. (Kim Hunter also starred.)

The Philco Playhouse was done in studio 8G. Your Lucky Strike Hit Parade was in 8H, and Show of Shows came from the International theater at Columbus Circle, (Howdy Doody was in 3H.) After the Sunday night Hit Parade was over, Robert Montgomery Presents was set up in 8H for Monday, and The Chevrolet on Broadway was set up in 8G for Monday night airing.

ALL LIVE !



Fred Coe and British actress Cathleen Nesbit, who was the star in the Philco Playhouse presentation of "The Mother" in 1954.



This 1950 photo captures some more old timers. Seated at left Milt Meyers, Production Supervisor; going right, Set Designer, Otis Riggs, Stagehand/propman, Matty Kronyak, Director Delbert Mann and the Producer, Fred Coe. All Heavy Hitters !





Who can forget the Saturday nights with the Show of Shows cast?

L to R: Hostess Faye Emerson (wearing a daring low cut dress, making NBC's censor very nervous) Sid Caesar, Alicia Markova, (Prima Ballerina), Jimmy Starbuck, (Coreographer) and Jack Russel, (Singer).

(On the air one night, televising the Show of Shows from the Center Theater, across 49th Street, word came that Jack Russel's wife had passed away from a lingering illness. Jack was informed. In true Show-Biz fashion, Jack went on and sang his best performance. That song has come to my mind many times, often bringing on a tear or two. H.)



Not quite the 50's — From Chicago, Burr Tillstrom and Fran Allison did their first Kukla & Ollie Show on WBKB in 1947.

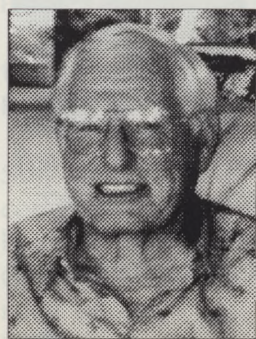
One cannot leave the 50's without saying



Pat Weaver with his Emmy.

something about this gentleman, Pat Weaver. Pat gave form to the TV medium that was in a void and had no form.

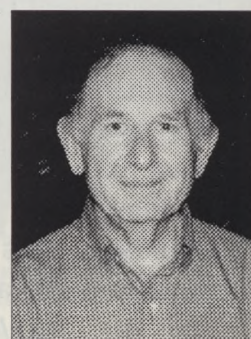
History now speaks for itself. Alas, then came the bankers and the ratings, so much for the Golden Past.



Red McKinnon

There are many joys to reminisce about from the Golden Days. This also brings sadness. The NYTimes writes lengthy obituaries about the more widely known TV personalities when their time has come. Not too many of the talented people who spent most of their lives behind the cameras, contributing to the greatness of TV, get any notice at all.

One such was the passing of my dear friend Fred McKinnon. On the following page, Bill Klages sent us his thoughts on Red — one of the behind the scenes giants. ➡



Bill Klages

A Personal Remembrance of Red McKinnon

By Bill Klages

I was a good friend of Red McKinnon throughout his entire career. His wonderful warm personality, great sense of humor and warmth were a joy. Our careers were intertwined for fifty years!

I vividly recall our first meeting. I was the videoman on Red's first major show — "The Ezio Pinza Show" from the Center Theatre. From that point on, we were closely associated. We both left NBC in 1970, joining Imero Fiorentino Associates, a New York entertainment lighting company. We both moved to LA to follow the industry in 1977. When I formed the Klages Group in 1983, Red was the first and most important member of that group of illustrious lighting designers.

The assortment of people who called Red their friend was staggering in number. No matter where I traveled in this country, there would always be someone who would suddenly appear and inquire, "How's Red?" Somehow this following always forgave Red when they realized that the multitude of his friends did not allow them the personal privilege of working for Red on every event he lighted... as he had implied.

Red was great fun. We always referred to him affectionately as the "Legend." He truly was. His span of achievements and experiences are a history of television lighting. Even when his hair matured to a more subtle shading, he was still "Red."

Red was first in many things: He was the first to light a commercial color special. When the RCA electronic color system was accepted and became the standard and the first shows were beginning to be produced at NBC, Red was there. Red was the lighting director at the Colonial Theatre that NBC had equipped to make those first color productions. It was there that he had another "first." Red "turned off the scoops." As humorous as this may seem today, the impact of this simple act changed color television lighting forever. Banks of scoops to supply "Base Light" were the technician's approach to lighting. Red's simple solution resulted in a method that stressed the quality of light, not volume. Television lighting was raised to a new level.

I am sure that Red was also the "first" to work around the clock, so common in those early days. His battlefield was NBC's Brooklyn Studio One. Red was there for all of the Max Liebman's Color Spectaculars. I recall that a little later, after the Brooklyn II studio was built, Red would be lighting in one studio and I would be in the other. Much to my chagrin, Red would always be "first" to capture dressing room 201 — it was the one with the chaise lounge and a shower.

As the legend grew and the "firsts" accumulated, there

became something known as a "Red Show." This would be your disaster event, a monster production with more than its share of overwhelming problems: impossible logistics, torrential rain, unrealistic staging, a screaming Producer and other Acts of God. This type of show was Red's area alone and followed him throughout his career. In fact, whenever I was (unhappily) placed into this kind of situation, the first thought was "What happened, why me? Where's Red?"

Another first, perhaps not as important as some of his others, was that he discovered that the stomach pains that seemed to be experienced by all lighting designers when confronted with insurmountable lighting situations could be calmed with scotch... but only when mixed with milk. He was also the first person that I knew who knew the verse as well as the refrain of "Heart of My Heart." This fact was reinforced on many occasions... with a little help from the milk/scotch therapy.

We worked together on many projects. Miss America, Junior Miss, the Olympic Closing Ceremonies in LA, numerous lighting seminars. In particular, I remember a Dolly Parton Christmas Special, taped, as is the case with most Christmas specials, in 90-degree weather. On that particular show, the lighting department, with 4 fully staffed lighting teams, was behind a day after the first hour of the first day. Red's unit was first up to shoot a group of Dolly's adorable nieces and nephews discovered in nearly every house in Sevier County, Tennessee. The segment was to be shot in a barn. Red (again) saved the day, or at least his luck did. Hidden in the hay were three hornet nests which, of course, were violated as the kids took their places. Waiting for this hysterical mob of kids to calm down got us back on schedule. This was the show that the Santa Claus Red was to light had to be removed just prior to his segment and a new Santa substituted. It was discovered that the original Santa had served time as a child molester.

Not only was Red the first to make the Statue of Liberty disappear on live Television (with help from David Copperfield), but he was the first, during the "Liberty Weekend" celebration, to light the Statue of Liberty, all three hundred feet of her, to an intensity of 100 foot-candles in all directions, not only in white light, but in three colors. There is hardly a location in this country, from the Statue of Liberty to Alcatraz and all points in between, that the "Legend" did not light for a TV broadcast.

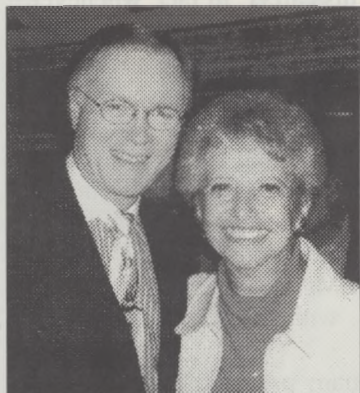
He lighted many national political conventions. The first that I recall was the Republican Convention in Chicago in 1952. However, during the set-up for the Republican Convention in Houston in 1992 (forty years later), Red established another first by focusing 1800 instruments in just under 20 hours. I will admit that I was helping, but it makes a better story if we forget that there were two of us focusing.

Red's good nature, particularly under pressure, was always evident (Well, most of the time). I was discussing Red last evening with a mutual friend and an alumnus of early TV, Marv Gelman, who put it wonderfully: "I can see him smiling and laughing. He was such a good guy".

And, that's how I see my long-time friend also. Red, you are "first" in our hearts, always. □

Chummy Newshounds Swamp Reunion

By Dan Grabel



*Chuck Scarborough
& Enid Roth.*



Bernie Gavzer & Alice Bell.



Tony Priesendorf.



Enid Roth Fred Harman, Carol Wendt, Jay Miller.

Producers Gerry Solomon and Patricia Lynch, now both working at PBS, were musing about the "old days" at WNBC News and Gerry said it would be nice if a few cronies could get together to mark the 25th anniversary of "News 4 New York." Pat said she'd make a few calls and they could collect at her East 66th Street apartment. Then the floodgates burst open!

Acceptances swamped the party organizers and the intimate soiree was switched to Le Verande West on 47th street where 95 sent in checks and 85 guests showed up Monday night, May 3rd! It was wall-to-wall celebrants from 6:30 on and when we left 3 hours later more than half the party-goers were still regaling each other with reminiscences. Put 'em all together and you have a best seller.

How do you organize such a successful blowout? The same way you get to Carnegie Hall. You work....you work the phones, and then the idea becomes contagious. Pat Lynch is a dynamic producer, so the success was pre-ordained.

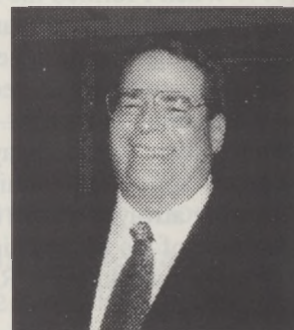
As each old crony arrived, smiles broke out and it looked like, maybe, hugs were going out of style the following day, so they had to be used up this night.

Solomon told of some of the recruiting efforts. They reached producer Gordon Thomas at Antibes on the French Riviera. Sorry, he couldn't give up that ambiance for the reunion. Verne Hixson? Tied up at his vineyards in Oregon. "It's the frost season, got to be out there to hose down the grapes."

Lynch reached cameraman Wing Lee. He was in Kosovo and moving on to Macedonia. Soundman Dick Sozio was in a similar venue. Bill Morris was on a domestic shoot. Carl Moore in hospital. Then Pat phoned Art Bonnar's home, not knowing if he was alive, so she asked his spouse, sheepishly, "Is Art still with us?" The reply, "Well, if you mean is he dead or alive, he's on the couch



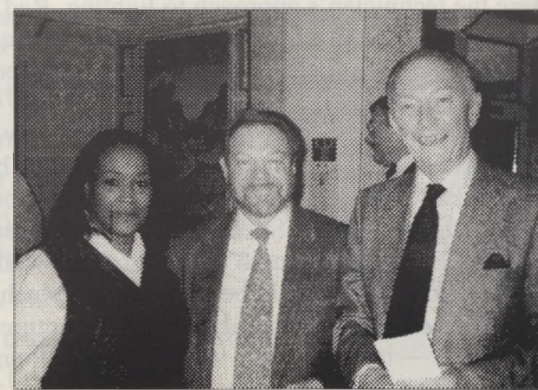
Royce Rowe.



Bob Garner.



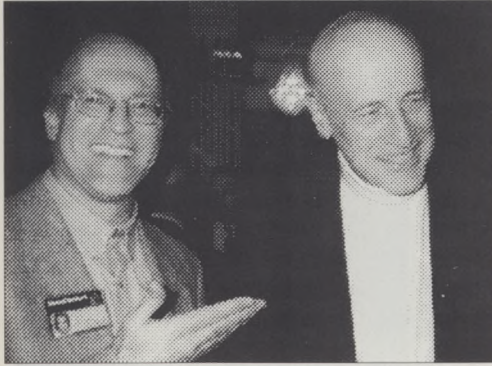
*The ever gallant Chauncey Howell
& Mary Ann Martin.*



Sheila Dozier, Gerry Solomon & Dick Wald.



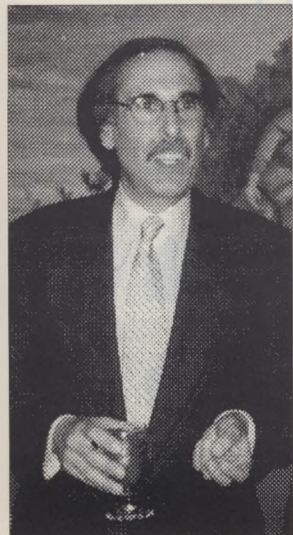
Dick Wald, Pia Lindstrom & Bernie Gavzer.



Tom Ginnocchio & Henrik Krogius.



Shelly Hoffman, Earl Eubell, Norm Fein.



Sid Friedman.

in the living room. But we'll be in India on May 3rd."

Solomon, who was the one-time executive producer of the show, noted with sadness that some of their colleagues had passed on, including Eric Denby, Carl Stokes, Phil Barnow, Ken Alvord, Betty Furness and Benita Furey.

Then, Solomon, speaking like the biblical personality of the same name, summed up the "News 4" experience, "The work leading up to it...doing it...and watching it, was the highlight of my professional life."

Dick Wald, then an NBC vice president, and now with the same title at ABC, recalled how it all began in L.A. in 1968 when Bob Howard was the GM at the KNBC. With old movies running from 4 to 6 pm, his ratings had plummeted, so he created a two hour news operation as a last ditch effort to save the station, and his own job. Jess Marlow and Tom Brokaw anchored and Bob Mullholland produced.

Wald said "The first hour, 3 twenty-minute segments, was without content. The second hour was without sense. But it was so cheap to produce that it made money!"

At that time WNBC New York was presenting "The News with Sandor Vanocur," a one hour show which Neilsen rated as "NMA" — no measurable audience!! Art Watson, President of WNBC came to network news prexy Reuven Frank and asked "What can we do?" Wald



Gerry Solomon addresses crowd.



*Barbara
Rosenthal Haines.*



*Patricia Lynch &
restaurant mgr Adrian Luatico.*



*Jody Gromberg, Pat Lang,
Marilyn Jacobs Furey.*



Paul Friedman.



Stu Rosenberg, Chuck Zanolunghi, Jerry Yarus.

suggested... "If one hour is such a bomb, try a two hour show!!" It worked!!

Earl Eubell, a former local news director, recalled the second blackout in New York in the 1970s and staff dedication to the job. The studio was dark, but News 4 managed to spread a little light for cameras in the news room and Chuck Scarborough and Frank Field stayed on the air for hours. Staffers who had departed before the blackout voluntarily returned to work and kept the station alive with reports.

Every segment of the news operation was represented at the party — the reporters and anchors still looking well: Pia Lindstrom, Mary Alice Williams, Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky — who is seeking the Pennsylvania Democrat senatorial nomination for the year 2000 — and the men: Chuck, Felipe Luciano, who may seek a Brooklyn congressional seat, Bob Jamisen, Frank Field, Bob Teague, Chauncey Howell and Tony Guida. And the writer producers: Bernie Gavzer, Barbara Rosenthal, Carole Wendt, Jack Freeman, and B.S. Brown. And there were many others.

There too, were film editors, camera crews, directors and those who had the title 'manager.' Twenty-five years gone by...it went so well, maybe they'll try for 50! □



Ken Bauer & Jack Freeman.



Merle Rubine, Lorrin Anderson, Bob Teague & wife.



Bernie Braun, Al Danoff, George Hupart.



Organizer Pat Lynch.

NEW MEMBERS PEACOCK NORTH

Steve Alper - Princeton Jct, NJ
Anthony Bianculli - Rocky Hill, NJ
Gene Cesa - Bronxville, NY
Joseph Coggins - Grafton, VT
Diane Corsi - Cocoa Beach, FL
Patricia Donley - Riverside, CT
Carla Engelman - New York, NY
Fred Facey - New York, NY
Nancy Fields - New York, NY
Melody Fleisher - Cos Cob, CT

Peter Gilmore - Manalapan, NJ
Brian Lang - Rahway, NJ
Judith Murray - Princeton Jct, NJ
Helen Nicole - Nutley, NJ
Rosemary Delito - Brooklyn, NY
Miguel Portillo - New Milford, NJ
John Rich - Cape Elizabeth, ME
Richard Stone - Seaford, NY
Peg Weber, North Salem, NY
Carol Wendt - New York, NY

Wendy Barrie with Staff and Crew 7 celebrate at Leon & Eddie's



Frank Merklein sent us this 1960 photo. He can't recall all the names but within the picture are: ? Jacobson, ? Quinn, Eddie ?, Marcel Thienpont and wife Helen May, Bill Stone and wife Barb, Merk with wife Joanie, By Wood, Tom Smiley, Carl Rohrer, Larry Lockwood and Bill Egan are among the standees. Seated are some unknowns with the Director ?, Wendy ("Be a good bunny") Barrie, Red Shultis and Bill Smyth.

(OK PNers, there are lots of other pictures hidden in drawers and albums—dig them out, send them in.)

Robins at the Shore

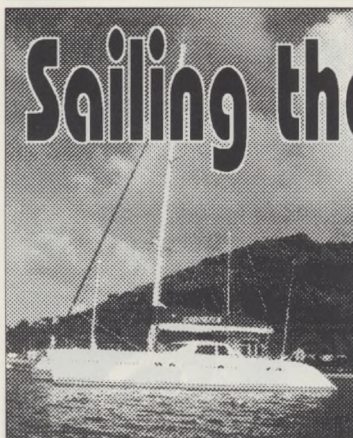
By "Muir" MacPherson
February 11, 1999

I saw them first in Spring,
Their red breasts bright in sunshine,
Two lovers on the wing;
Below, six crows in inky line
Watched my robins light upon the grass.
He watched too, the silent sentinel, as
She gathered bits and pieces for their nest
Where baby birds could safely rest.
There in the tall hemlock we could see
From our kitchen door;
And other birds let it be,
Unseen within the deep, dark core.
Six crows flew by, not knowing it was there
High among the branches in the soft summer air.
Later, upon the lawn, I saw
My robins and babies — all four;
Mother searching for food for her brood,
Father watching crows who might intrude.

A lovely summer of sunny skies and showers;
Pink impatiens, purple pansies, and geraniums,
And always robins at our door or green tree-towers
To play and search for kindly strewn bread crumbs.
Even in the mild September and the golds and reds of Fall,
The birds watched through October's splendor
And shivered through November's ball
When leaves danced wildly in yearly frolic to end or
Change the season's colors in readiness for ice and snow
Not the place for our red robins! I knew that they would go.
But always Spring returns with sweet renewal everywhere
Buds, birds, blossoms, signaling here and there,
And once again our crimson friends will fly back to you and
To their favorite port of call and Springtime by the sea.

Muriel MacPherson writes poetry for family and friends in
Barnegate, New Jersey.

Do we have any other poets and writers out there?



The catamaran "Endorfin."

Sailing the Virgin Islands *with the Luftigs*

Standing on the beach behind a small restaurant on the island of Anegada, in the British Virgin Islands, we looked up at a moonless, cloudless sky and saw the most incredible display of stars we had ever seen. The Big Dipper and Little Dipper

were surrounded by thousands of brilliant star-islands blinked at us in breath-taking profusion. The sky was black. The stars were tiny diamonds extending to the horizon. It was like being in a living reality planetarium.

It was just one of the highlights of our trip to the BVI's. Sandy and I flew from Newark to San Juan and from there to the island of Tortola. Sandy's daughter, Jill, and her friend Doug, met us at the airport, just a minute's walk from the water. Marina Cay, where our boat was anchored, was filled with dozens of beautiful sailboats and launches. It looked like a painting in motion. Doug artfully steered his dinghy through the water traffic and brought us to "Endorfin" their catamaran. It is a sleek looking private boat; fifty-five feet long, thirty feet wide, with four cabins. Each cabin has a queen-sized bed, in-suite shower, ample storage and is air-conditioned. We were the only guests.

Just a little bit of history before we continue. Columbus discovered the Virgin Islands in 1493 in his second voyage to the Americas. The Carib Indians lived there at that time and fought with Columbus' crew at Sugar Bay on St. Croix. It wasn't until the middle 1500's that Emperor Charles V of Spain ordered the soldiers to kill the Indians and take the islands. In the 1600's the British and the Danes began settlements. In 1916, Denmark and the United States signed a treaty transferring control of the Virgin Islands to the United States. The British Virgin Islands are separated from the U.S. Virgin Islands by a channel called the Narrows. The BVI's consist of 32 small islands covering 59 square miles and have a population of about 8,000. Road Town is the capital and only urban area.

Sandy's daughter Jill is a graduate of Brown University. She had a great job as a director at the computer corporation giant Amdahl in California before she decided to give it all up and enjoy her hobby of sailing. She then spent several weeks at a cooking school learning that art. Her boyfriend Doug has an engineering degree and is a licensed sailing captain of vessels up to 100 tons. The catamaran is about 30 tons. After serving as crew aboard a

charter vessel for about two years, they met a couple who hired them to find, buy and rent a private boat. This is the Endorfin.

Once aboard, we had a drink, then hauled up the motorized anchor, and we sailed to Leverick Bay in Virgin Gorda. Gorda was originally and irreverently called the "Fat Virgin" by Columbus because of its resemblance from the sea to a fat woman lying on her back. It is about ten miles long with high peaks at the North and Central areas and was once the capital of the BVI's.

The weather (for our entire trip) was wonderfully warm, temperate and without humidity. The average temperature was about 80 degrees Fahrenheit. That evening we took the dinghy ashore. The settlement has a small supermarket, some shops, and a delightful terraced restaurant called Pusser's. That night we had a most enjoyable fish dinner in their Victorian styled dining room.

It is very difficult to get current newspapers on the islands. Television reception, as we are used to, is almost nonexistent. But, in a small shop opposite the restaurant we were surprised to discover a little cyberstation where, for a small fee, you can log onto America On Line. Then you can get your e-mail and stock quotes. Fifteen minutes cost four dollars. It became our civilization fix. Habits die hard, don't they?

The water is heaven blue and dollar green. The bay is patch-worked by various depths and different colored water. You marvel at the intensity of the sea colors. Boat sails dot the water like endless towels waving in the breeze. Everyone waves and smiles, hoists drinks and the troubles of the world seem like they are — thousands of miles away. After a few days you accept this fantasyland and relax and enjoy.

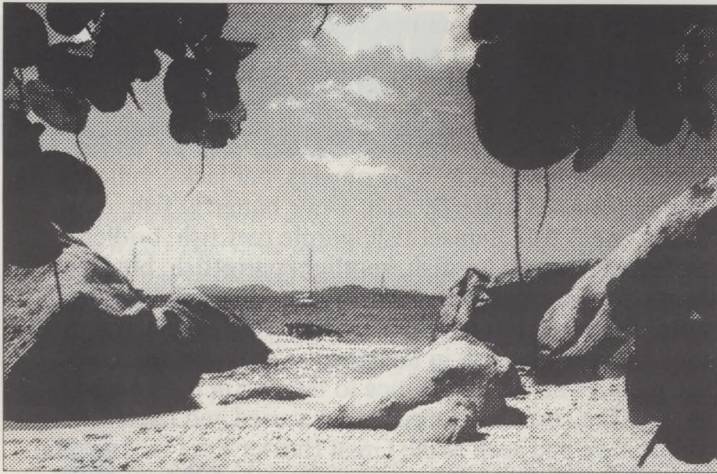
The next day, Doug placed a phone call from the boat and shortly an open-air taxi was waiting for us. As we drove across the island, to the exclusive Little Dix resort, the views were picture postcards. Little Dix was built by the Rockefellers. The rates in April are about \$400 to \$600 a night — without meals. The meal plan is \$100 a day per person. The rooms are large and beautifully furnished. The

grounds are lush and well manicured. We had to take the taxi to the resort because Little Dix does not allow boats to anchor in its bay. Sandy had called a friend at the resort for lunch reservations. We had a delightful buffet. We also picked up a NY Times fax news report available to guests at the hotel. My need for news still had to be fed.

After lunch, our taxi picked us up again. The next stop on our itinerary was a place called The Baths. This is a must-see when



The "Endorfin" riding at anchor.



The Baths.

visiting Virgin Gorda. It is located on the southwest tip of the island. The Baths are a most unusual formation of large granite boulders. Large pools of water are created where the sea washes in between the rocks. Shades of light play on the water creating unusual dramatic effects. You have to climb, scramble and squeeze between the rocks to reach a white, sandy beach where you can swim and snorkel. Ladders and ropes have been put in place since the last time we were there and it is easier to get to the beach — but not that easy. Doug knew a way that avoided crawling around the rocks. On this particular day, the surf was a little rough so we just relaxed, took some pictures and headed back.

Back where we started, we enjoyed some drinks and cooled off in a large pool until the driver picked us up again to return us to the harbor. The price for the all-day taxi service — ten dollars a head — forty bucks.

The gentle waters rocked us to sleep. We sleep late as the sun sneaked through the portholes. Sitting on deck, known as the cockpit, we enjoy a late breakfast and that view. Oh, that view! Low, green mountains, blue green water, azure skies flecked with white breeze-motored clouds.

Then we sailed east to Peter Island. The resort on this island had been devastated by Hurricane George. For the last two years the owners have been working around the clock



Peter Island Resort from the Endorfin.

and now it is completely refurbished. The general manager, Wayne, who had been alerted by Sandy that we would be stopping by, kindly gave us a guided tour of the resort. The afternoon was spent swimming in their pool. This is one of the few places where you can get that day's newspapers flown in from San Juan. I couldn't resist buying the NY Times and the Wall Street Journal. I was relaxed, but with the newspapers, I was happy. While Sandy, Jill and Doug could manage without news, I needed to know what was happening in the world. There weren't too many changes. They were still bombing in Kosovo. The stock market was on its usual roller-coaster ride. Maybe, I deluded myself; I wouldn't buy the next newspaper.

Morning smiled at us once again with sunshine and blue skies. After a pleasant breakfast, our course was set for the island of Anegada. Anegada is a secluded and friendly coral island with a population of approximately 180. The highest point on the island is only 28 feet above sea level. It is eleven miles long. It has beautiful beaches and hundreds of fascinating shipwrecks and reefs. People who enjoy snorkeling and scuba diving consider the island a paradise. The sailing time to Anegada was about two hours. We anchored in the harbor. Mooring at most of the bays in the islands is about twenty dollars for the night. Some resorts charge more depending on the size of your boat. Before we went ashore, Doug made a telephone call to the Pomato Point Restaurant advising them that we wanted some lobster dinners that evening. Renting a beat up jeep, we drove across the island to an area known as "Flash of Beauty." Indeed it was. The beach was long and the white sand was clean and safe. There was a small restaurant there and if you used the chairs and umbrellas set up on the beach, you were expected to buy something from them. A local beer was delightful. The swimming was great and Doug found a beautiful shell while snorkeling. He showed us the inhabitant inside and then returned the shell to its natural surroundings.

On our way back to the Endorfin, Doug showed us some lobster traps off the pier and sure enough, there was the evening's dinner. After showering, we returned to the island and motored to the restaurant. If you don't rent a car they will come and pick you up at the pier. The restaurant was lovely. The ambiance was as delightful



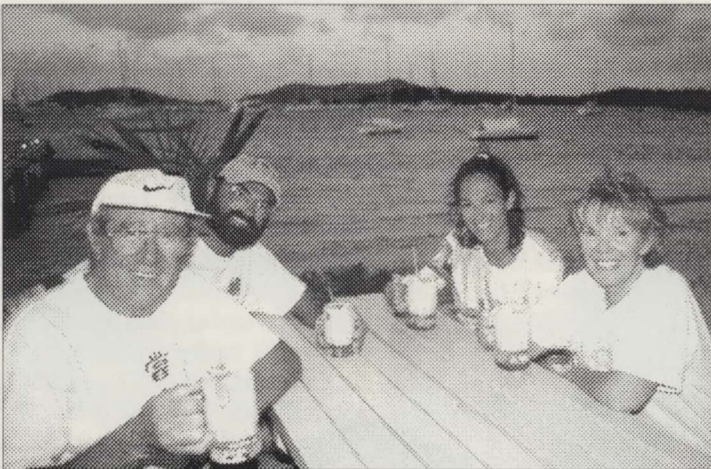
The beach at Peter Island.



*Monkey Point on Guana Island.
The waters here provided fabulous snorkeling.*



Sailboats at anchor in Marina Cay, Tortola.



Don, Doug, Sandy's daughter Jill and Sandy at the Bushwacker.

as the wine. In the rear of the restaurant, Wally, the owner, was barbecuing the catch of the day. We enjoyed a wonderful dinner. Then, just before we left, we went to the beach behind the restaurant and marveled at the star-filled sky. It was an awe inspiring, standing applause worthy ending to another incredible day.

Monkey Point at Guana Island is part of the National Park System. They say that the island got its name because

there is a rock jutting out that resembles an iguana. Whatever you call it, it was the site of some of the most fantastic snorkeling I have ever seen. A partial list of fish we spotted includes redfin needle fish, trumpet fish, small silversides, reef squirrel fish, fancy basslets, red hind grouper, horse eye jack, blue runners, bar jacks, yellow tail snapper, banded butterfly fish, 4-eye butterfly fish, rock beauty angel fish, damsel fish, purple reef fish, bridles gobies, blueheads, hogfish, spotlight parrotfish, blue tang, doctor fish, spotted trunk fish, juvenile hawksbill turtle and more. When we returned to the boat, we looked through a book showing the fish in the area to verify our sightings. The pictures hardly did justice to the fish in their natural setting. The coral was larger, more varied and colorful than the ones we had seen at the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. The fish prettier than the specimens we had seen in Bora Bora. It was an underwater aquarium beyond belief. Later, Doug told us that there had been a barracuda beneath the boat but he said that they never bother human divers. I was glad he told us after we had returned on board.

Have you ever seen a pelican dive into the water for food? Well, there must have been a hundred of them at Cane Garden Bay, one of the more beautiful (are we being redundant?) anchorages in the BVI's. While we had our breakfast, we watched the pelicans soar through the air, hover, and then dive at a ninety degree angle into the water. They would scoop up a beak full of fish, tilt their heads down to release the water, then tilt their heads back to enjoy their catch. Every time they hit the water, we exclaimed "Yessssss!" We sounded like Marv Albert on instant replay. Small swallows joined in after the pelicans landed, picking up little fish that were stunned by the impact. You couldn't keep your eyes off this perpetual motion feeding. The tiny fish (there were millions of them) were between a rock and a hard place. If they swam at a deeper level, they would be prey for larger fish. And, when they approached the surface, they were fair game for the pelicans.

That afternoon, we set sail for Marina Cay so we could be close to the airport and an early departure. In the evening we went ashore to have some Bushwacker drinks and dinner at a local beachside restaurant. It was a great ending to a great vacation.

We spent ten days sailing from island to island, sitting in the different bays enjoying the incredible peace and quiet of God's scenery. We moved from place to place when we wanted, stayed as long as we wanted. This has been the life that Jill and Doug have enjoyed for the past few years. It's the kind of thing you do when you have a great deal of money and retire. I asked Doug, "What will you do when you retire?" He shrugged and laughed. "I'm doing it now," he said, "Life is good." I couldn't argue with that.

We're home and once again, I have my daily fix of civilization with television, newspapers and stock market reports. Normally I end my little tour report with "it was good to get away and great to get home." This time, however, I'm not that sure. □

*Don, ex-NBC director writer producer and Sandy
live in North Caldwell, New Jersey.*

NEWSREEL DAYS

By Roy Neal

(Editor's note: NBC send Roy Neal west in the 1940s to create its West Coast news operation. He not only created it but also became one of the best-known TV reporters and NBC's main correspondent on the space beat. After four decades Roy and his family retired to North Carolina. The following story is a condensation from a book of memories he is working on. Dan Grabel, Managing Editor)

In the early 50s, when NBC was establishing itself in television news, John West, the head of NBC in Hollywood, invited us to cover the dedication of the latest RCA technical achievement. It was a million-watt radio transmitter to be used to communicate with Navy ships at sea, and even submarines beneath the sea. One million watts — the biggest clear channel public broadcast stations then used a maximum of 50,000 watts, the same as today.

The operation was located in Seattle and its long wire antenna was so long they strung it from one mountaintop to another! General Sarnoff would dedicate it using a Morse code signal to turn it on.

Obviously, we'd cover the story. I picked up our cameraman, Joe Rucker, in San Francisco — he literally was our San Francisco bureau. Rucker was the dean of West Coast cameraman, and had been shooting since the days of hand-cranked cameras.

In Seattle, there was a convoy of cars with Sarnoff, in a long, black limousine, leading RCA executives, Navy

officers, press and police.

We got to the site and I had never seen such huge transmitting tubes, easily 6 feet tall, two feet wide. When fired up, they looked like huge floodlights.

The formal ceremonies began and Joe Rucker's converted Auricon 16mm camera with magnetic stripe sound jammed! Joe changed magazines. Still it wouldn't work. Then Rucker reached into his bag, pulled out a small hand-wound camera and we got the pictures.

Sarnoff, who came to fame as the radio operator who handled communications at the John Wanamaker studio in New York during the Titanic disaster, pounded a large, straight key — dit dit dit dah.... a "V" ...the time-honored code letter. Those tubes glowed red...pulsing...and a tone echoed through the building. Sarnoff continued in code...."test, test from RCA."

The crowd applauded, Rucker kept on cranking and filming. The event over, we dashed to Seattle and affiliate KOMO to develop and edit the film. There was some audio, only a warble, but it wasn't essential, and Sarnoff had only spoken a few words.

I wrote a script and we found some clear tone to use as the background audio (The only time I can remember breaking the newsman's code and re-creating sound on a story. But we didn't really *fake* it, we *enhanced* it.) It saved the day.

We fed the story east to Camel News Caravan and three hours later, on the repeat show, General Sarnoff and John West watched the transmission in Seattle. We were in the room and had briefed them on our problem.

Ah, the memories of those newsreel days. Lost in the limbo of videotape, they did present a challenge. □

(Editor's note: Joe Mehan was a writer-producer in News and from time to time enjoyed "cream" assignments. One never forgets 'em. This memory came in answer to our on-going request for anecdotes involving General Sarnoff and we still want more for up coming issues of PN. Dan Grabel.)

LUNCH ON THE GENERAL

By Joseph A. Mehan

I had done NBC's one-hour obituary on John F. Kennedy, which General Sarnoff gave to Jackie Kennedy in a golden case, and when the General himself was ailing I was assigned to prepare the on-the-air obit as NBC's salute to its founder. Billy Freeda was my film editor on Kennedy and Al Danuff handled the Sarnoff assignment.

It was one of my most pleasant interludes at NBC. We worked entirely on our own, and at our own pace. Occasionally, some one would ask, "How's it going?" to which I would reply, "Fine." And that was the end of that.

I was chauffeured regularly down to the Sarnoff Labs at

RCA in Princeton to go through the film vaults there. It was fascinating: the General with Marconi in early talking films, the General at the

opening of Radio City Music Hall, the General with Lindbergh, Will Rogers, all the major figures of our time.

During his long illness, Sarnoff's food was catered by the 21 Club, his favorite hangout. As part of my research, I ate there regularly with the Krindlers — the family that owned 21 in the halcyon days, and they provided me with anecdotes.

The assignment lasted many months and finally I needed a narrator. I chose Ed Newman, an esteemed correspondent, and one of my personal friends. He had the right degree of gravity, stature and intellect.

When David Sarnoff finally died, I was no longer at NBC. But I did see the 20-minute obit on Channel 4 and could see what I had done many years earlier. It wasn't bad.



Jack Durkin, Engineering. Jack started his career at NBC as a microwave technician in the TV Field Department. He also worked as a cameraman both in the field and studio where he worked on many of the top shows. He closed out his career as a studio videoman. In retirement he continued using his talents to produce videos for local civic groups. Jack had suffered several debilitating strokes in the last few years. He was 73. (See page 32.)



Jack Durkin

Walter Scott, net president. Scott, the president and CEO of the network in the 1960s, died in California at age 84 in March. He made the decision in 1965 to put the net's entire lineup in color. The move vaulted NBC into a ratings tie with CBS, then the leading network.

William (Bill) H. Schwarz, former Program Manager, WNBC Radio, passed away at New York's St. Luke's Hospital in January following surgery intended to correct circulatory problems. He was 75. (See page 33.)

William J. Wenzel (Wendell), Announcer, 75, died in April of complications from cancer at Boca Raton, Florida. He divided his time between New Rochelle and Delray Beach, Florida. A native New Yorker, Bill studied announcing and English at Fordham University and graduated with a degree in speech.

He began his radio career in the late 1940s and joined the DuMont television network in early 1950 following Army service. At DuMont he met Ernie Kovacs and followed him to NBC. Bill stayed with NBC for 37 years. He worked with most of the giants in comedy, including Jack Parr, Jack Benny, Bob Hope, and Allen King. At WABD he hosted "Mr. Adventure" and at NBC "TicTac-Doe," among others. He was the winner of two Emmy Awards.

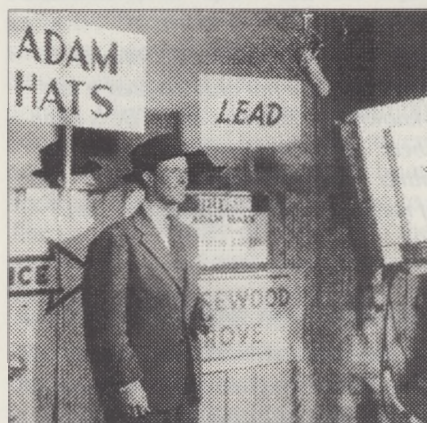
In 1980 he was Letterman's announcer for Letterman's one season morning show. Bill again teamed up with David's "Late Night with David Letterman" in 1982 and followed Letterman to CBS in 1993. He retired in 1995. "The fun had kind of diminished," he said in explaining his departure.

In retirement he continued performing in radio and television commercials along with charity work almost to the end. His wife Anne of 52 years, two sons, three daughters and 14 grandchildren survive him.



Bill Wendell

Ray Forrest, TV pioneer. NBC's Ray Forrest, TV's first celebrity, earned the title "The Television Man" years before Milton Berle was tagged with a similar name because of his work on Texaco Star Theater. Forrest, who died at age 83 in



Ray Forrest and the first live commercial for Adam hats.

The box on the right is the camera.

mid-March, was NBC's first TV announcer, a job he got by default. NBC's well-paid radio announcers back in 1939 had no interest in the experimental station W2XBS and Forrest, 23, as a junior member of the staff, got the assignment — probably because there were no commercial fees.

He and his family, the Feuersteins, had emigrated from Germany in 1923. Forrest, a better name for an announcer, started in the NBC mailroom when he was age 20.

Fewer than one thousand people owned receivers before World War II and when they turned on NBC they would see Forrest as announcer, host, interviewer, and after newsman Lowell Thomas gave up his simulcast, Forrest became newsreader, too.

Although Forrest wore a tuxedo at work, as all announcers did in that day, he had a natural folksiness, and TV historian Jeff Kisseloff has said, "He understood he was coming into people's living rooms and presented himself as such." Forrest recalled, "Everything that was put on the air, I introduced." So, everything he did was a *first* and made history.

On July 1, 1941 he announced that the experimental station was becoming WNBT. Four days later he did the first live commercial, for Adam hats, and his fee turned out to be the hat he wore in the spot. The first commercial, on July first, was merely a shot of a ticking Bulova watch, without a voiceover.

He hosted and reported live from the 1940 Republican convention in Philadelphia when Wendell Wilkie was nominated for president (CBS broadcast it in color), live from LaGuardia Airport on opening day, and on December 7, 1941 he broke into a Sunday afternoon movie to announce that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor.

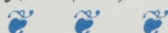
Forrest resumed his work at NBC-TV after his military service and from 1949 to 1960 he produced and hosted "Children's Theater." He objected to loading the show with Hollywood comedy shorts and instead used high quality science and nature films. NBC brass warned he would lose his audience, but within two weeks it dominated the 6:30 p.m. spot. Later, it was moved to Saturday morning and

expanded to 90 minutes.

Forrest turned his Ridgewood, New Jersey home's basement into a production studio and edited educational films, many of which he himself created.

He also covered wrestling, boxing, hockey, horse racing and movie premieres, and served as quizmaster and variety show host. In 1947 he announced one of the early cooking shows, "In the Kelvinator Kitchen," and then hosted "TV Screen Magazine."

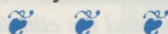
When his children's program went off the air in 1960, Forrest quit television and joined the family jewelry business in Paterson, NJ. He is survived by his wife Charlotte, and a son Ray, Jr. (DG)



Jane Crowley, NBC Censor. Ms. Crowley, who spent 40 years at NBC, nearly all of that time in the network's Standards & Practices Department, died in New York at age 73 in April. She gained a modicum of renown when Johnny Carson referred to her as "Priscilla Goodbody."

During his opening monologue some 30 years ago, Carson said, "I had a strange experience today. Our NBC censor, Priscilla Goodbody, asked 'Are you going to tell any of those lewd, filthy, or obscene jokes tonight?' I said, 'Certainly not,' and she asked, 'Do you want one?'"

Over the years Ms. Crowley put her gimlet eye on scripts for "Your Show of Shows," "Late Night with David Letterman," and "The Cosby Show." (DG)



Edward Wackernagel, Engineering, passed away April 21 in Missoula, Montana. He was 84. Ed retired from NBC in 1977 and moved to Beaumont, CA. About 2 years ago he moved to Missoula where his daughter is a professor at the University of Montana.

After service in the Navy as a PT boat radio operator, and before joining NBC in 1950, he worked for Northwest Airlines. Ed spent much of his varied NBC career in the Videotape Department. He was an avid amateur radio operator for over 61 years. His wife, Beth, daughter Betsy and a grandson survive him.



Thomas W. Lyman, Jr., Engineering, died in mid-March 19, of natural causes at age 83. He was a Stamford resident for 45 years. He was born in New York City and received his engineering degree from Columbia University. He was a film Technical Director when he retired in 1977 after 40 years with NBC.



Fred (Red) McKinnon, Engineering, died on April 21, in Los Angeles, after a series of heart attacks and a number of surgical procedures associated with these attacks. He was 73.



Red McKinnon.

Red was a NABET Lighting Director during NBC's Golden Age of live drama and the transition from black & white to color TV. He left NBC more than 25 years ago to pursue a lighting career with outside production companies.

Red was a talented engineer who was a great asset within the TV industry. He will be missed by all. (See page 21)



Joseph E. Zurcher, Engineering, 79, of West Paterson, NJ, died May 20. Joe retired in 1980 after 33 years with NBC, New York. He was a Navy veteran of World War II. Joe was a past master of Masonic Lodge 263, Little Falls, NJ, and a former volunteer firefighter in West Paterson.

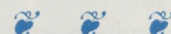


Robert Carr Doyle, 78, New York and Washington NBC-TV producer-director, died May 21 of pneumonia. He was instrumental in launching the "The Huntley-Brinkley Report," for which he won an Emmy.

His NBC career started in Washington in 1946 and continued in NY from 1948 to 1953 when he returned to Washington. He coached four presidents, Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Lyndon Baines Johnson and Richard M. Nixon, on the use of television.

He entered the Navy after graduating from Harvard in 1942, serving as a pilot in the Pacific and aboard destroyers in the Atlantic.

After leaving NBC he produced 28 nature specials for the National Geographic Society that won him Emmy and Peabody awards.



Mel Torme, jazz and pop singer. "The Velvet Fog" died in early June at age 73. He was co-writer of the Christmas classic "chestnuts roasting on an open fire."



William Goetz, Engineering, died in early June, just short of his 74th birthday, after a long illness. Bill was an outstanding cameraman in both studio and on remote events. After retirement in 1988 he continued working as a freelancer. Bill had been in failing health following heart by-pass surgery that brought on several strokes which left him partially paralyzed.



Bill Goetz

The members of Peacock North extend their heartfelt condolences and sympathy to our departed friends.

Memories of Jack Durkin

and early TV Years

by Frank Merklein

Jack and I kept in touch sporadically after I left NBC (to join the Television Bureau, the trade association for TV stations and the nets.) My work kept me moving around (19 countries) and for years I commuted to my home in Sarasota, Florida, from LA. I have agonized that we let so many years go by without more contacts.

In the summer of '95 I told them "I'm coming like it or not." That same week an octogenarian woman driver killed his son while he crossed a street in Daytona, FL. We kept that date and again in '96. He made it to the Florida Retiree Reunions in '88 and '89, but he began to slow down after that. In the mid-nineties I was often in Quakertown, PA and visited Jack and Beth at their home in nearby Palmerton, PA.

Hours were spent in his equipment room — until 4 or 5 in the morning. Beth said he was never happier since his illness began. We'd call Jim Sunder at all hours to settle "arguments." In '98 he asked me to delay coming due to his health and Beth was recovering from injuries suffered in an auto accident.

This past January he called me to sing Happy Birthday to himself, as I had not called him.

I was hired on March 5, 1948 along with Dan Zampino and Joe Waag. Jack came on the 8th. I never let him forget that. As Ed Wilbur (*TV Field Supervisor*) would say, "that man has senior-rority." Jack started on NBC's microwave link between NY and Washington — before the Telephone Company put in that service. Others on the link were Big Bill Kelly and Andy Switzer. I was at the NY end. Jack was somewhere in Pennsylvania, so we "knew" one another before he came in out of the cold.

When I was hired, we were given a tour of the NBC plant including the RCA roof microwave facilities. Danny always wore beautiful three-piece suits and wouldn't climb the ladder to the next roof level. I was assigned to studio but was often sent to do microwave since I held an FCC license. At the time there were just platforms at each corner of the building for the receivers. One cold day Andy Switzer and I dropped the antenna dish just before airtime for a "Village Barn" show. We recovered in time while Andy blew on his hands all the while cursing the wind. Finally the company spent a few bucks for the plastic domes. While I was doing rooftop duty I requested a transfer to TV Field.

Durk and I became fast friends, at work, at home, and even took vacations together with our families. He was a good cameraman and later one of NBC's best videomen, when color video was experimental, difficult and important.

We worked together on hundreds of field shows. I was in seventh heaven when I was assigned to the camera behind homeplate at the Polo Grounds — and they paid me \$48 bucks a week to do what I loved doing. Jack was not interested in

sports, but he followed directions well and never missed a beat. At a Yale football game I professed to Director Harry Coyle that I knew more than the coaches, but he had a "heart attack" when Jack asked him which guy was the quarterback and how come he always got the ball before anybody else.

In those early days only 8G and 3H were equipped for television. 3A & 3B, 6A & 6B and 8H used portable field gear and had to be "BUILT" and torn down for each show. (Not exactly portable, the air monitor weighed 87 pounds. Old Ed Wilbur made it "portable" by bolting a leather handle on top.)

One of the early hits was the "Dunninger and Paul Winchell Show." Paul would give the audience warm-up. Paul would explain the show and introduced the visible crew. "On



Studio 8H, 1948. Durk behind the camera, Merk in front with Paul Winchell and Jerry Mahoney.

camera three is Merk, on camera two is Durk and on camera one is ... pause... he would then point to Moose (Bob Daniels) and start laughing. The audience would howl and Moose would bury his head in the viewfinder. I swear he went red and smoke poured from his ears.

Durk was really an audiophile. When he was not yet a teenager he would sit in on big-band recordings at RCA Records. His dad was the only engineer the bandleaders wanted for their mastering. (*His father later joined ABC.*)

During a Tommy Dorsey session break the vocalist sat down next to Jack and asked Jack if he knew how to play stickball. He did and they went outside and played a pick up game with the neighborhood kids. This went on for a long time until Frank Sinatra came back for vocals.

Jack was hooked on audio.

Jack has a vast recorded music collection. I sent him some Glenn Miller recordings (with Glenn speaking awful German) made for broadcast during WW II to the Germans just days before Miller's plane crashed into the Channel. Jack was delighted with them. A few years ago we spoke of what to do with his unique collection. I told him of my discussions with an archivist at UCLA to preserve his collection. When things settle I will renew those discussions with Beth.

I shall miss him. □

Frank Merklein now lives in Key West.

Bill Schwarz Remembered

By
Patricia Millman

I was Bill Schwarz's secretary for five of the six years he was Program Manager for WNBC Radio. Bill served in the early 1960's under then Station Manager George Dietrich and his successor, George Skinner. It was the time of Ted Walworth, and Steve Labunski.

Programming was an all-music format (Jim Lowe, Jerry Marshall, Julius LaRosa — John Clarke and Harry Fleetwood spun records). Bill's second in command was "Colonel" Lee Jones, who headed up the FM station.

There were always "hopefuls" at Bill's office door:

Barbra Streisand, Ed Ames — and the mails were flooded with audition tapes for Bill's evaluation. Unlike many of today's executives, Bill always 'took' calls. Not long after Bill was hired, he accepted the mandate to turn the entire music programming schedule into an all-talk format, with telephone call-in shows, using a seven-second delay system.

He began to search the country and brought to New York radio audiences the talents of sports maven extraordinaire, Bill Mazer, (from Buffalo); the engaging and always stimulating Brad Crandall, (from CBC Canada); he wooed Long John Nebel to WNBC for a truly unique late night show; opera's dynamic Mimi Benzell talked; as did Marjorie and Tom Ewell. "Big" Wilson, the "hottest" morning man in Cleveland radio, brought his cheer and charm to morning drive time at Bill's behest. And Celeste Holm reported regularly from the United Nations.

Bill created feature time for garden specialist Ruth Alampi and the multi-talented Robert Alda, (whose young son Alan occasionally substituted at the microphone for his dad).

Radio personalities from Network's "Monitor," were frequently on the scene, since Bill's responsibility included scheduling these broadcasts locally — among others, Ed McMahon, Dr. Joyce Brothers and Henry Morgan.

Network staff announcers were at WNBC mikes doing station breaks and newscasts... and Bill called upon Fred

Collins and Wayne Howell to do an occasional show host substitution.

During a long and productive career of creative and innovative radio producing, directing and management, Bill was indeed one of the "movers and shakers" of the medium.

When Bill left WNBC, he established a successful independent career specializing in producing multi-media presentations — slide shows, audio dramas, seminars and meetings for major corporate sponsors.

His interests were limitless. He was a lifelong "fanatic" New York booster, and, as radio was a major love of his life, he was regularly called to participate in current events radio talk shows, announcing himself merely as "Bill."

He ran for office on the Liberal party ticket and remained active within the party, he supported the work of the ACLU, Alcoholics Anonymous, Alanon, the Hemlock Society and World Federalists. He was interested in Native American



Bill Schwarz, Program Manager; "Big Wilson;" Mimi Benzell; George Skinner, Station Manager; Edith Walton; Brad Crandall; Member of WNBC Radio sales staff, name not known.

religions and artifacts, the Rabbi Mark Tannenbaum Foundation; the Unitarian Church, hiking and camping, theater and art and computers. He was consistently supportive of family and friends and passionate about his grandchildren.

Bill was under contract for a coffee table book about the statues of New York's Central Park at the time of his death.

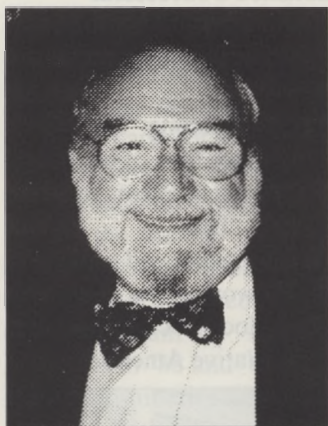
He was active in his East 90's neighborhood civic events and in his "spare time," he gardened.

Bill died this past January and is survived by two sons, three grandchildren, his companion, a sister and mother. He will be muchly missed by many, including this writer, Patricia Millman. □

When NBC was good!

By Arthur White

When I think back upon my life with NBC during tile 60's and 70's I realize how fortunate to have



Arthur White

I was a Unit Manager/Production Manager at the time working in the Washington, DC office of NBC News. My first assignment was working with "David Brinkley's Journal." It was the first year of the program and we were all struggling to figure out how to thread film into a television set. We laughed, cried, researched (without the internet) worked long hours, traveled all over the world leaving our families at home and finally, with determination, figured out how to do it. We produced the finest television programs at the time, allowing us to burst with pride. It won an Emmy the first year!

While we were immersed in our glory and hubris many of us lost our families to that pride. It became difficult to hold on to marriages with all the traveling and time away from home, so some of us succumbed to divorce. It may sound harsh, but if asked if I would do it all over again, I might even say yes. Of course, we never have that choice, but I remember how good it felt to be in the midst of news breaking events or meeting some television stars and feeling that certain sense of importance for a few moments. Andy Warhol understood that feeling quite well!

I continued my assignments in the News Division when I left Washington and returned to New York in 1972. Again

been working in a new industry open to fresh ideas with people who embraced fine thinking or just plain thinking. One felt a very significant part of the system where there was a natural accommodation by any member of a production team to contribute to a project. It seemed that the "team" was a reality and people pulled together for the benefit of informing or entertaining the public.

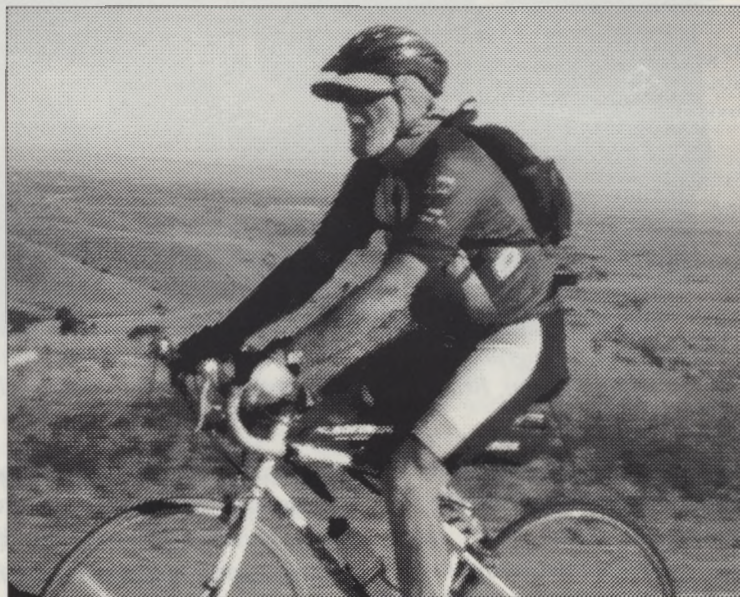
I was working on the newly formed magazine shows to try to compete with that new show, "60 Minutes." I think I worked with every one of those new shows which seem to last no more than a month before it was taken over by still another title with the same format. For some reason the News department could not get it together. We all worked very hard to try to make it work but alas the public was not impressed. Even though the shows didn't get the ratings, the team work continued. I never felt more of kindred spirit with my colleagues and friends. We all felt we were determined to make it work no matter what. The show may have failed in NBC's eyes, but our ties together were stronger than ever. Eventually NBC became tired of the magazine format and I worked on special projects like the Presidential conventions and Presidential funerals. Even though the assignments changed the comrade spirit lingered a little longer, until.....

Eventually, I left the News department in 1976 and became Director of Advertising Operations. Although it was an interesting job, the spirit was lost. Sure, my friends and colleagues were wonderful, but it was not the same. The teams were broken up and we worked in very small groups, sometimes alone.

It's a sad commentary when you realize that success is dependent on working together and the very nature of today's working structure is making people work alone and/or with computers which by its very nature has a very negative impact on relationships. I wonder if there is any relationship between the drop in television viewers with the loss of worker companionship and camaraderie. It may be a

sign of the times, but I am ever so thankful that I had the opportunity to work in television during what I think of as the "golden years."

I am now a partner in a videotape editing facility, Valhkn Film and Video, and I still have those wonderful memories. To help me further reminisce, I biked across the US from Seattle to Washington, DC last summer for the American Lung Association. It reminded me of my old adventurous days at NBC. Forty-eight days of thinking and reminiscing were



Peddling America, Seattle to Washington, DC.

glorious. The trip was a grand challenge and I was able to go to some of the locations I visited during my documentary years. It was quite a trip both ways. □

Arthur White and wife, Joan, live in New York City.



THE EAR BENDERS

By Dick Dudley

Shakespeare said: "*Parting is such sweet sorrow*," but I say getting together each year is just sweet. We have the joy of hugs and kisses from old friends. It refreshes the spirit and I offer thanks to those 18 engineers who started it all, 194 less people than we had at our May Peacock North luncheon.

Having "Lil yon" Hickson as Guest of Honor at the announcers table was a delight and with Vic Roby on my left and Fred Collins across from me, caused memories to flow like lava.

Recently while trying to clear out my files I found the notes I used when I roasted Jack Costello at his retirement party. I had him born in Bethlehem — PA in a Pullman car

named "Watergate." At his mother and father's wedding, Jack served as ringbearer. They had moved to an Irish neighborhood and changed their name to Costello after an Italian family they knew. They became very Irish. Jack's mother made soda bread and his father had a seasonal business selling shamrocks on St. Patrick's Day. At Christmas they filled Jack's stocking with toy potatoes.

When Jack joined NBC, he became the voice of the "Catholic Hour" which brought him fame and a plenary indulgence. He became known as the 13th Apostle, right after Judas Iscariot. When He went to mass at St. Patrick's people came from miles around just to see him genuflect.

If you care to know more about him, I refer you to his biography: "The Life of Jack Costello, KM, LLD, BA, ST, ARD." You'll find it with the remainders at Barnes & Noble.

I also roasted Gene Hamilton but I've lost my notes. I do remember having him convicted with a strip teaser named Norma Vincent Peel.

If I were to walk through the halls of NBC today, I would not recognize anyone. Gloria Clyne has retired after an eon and Pardo would probably be at the dentist. I wouldn't even recognize the halls!

So let's play trivia —

If you walked the halls years ago you would know all the numbered people on the left. See how many you can connect with their lettered description on the right.

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| 1 Frank Black | A VP in charge of greeting VIPs |
| 2 Sidney Stortz | B Musical Director and brother of Phil |
| 3 Pat Kelly | C President of NBC |
| 4 Ray Kelly | D H.V. Kaltenborn's secretary |
| 5 Pauline Fredrick | E Head of Sound Effects |
| 6 H. Leopold Spitalny | F Head of Announcers |
| 7 William Burke Miller | G Gofer for Toscanini |
| 8 Jolly Bill Steinke | H Music Director |
| 9 Al Walker | I Husband of Jane Ace |
| 10 Mischa Mischacoff | J The Willard Scott of that day |
| 11 Goodman Ace | K Concertmaster of the NBC Symphony |

A special note to Gene Hamilton — Take good care of yourself. Now that Ed Hurlihy has left us, you are the last of the Golden Voices.

Answers:

1-H; 2-C; 3-F; 4-E; 5-D; 6-B; 7-A; 8-J; 9-G; 10-K; 11-I

If you know who Herbert S. Schlosser was you might know how many Logos NBC has had. He was president of NBC.

There were 7 Logos



1926



1929



1954



1959



1975



1970



And, today — the most recognized LOGO throughout the world.

BRAIDS of GOLD and SILVER

By Bob Asman

It was a wonderfully romantic time in New York in the late 1940's. The city was vibrant with post-war prosperity. It was the era of Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia and city planner Robert Moses, when the Dodgers were still in Brooklyn and there were double-decker busses on Fifth Avenue. Tourists came to New York City and were dazzled by the sights — the Empire State Building, Park Avenue, Rockefeller Center and the Radio City Music Hall. And Radio City itself, home of NBC with its art-deco opulence, Arturo Toscanini and the NBC Symphony Orchestra in Studio 8H, the daily radio soap operas from that row of 3rd floor studios. And there were the guided tours which took the tourists "behind the scenes" of radio, allowed them, finally, to see the stars of those soap operas. And, at the very end of the one-hour tour, to get a glimpse of the exciting new technology that was television with a closed-circuit demonstration that allowed them to see themselves and their friends on the new medium.

It was a great time to be in New York and, if you were lucky enough to pass the rigid screening and were hired, a great time to be a guide or a page, a member of NBC's Guest Relations Department. It was an elite group, all proud to wear the uniform with the gold braids over the shoulder for the guides, silver for the pages. There was a time, in the late 30's and early 40's, I am told, when the guides and pages actually were drilled in military fashion on the roof of the Music Hall.

After World War II, most of the guides and pages were ex-GI's. Some were doing it after being discharged and before going to college, some had been through college and were looking for a career in broadcasting, but all were personable, good-looking, intelligent young people. They would not have passed the screening otherwise.

Peter Tintle, who was director of NBC's Guest Relations department when he retired in 1983 after 41 years in that department, refers to the hiring of guides and pages as "casting." "They wanted to select the most attractive and articulate young people." After all, they represented NBC to the public and founder David Sarnoff was determined that the NBC image was one of quality and good taste.

Tourists eager to see NBC would go to the ticket booth

in the small corridor that ran between 49th and 50th Streets to buy their tour tickets. They would then be invited to go up the Grand Staircase that led to the huge, high ceilinged mezzanine where they would be checked in by a guide seated at a small desk at the top of the staircase. He would make a count as the guests passed him, stamping a tour number on the back of their ticket and instruct them to be seated in the comfortable chairs arranged around the circular walls of the 'mez.' When the count reached 30, he would pick up a phone and call the dispatch desk on the other side of the mezzanine near the studio elevators and the guide "ready room." The guide working the dispatch desk would then call a guide from the ready room. He or she would then announce (on a PA system) "will tour number ---- please move to the elevators." They would be met there by their guide.



The Asmans, Bob & Nancy, in a 1998 photo.

The ready room was small (actually a large closet) so most of the guides on duty would be upstairs in the 2nd floor locker room. There were two locker rooms, one for male, the other for female guides and pages. A long, rectangular room, which for many years was the home of Mr. Ruthe, separated the locker rooms. Mr. Hans Ruthe was a man in his 60's, who retained a heavy German accent, wore a hearing aid

and was the wardrobe master; official title: Quartermaster, for guides and pages. He was the man who saw to it that all uniforms were cleaned and pressed, that fresh white shirts for the men and white "dickeys" for the women were available at all times. He had a kind of half door with a small shelf on top, which opened onto the two locker rooms and through which he would issue the clean uniforms.

Mr. Ruthe was not only old and deaf; he was also grouchy and authoritarian. He became the subject of torment and teasing from both guides and pages. The favorite trick was to come up to Mr. Ruthe's window and mouth silently a request for a new shirt. Mr. Ruthe would ask you to repeat the request, and once again the tormentor would simply mime the request. Mr. Ruthe would then curse, turn the volume on his hearing aid up to full while muttering about what a lousy device it was. It was at this point that the tormentor would **shout** his request.

There were other college-level pranks in which guides and pages indulged. One comes to mind involving a young



Pete Tintle, Assistant Manager of Guest Relations at work on tour promotion. Pete also directed the guide staff operations. Here he and Jeanne Conkey inspect a new tour ad in 1948.



Ticket distribution is a public relations job ably handled here by Jim Schaeffer.



At reception desks throughout the studios, pages direct guests, clients, artists to studios and offices. At the 3rd floor desk George Sweanngen gives a message to announcer Bud Collyer in this 1948 NBC "Chimes" picture.

guide with a rather disagreeable personality. He was unpopular with most of his fellow guides. In an effort to curry favor with his bosses, he volunteered to clean the display cases in the 4th floor lobby. Since these display cases were primarily there for the tours to see, it became the job of the guides, every month or so, to clean the glass, both inside and out. The cases contained displays of some of the early microphones and early image orthicon television tubes. An engineering supervisor named Mr. Diagastino was in charge of the display and, because he considered the contents of the cases to be precious, they were kept locked. On the day that the unloved guide was cleaning the inside of one of the cases, a fellow guide snuck up and closed and locked the case with him inside. At least one tour group got to see, not a display of early broadcast equipment, but a live and embarrassed young guide!

As we mentioned, there were both guides and pages on the Guest Relations staff. The guides took guests on the one-hour studio tour while the pages were stationed at various locations around the building to assist visitors and to take calls for the many busy actors who worked the 'soaps.' The pages would post the calls from an organization called 'Radio Registry' on a small blackboard on each studio floor. Actors were frequently called to a studio for a part in a soap just after they had finished another broadcast. The pages also acted as ushers for programs that had a live studio audience. Concerts in Studio 8H (which, before it became a TV studio, had seating for more than 800 people on the floor and another 500 in the balconies) or programs from the 6th floor studios like the Perry Como, Jo Stafford or Nat "King" Cole programs.

There was always a friendly rivalry between the guides and the pages, each group claiming superiority over the other. The guides claimed that because they had to memorize their one-hour tour 'spiel' and actually performed for the guests on their tour, they were the more elite. The pages, on the other hand, said that because they acted as both greeters, ushers and aides to the performers and also worked hand-in-hand with

the NBC Security forces, they were more important.

The fact is, both NBC guides and pages not only provided NBC with a friendly public 'face,' they also provided some great opportunities to young people interested in the broadcast industry or in public relations associated work.

A good example is a young page that worked the reception desk on the 4th floor. He helped the guides coming off the studio elevators determine to which studio observation booth they should take their tours in order to see a program in progress. It so happened that 'Buffalo Bob' Smith had his office just down the hall. When he wasn't busy, that page would stop by and chat with Bob about a television program for kids he was preparing. The page ingratiated himself to the point where, when Buffalo Bob was looking for a clown character for the show, the young page, whose name was Bob Keeshan, got the job. The clown character's



A scene from the 1948 "Brass Button Review."

name was 'Clarabell.' Keeshan went on to become Captain Kangaroo on a show of his own. However, he got his start as an NBC page on the 4th floor.

A number of other NBC Guide/Page Alumni include Bob Van Skoyk who became a writer for television and was for many years head writer for "Murder She Wrote," the hugely popular weekly mystery thriller starring Angela Lansbury. It was Bob Van Skoyk who cut his writing teeth as an NBC guide when he wrote the book for a TV musical called 'The Brass Button Revue'

Most guides and pages had a bit of ham in them and they made up the cast of the "Brass Button Revue." (Besides the gold and silver braids, one of the features of the NBC uniform were the shiny brass buttons.) The revue was produced in 1949 and was shown on NBC in prime time (an indication of how hungry the TV schedulers were in those early days for any kind of live programming.) The show was certainly more entertaining than some of the wrestling matches that filled much of the prime time schedule in those days.

Some of the early graduates of the NBC Guide/Page staff included Dave Garroway and Gordon MacRae. Gene Rayburn (TV personality and host of a number of TV game shows) was a page. The 1940's singer Dick Haymes had been a page. Actor Eddie Albert (star with Eva Gabor of "Green Acres") had been a guide. Then there was Bob Howard, a guide who became President of the NBC Television Network! The well-known Hollywood producer Alan Landsberg was a guide. Dennis Whooley, who hosts a one-hour weekly program called, 'This is America' on PBS was a guide.

Peter Tintle, with whom I consulted on this article, also reminded me that David Hartman (actor and former host of 'Good Morning America' on ABC had been a guide, as was Regis Philbin of 'Live with Regis and Kathie Lee.' There was Dick Schneider who, in addition to directing 'Jeopardy' for many years, was the director of the annual Macy Thanksgiving Day parade. Dick was actually the guide supervisor for three years in the late 40's.

Remember J. Fred Muggs who terrorized Dave Garroway on the TODAY show and returned as a 'guest' on that program several times? The owner/trainer of that infamous chimp is Buddy Manella, a former guide. Perry Cross, actor/comedian started out entertaining guests on his tour, as did Red Naughten who became an actor in TV sitcoms and commercials.

The author of this piece was a guide at NBC in 1947 and '48. That ready room on the mezzanine was where I met the guidette (that is what they called the female guides back in the 40's) who became my wife and with whom I will celebrate 50 years of marriage this year! There were lots of NBC romances back in that romantic era. Another guide friend of my wife was Annie Teahan. She met and fell in love with a mail room guy named Ray Lockhart. Ray went on to become one of NBC's prime Special Events Executive Producers and News Department Executives. Ray and Annie married and one of their children, a young man named Joe Lockhart is now

President Clinton's Press Secretary (and, by sheer coincidence is now my neighbor here in Washington).

And then there is Gloria Clyne, an ex-guide from that early era. She just retired in March after 56 years at NBC. Gloria has worked in many different jobs in her long career with NBC and WNBC, her last as a Field Producer.

When I spoke to Peter Tintle, who started in the Guest Relations Department in 1942, he clicked off the names of some other well-known guide or page alumni: Eva Marie Saint, Kate Jackson (one of 'My Three Angels'), Bill Dana, better known as comic actor 'Jose Jimenez' and, more recently, Chris Elliott, son of one half of the 'Bob & Ray' radio comedy team. Chris has been a character actor on a number of recent sit-coms, developed and starred in 'Get A Life' for FOX and has starred in Doritos and other commercials.

Tintle also mentioned ex-pages Alan Baker, who became Vice President of the Hertz Corporation, Jack Kennedy, who became Vice President of Engineering at NBC and Bob Tassie who left NBC to become VP of CBS Sports. Perry Massey, an ex-guide who became VP in NBC's programming division. Peter said there were so many other guides and pages who have moved through the Guest Relations Department and have moved on to fame and glory, or at the very least, to very successful careers in broadcasting or the arts, he couldn't possibly remember all of them. I had the feeling Tintle felt a little like Mr. Chips (in "Goodbye Mr. Chips")

Had I not taken Pat Kelly's announcing class while I was a guide back in the 40's, I might never have gone on to a career in radio and television which has been richly rewarding. I will always be grateful to NBC for that early start.

It is a poignant trip, looking back on the real glory years at NBC. Sadly, much of the joy and happiness and pride that we felt back in those happy years is gone now. It is so much more a business now. Some of the commitment to quality and class and good taste that General Sarnoff instilled in everyone who was a part of RCA and NBC has been replaced by the scramble for audience and ratings and the almighty dollar at the expense of those fine qualities. Those of us who lived through those wonderful latter days of NBC Radio and the early days of NBC Television and who are now retired can only say, "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. He and wife, Nan, live
in Washington, DC.*



NABET Local 11 Awards Scholarships

Some 100 members and guests attended the annual Shop Steward installation dinner for the swearing in of the stewards and drawings for 10 newly created named \$500 four-year scholarships, bringing the scholarship total to 25.

Five Memorial Scholarships are named for persons no longer with us, Phil Falcone, Bill Lockhart, Ed Lynch, Jim Nolan and Miles Owens. Another five for persons still living, Arnie Gold, Louise Malcolm, Hank Huestis, Calvin Siemer and Jerry Sturm. The names reflect their service to Local 11.

Among the honored guests were Jim Nolan's wife, Frances, and his son, James Jr., Miles Owens' wife and daughter, Hank Heustis and Cal Siemer.

The newly named scholarships:

William Lockhart (1937-1996) came to NBC in 1962 as a Film Editor and joined NABET in 1975 when he made the transition from film to videotape editing. His contribution to Local 11 was his quiet but firm leadership in guiding others through the film to tape transition.

Edward M. Lynch (1920-1991) His skill as a negotiator earned him an unequalled reputation in NABET and in organized labor nationwide. His career with NABET spanned 45 years. Starting in 1946 he served as President of the Rochester Local (1947-52), Staff Director in Buffalo (1952-68), Network Coordinator in Washington, D.C. (1968-71), four term International President (1971-86), and President Emeritus (1986-91). He was responsible for negotiating and administering many contracts for Local 11.

James P. Nolan (1929-1994) joined NABET in 1958, working as an Electronic Maintenance Engineer at ABC. He served NABET in a variety of roles for 25 years; President of Local 16 since its creation in 1967 until 1989; Regional Vice President; International Vice President, and International President for 8 years. His assistance to Local 11 and our members was unmatched, especially during the 1987 NBC strike.

Miles H. Owens (1930-1996), a graduate of RCA Institute, began his broadcasting career at WOR- TV, WPIX- TV, and UN-TV, before joining NABET in 1966 at NBC. He served as a Shop Steward and for many years chaired the NABET Safety Committee. Miles is affectionately remembered as "coach" for his work with the employee softball and basketball teams. He retired in 1993.

Arnold M. Gold started at NBC and joined NABET in 1950. He served as a Shop Steward, Executive Board Member; Chair of the Grievance Committee and Chair of the Welfare and Benefits Committee. For 15 years he was Chair of

the Vacation Committee. He retired in 1987.

Henry J (Hank) Huestis came to NBC and joined NABET in 1951 and for more than 35 years he worked as a Studio and Videotape Engineer. In 1971, he and fellow NABET Engineer Mort Aronoff formed the Alcohol Assistance Committee. It later became the Member Assistance Program. This vital work helped hundreds of Local 11 and other NBC employees. He continues this important work in his retirement.

Louise F. Malcolm joined NBC Radio in 1942 as a secretary in the Radio Recording Department. That same year she joined the engineering unit as the first female NABET Recording Engineer. Louise witnessed the transition from disc to tape editing and mixing. Her favorite early assignment was the recording of Toscanini and the NBC Symphony. She retired in 1981 after 38 years with NBC.

Calvin Siemer came to NBC in 1976 and joined NABET in 1979 working in the Video Tape Department. He served on the Executive Board, as Secretary-Treasurer (1984-87), Vice President and Grievance Committee Chair (1987-1992), and as a delegate to the NABET Conventions and the NYC Central Labor Council. He is currently an attorney with the law firm, Skadden, Aips, Slate, Meagher & Flom.

Jerome Y. Sturm, with his partner Alan Perl, started working for NABET in 1950. For almost 30 years, he represented NABET and the members of Local 11 in negotiations, arbitrations, and the NABET Conventions. Jerry dealt with RCA, NBC and General Electric on behalf of our Local and the International. Through our legal aid plan he assisted countless members in personal legal matters. Jerry and Anita, his wife of almost 60 years, are retired in Florida. His son Steve continues the Sturm and Perl service to Local 11.

Philip F. Falcone (1912-1997) was a studio and field audio engineer with NBC for over 49 years, but started as a page in 1928. After the war he moved from radio into television, and married Janet, his wife of 50 years. Phil was associated with the great live television programs of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, including space shots, political conventions, and dramatic shows.

After retirement in 1977, Phil returned to work as a freelancer, until illness slowed him 1991. Phil is remembered as very warm person with extraordinary technical talents. He loved live broadcasting, and he was loved back by the people in the business.

Local 11 is grateful to the Falcone family for fully funding this continuing scholarship.

The Scholarship Recipients

William J. Lockhart Memorial Scholarship to Mariane J. Nicosia
 Edward M. Lynch Memorial Scholarship to Janice C. Catanzarita
 James P. Nolan Memorial Scholarship to Scott W. Jones
 Miles H. Owens Memorial Scholarship to Dawn McEwan
 Arnold M. Gold Scholarship to Natalie Brignoni
 Henry J. (Hank) Huestis Scholarship to Mary Gorry
 Louise F. Malcolm Scholarship to Robert J. Gandini
 Calvin Siemer Scholarship to Joseph E. Nicosia
 Jerome Y. Sturm Scholarship to Alyson Vogel
 Philip F. Falcone Memorial Scholarship to Anthony R. D'Elia



KEN'S

ORDER



by
Ken Arber

A Letter From Stewart MacGregory

I received a letter from Stewart MacGregory, dated "The Ides of March." He mentions the story I wrote in the PN spring issue of 1998 (Page 34) about his explanation of why he was late for a morning formation of the NBC Army psychological warfare unit, by saying he was, "busy selling his sugar plantation." He wanted to tell me he enjoyed reading something he had forgotten about so many years ago.

Since we were both in the same Army unit, he often thought of the great times we might have had, if I had accompanied his special unit when they transferred to Heidelberg, Germany from North Africa. In Heidelberg their unit did not really have a "mission." Any beaming of broadcasts or dropping of leaflets, in the opinion of the State Department, might be considered by the Russians as "open act of aggression against them!"

Stewart writes: "The mobile Radio Company set up a transmitting tower, and the Reproduction Company was given the job of printing all Army Regulations — special

regulations that were sent from Washington."

"I was made the head of the Headquarters Company when Jim Patterson left to go back to the States. I was unable to get quarters, but the government agreed to send my car overseas, as they did for anyone who requested it. We had rich young soldiers in the Headquarters Company that owned Cadillacs, Bentleys, and Morris Garage sports cars. The cars were brought over and later returned home to the States."

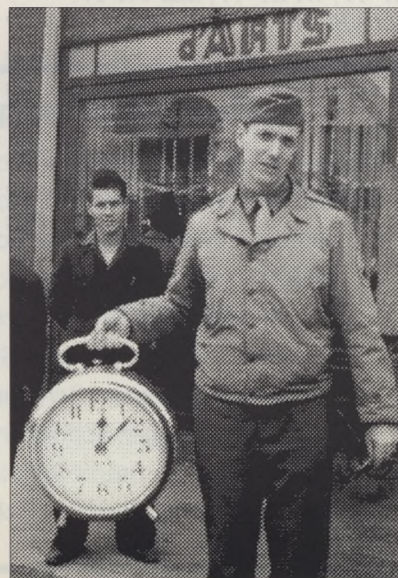
"My wife Bette and I lived on the German Economy. We did see some of Germany and visited Gaarmisch Parten Kirchesen, which was wonderful. After a while, we discovered that we were going to be parents. We then learned that a child born in Germany would have dual citizenship and at age 18 could decide on whether to be a citizen of the United States or German. We decided Bette should return to the States for the birth of our first child. So, our first, Carolyn, was born in October in Needham, MA while I was still in Germany."

"We still had no mission, so I spent a lot of time writing out 3-day passes for the enlisted men, and painting helmet liners and applying decals on them, and arranging parade and guard mounts, etc. We were stationed at a Kaserne in Mannheim Kaefer Tal. The place was great, but the bugs were atrocious!"

"Lots of strange happenings. They plunked us down between the 40th Tank Battalion and the 285 Ack-Ack artillery Battalion. These two outfits were very relaxed and had veterans of the war in Europe. Col. Gruber for some reason decided that the 301st Radio Broadcasting and leaflet group would stand reveille and form for retreat each day. The other two groups, the tank Battalion and the Anti-Aircraft Artillery, would laugh and ridicule our outfit for the first few weeks. I didn't blame them, we were not a very military looking outfit. We soon shaped up — after a time, I think the men actually enjoyed playing "soldier."

"As time went by, I would get calls from personnel to transfer some of our language people to the "Radio Net" in Frankfurt to assist the "Armed Forces Radio Network." I had been promoted to Captain, and the fact that I still had fellow NBC employees W.T. Rabe, Walter Ehr Gott and Ed Starr with me made it all livable."

Ken at the audio console in the French Morocco Post de Telegraphie sans fil (telegraph without wire). Broadcast were done in French, Italian, German and Belgian to keep radio listeners up on the progress of the war.



Clock owner watches Ken closely outside his Oran art shop.

"It's funny, how you remember most of the good times! And try to forget the bad. I certainly have been rambling. I really wrote, originally to thank you for writing up the early meeting of the 301st."

Best Wishes, Stew MacGregory

Stew's letter brought back many memories of my three years in the Army, before joining the 301st and during the invasion of North Africa, in 1943. I missed the trip to Germany with Stew because I was declared medically unfit because of a back problem.

A Trip to the TV Field Shop in Long Island City — Many Years Ago.

As I say, it was many years ago, and you have to understand that I have been retired going on 26 years, but these old things still pop up in my memory.

One day I was assigned to the Long Island City mobile unit garage, to meet my old friend Courtney Snell. He was to show me the TV field facilities so that I would be familiar with them in the event I was assigned as a TD on a field remote. Unfortunately Court was not available, but the field maintenance engineer Frank Vierling was. He took me through the field shop and showed me all the equipment they had available, so I got to know what the field office consisted of.

While going through the color mobile I noticed one piece of equipment was a bright silver-gray color. It reminded me of some of my Ham equipment — like equipment I built from "Heathkits." We hams often bought kits from that company located in Benton Harbor, Michigan. They provided hams with all the parts, and directions to put Ham gear together, both with schematic drawings and pictures of the components.

I asked Frank if that was a Heathkit and much to my surprise he said, "Yes." I could not believe that in this big expensive NBC mobile unit, there would be something that was not made by RCA!

He explained to me that the color unit was actually two trucks that were married together to provide 5 color cameras. The control truck contained camera switching, three cameras and the audio facilities. The second unit, which we were in, had two cameras and depended on the control truck to supply its driving pulses and test equipment, such as color bars (an essential for setting up monitors and cameras). It was often inconvenient for the Control truck to interrupt their activities to provide the needed color bars.

Request upon request was sent up the chain of command for an RCA Color Bar generator. Being a capital budget item, these requests were always turned down as "unnecessary!" Frank took it upon himself to order a color bar kit from Heathkit, which was within the normal field working budget. With the completed kit, the second truck was no longer dependent on the control truck for color bars.

I asked him how RCA would explain the use of a Heathkit to customers contemplating buying RCA equipment, if they saw a Heathkit amidst all the RCA gear. To the best of his knowledge, it had never come up. I have often wondered, how this turned out, but have never asked Frank. I am sure that he will fill me in on that. □

(Ken, The Heathkit worked out very well — and, Sal Benza was happy that I never had to plead for color bars again. FV)

Ray Forrest Remembered

I noted with some sadness the death of a true TV pioneer, Ray Forrest.

I first met Ray Forrest, in studio 3H, around 1939, while he was waiting to go on air for a television show. We became interested in each other's work, and during our conversation, he mentioned that he had changed his name from Raymond Feuerstein to Ray Forrest. He was in the offices for television — room 952 in the studio section; I know this because I have a phone directory for 1940.

We became interested in where we lived, and since I lived in New Jersey in Bogota, and he lived in New Jersey, he asked me if I was familiar with Greenwood Lake, and of course I was. He said that his grandfather had a country store on the west side of Greenwood Lake, and that from time to time he would work at the store, I imagine to help his grandfather. Ray was about in his 20s and I was a little older, by about four years.

Publisher's note: My memories of Ray Forrest are all very pleasant ones. —

In late 1949 and early 1950s TV Field did weekly shows from the Village Barn in Greenwich Village and wrestling from St. Nicholas Arena. It was our pleasure to have Ray Forrest as the announcer on these two remotes.

Ray lived in Ridgewood, NJ, and I in nearby Oradell. When Ray discovered this, he would stay until we broke down our equipment and packed the mobile unit so that he could drive me home — a very generous and welcome gesture.

It was always a pleasant way of unwinding after what, in those early days, were hectic remotes.

Frank Vierling



Former NBC Technical Director Ken Arber writes from Boynton Beach, Florida, where he and wife Jaye enjoy their well-earned retirement.



GLORIOUS GOODBYE

by Dan Grabel

Some two hundred friends, relatives and colleagues, past and present, filled studio 6B at 30 Rock the evening of March 18 to bid adieu to Gloria Clyne, one of NBC's most precious resources. After more than 55 years she had cleaned out her desk and moved on to partial retirement, just partial, because a woman of such energy and savvy cannot be tossed on the waste heap after a half century in television — one of the culture's most exciting environments.

Vice president and GM Denny Swanson opened the formal part of the celebration by noting Gloria's seniority in a sea of newcomers. At the daily channel 4 editorial meeting one morning, with Gloria there as usual, he looked around at the staff and wondered how many were alive when Gloria began her first day in 1944. Only two of them, including himself, qualified.

Gloria's first job was as a page. That was a coveted entry level job at NBC and the first step for many industry leaders, among them Grant Tinker.

Denny noted that the mentality at that time, 1944, was that a new employee probably would remain with the company throughout their career. He said NBC was blessed to have had her as a resource all these years. He suggested that she and Gabe Pressman, who recently marked his 75th birthday and longtime career at NBC, write a book.

WNBC News Director Paula Madison recalled her own arrival at the station and noted a trio in one corner; Betty Furness, Ritz Satz and Gloria. Madison soon learned who they were and what they contributed.

Gloria, she said, "Cajoles, smiles, pushes, insists, and usually gets her way. And generally, she is right. If someone has been mistreated...if someone's story must be told, Gloria will support it. Yes, what Lola wants, Lola gets!"

Next, a six minute video, "lovingly put together" by Larry Seeri and David Hyman, included expressions by Sue Simmons and Chuck Scarborough — who recalled that when he arrived 25 years ago, Gloria already had been at NBC for 30 years!"

Pressman said "She was an asset to journalism and to NBC. A great schmoozer, when speaking with Bob Wright, or someone way down the ladder. She's warm, compassionate, curious, and she has class."

Human Relations Director Ed Scanlon remarked on Gloria's professionalism and enthusiasm. And he added, "I

first saw her when I was in a hospital delivery room. I looked up, beside my mother, and there she was on the screen." Tom Brokaw quipped, "You were a babe then, and you're a babe now."

The personal video ended with Gloria's name twinkling on the scoreboard at Yankee Stadium.

For her turn, Gloria commented, "Sounds like 'This is Your Life'" and then greeted a dozen relatives in the crowd including husband Leonard Greenberg and sister Barbara Schwartz.

Going serious for a moment, she noted that in 1944, even though General David Sarnoff was running the company, prejudice against women and Jewish employees was apparent, but she overcame both. She was happy to see old colleagues now at CBS, CNN and Channel 11 had come to wish her well.

Among the crowd were old chums from the local operation, also Ed Newman, Bill Wheatley, Bill Chesleigh, Joan Gifford, Gloria Marino, Bernard Ganser, Mort Fleischer, Tom Ginnocchio, Frank Shanbacher, Ralph Penza, Dave Handler, Joe Coggins, Bambi Tascarella, Peter Peterson from Peacock North, and, this PN reporter.

When we asked Bambi for a "Gloria story," she recalled that early in Gloria's page career she was assigned to the entry desk at the studio elevators.

One day a short man wearing a dark suit and beret and speaking poor English tried to get to the elevators. Gloria asked for an ID and the chap didn't have one but insisted he had to get to a rehearsal...still forcefully talking Italian, which Gloria did not understand. She finally let him in. It was Arturo Toscanini enroute to rehearse the NBC Symphony Orchestra!!

Gloria's gifts from colleagues and WNBC included two little Tiffany boxes, a cartoon with friends' signatures, a mystery envelope, and even an attractive carry bag that contained all the goodies.

Champagne, hors d'oeuvres, snacks and a huge cake were served at the party which lasted from 7 to 9pm.

Gloria's future? She announced that Gabe Pressman, president of the New York Press Club, would be putting her to work at that organization, and she had been invited to teach a course on TV and public relations at Baruch College.

But before those activities Gloria said, "I have a small apartment and a large husband. I have a lot of cleaning to do now that I have some free time!" □



Sister Act — Gloria & sister Barbara Schwartz.

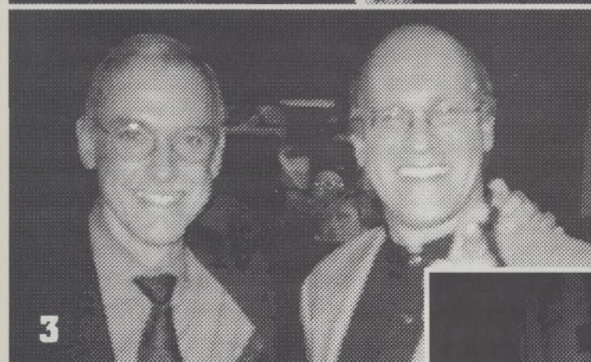
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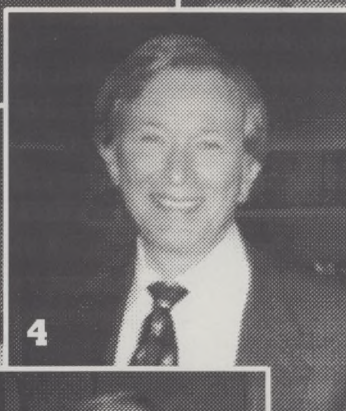
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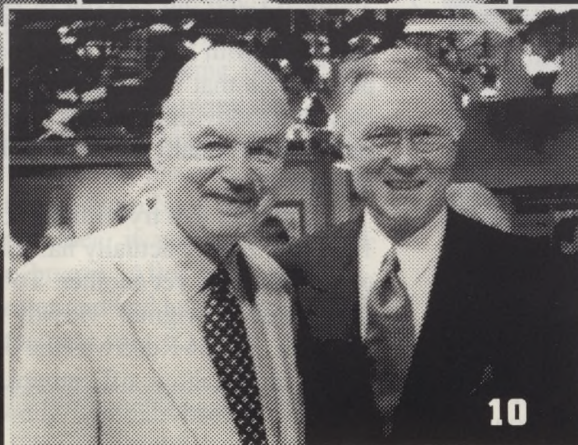
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A few of the distinguished guests

- 1 Judy Farinet, Pete Peterson, Joan Gifford
- 2 VP & WNBC GM Dennis Swanson
- 3 Frank Shandbacher and Tom Ginocchio, now a Channel 5 producer
- 4 Newsman Ralph Penza
- 5 Husband, Leonard Greenberg & Gloria
- 6 Glo screams -- Dan Grabel smiles
- 7 Bambi Tascarella and Stephen Sanchez
- 8 Mort Fleischer (retired) & Gabe Pressman
- 9 Producer Bill Chesleigh
- 10 Ed Newman & Chuck Scarborough

Theodore Retires

By Gloria Clyne

Want to feel really old? Well, it certainly made me feel old-ish when I attended Boston news bureau chief Bill Theodore's retirement party in early February at the Pig & Whistle on 48th street. Theodore was one of my "kids" along with Bill Chesleigh, Allan Statsky, and others when we all worked in the Mac Johnson Unit for news-gathering.

Now, here was my "kid" retiring before me! It was a room filled with love. In attendance were: Arlene and

Mike Silver, Chesleigh (who has four granddaughters — all living with him — but that's another story), Bill Wheatley, still going strong on Nightly News, Carole Kahn, Joan Jewczyn, Lou Castro of EJ, Jim Plante, retired newsman Stan Bernard, correspondent Bob Bazell, assistant director Randy Wands, Bambi Tascarella of satellite ops, cameraman Richard Copley, Judy Kerr, Nancy Kirk, Donna Mastrangelo of CNN Atlanta, Tom Keenan, Dateline producer, Lauren Fairbanks, Nightly producer, Joe Alicastro, specials producer, Lloyd Siegel, Buba Adschiew, Nightly assoc. producer, Rod Prince, Nightly exec. producer, to name a few. □



Buba Adschiew, Nightly News Assoc. Prod.; Stan Bernard; Rod Prince, Exec. Prod. Weekend Nightly News; Donna Mastrangelo, Sr. Exec. Prod. CNN, Atlanta; Bill Theodore behind Richard Copely (eyes and hair); Gloria Clyne; Lauren Fairbanks, Weekend Nightly News Prod.; Tom Keenan, Dateline Producer (facing away); Bambi Tascarella; Joe Alicastro, Special Prod.; Mike Silver.

Battle for Howdy

By Dan Grabel (edited from wire services)

The smiling, freckled face sidekick of "Buffalo Bob" Smith, Howdy Doody, one of the most famous stars of 1950s television, is the subject of a battle between his creators' family and a Detroit museum which claims it is rightly the depository for this little hunk of lumber.

The Detroit Institute of Arts, which has one of the largest collections of historically significant puppets in the country, is accusing Rufus and Margaret Rose's 3 sons of purloining the puppet which is now in a safe deposit box in a Connecticut bank. The museum says Smith and Rose promised to donate Howdy to its collection. For its part, the Rose family says it had thought about making the donation but was not legally obligated to do so and in fact, Rose's

will did not make that stipulation.

Rufus Rose and his wife Margaret created Howdy Doody and replicas of him which often went on the road. One copy, in fact, is in the Smithsonian Institute.

In 1970, when Smith wanted to go on a tour of college campuses with Howdy, Rose loaned him the "original" and pointed out that NBC, in giving Rose ownership of all the Howdy Doody marionettes after the show went off the air, said that eventually, they should be given to the Detroit museum.

Lawyers will try to figure out who the true owner is. The Rose family actually has 2 Howdys, the one in contention, and yet another. To add to the confusion, there are at least 3 "original" Howdy Doodys who appeared on the show. Rufus Rose was the one who manipulated the strings on the show, off camera.

The "Howdy Doody" show ran for 2,543 episodes from 1947 to 1960. □

Garroway at Large

TODAY remote at Plymouth Rock

My cousin, John Burke, was commissioner of Commerce for the State of Massachusetts back in 1955. He told me that a British replica of the ship "Mayflower" was to be turned over to the restored Pilgrim Plymouth Colony located near Plymouth Rock. He suggested that it would be a good story for TODAY to cover.



The English replica of the Mayflower anchored off Plymouth Rock.

I put him in contact with Jac Heins, TODAY director at that time, and John's proposal was accepted.

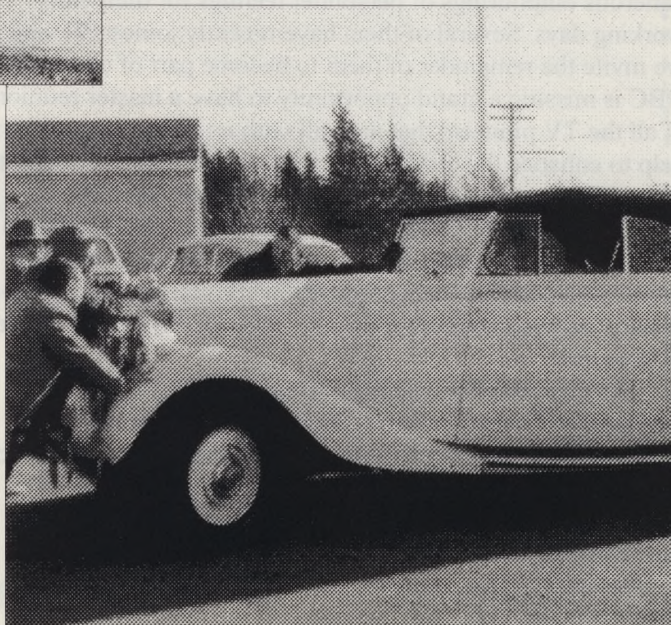
The day the segment was to air was the day President Eisenhower suffered his heart attack. This news necessarily took precedence and we had to make a kine (kinescope recording) of our spots for playback the following day.

Director, Jac Heins and his secretary, Mary Kelly, along with Ed Rossi and Dave Garroway were the only ones I can remember, beside myself, that came from New York.

Even though it was September, it was a bitter cold morning with a stiff offshore breeze. After each segment, Dave was rushed inside to a heater and had hot coffee poured into him to get him ready for the next spot. □



Dave with his cast of "Pilgrims." The technical crew was made up of engineers from WBZ-TV, Boston.



Dave drove to the remote in his restored Packard.

Walt and his wife, Anita, live in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Walt was a studio engineer and also worked in TV Master Control. Anita is an accomplished sculptor.

A Message from

Pete Peterson



On May 23 Peacock North had a record crowd when over 200 members attended our annual luncheon at the LaMaganette Restaurant in New York City. Despite inclement weather the group gathered from near and far to recapture and share in the fun of reviewing earlier times. There was lots of hugging, kissing, and

laughing coming from the crowd.

Once again we are pleased to report that our membership roster has increased. We have topped the 850 mark. Active membership is over 70% and engaged in our regular PN affairs. Dan Grabel's lead article tells it all. Much of our success is attributed to the PN magazine. The unsurpassed dedication of Heino Ripp and Frank Vierling in assembling this newsletter is outstanding. Along with them are those who have contributed materially with fine reports and stories. Thanks to every one of them for their contributions.

This year's luncheon saw more members attending from distant places than ever before. We were pleased to have good representation from all the departments of the company. This year we had a larger number from the News Department. Recently they had been brought together by an anniversary bash celebrating 25 years of NewsCenter 4. And then reinforced by the farewell retirement party for Gloria Clyne. The need for "rejoining" is clearly expressed by these generous outpourings of personnel feelings for their early working days. Several of them have recently joined PN, and we invite the remainder of them to become part of our group. NBC is missing a grand opportunity to have a master reunion of all the TV pioneers that are still with us today! It would help to enhance the company's image in the industry and with the public, as well as recognize those who served NBC so well. In Washington, they're still working on a monument to WW II. It seems opportunities for recognition of a job well done by veterans in the work place or the war is leaving our culture, perhaps because it doesn't show up profitably on the bottom line.

As to recent days, changes are occurring all the time. Rockefeller Center has been doing a complete makeover of the Radio City and Rock Center area. Some of us remember the days when 50th Street had a very different look. I remember when the land where the Time & Life building stands was a bus terminal, with a cinder parking lot alongside a vast expanse that extended almost to Broadway where it met up with the Hotel Taft. The Taft had in it the famous Roxy theater. Many of our original radio stars were headliners at the Roxy. How the landscape has changed! The well known stores, shops and restaurants that surrounded Rock Center are

gone! The main and lower level concourse shops in the RCA (oops GE) building are gone! Cromwell's and The Down Under et al are gone! They've all been swapped with replacements that have "today's" extraordinary upscale look — Lights and Glitz ablazing! It is a stunning change to see all the differences. Then, there are changes at the NBC studios as well. Internally the studio section has been drastically reconfigured. New tech centers in the core of the building have been constructed. Now, new changes in programming have brought a near end to soap operas. "Another World," a fixture for some 35 years has been axed. I spent '68 and '69 doing my tour of duty working on that show along with many other programs originating live in NY. There isn't much "LIVE" TV left.

The losses are mounting in many ways to our membership and to their memories. There's a bit of melancholy remembering all those days putting shows on the air. We enjoyed working with some very talented people from many departments. In recalling the excellent work of all the casts, crews, production and administrative departments, it was remarkable how they combined and complimented each other so effectively and smoothly. The result was the award winning entertaining programs NBC produced. What great profit centers were realized by those corporate capabilities then! PN'ers were in the center of that enterprise. They were in the very arterial flow of what made it all come together! At one time, NBC had 22 LIVE CREWS working around the clock. On the air LIVE, with several theater studios and remote broadcasts going on simultaneously. They came from just about everywhere, and in the same relative time parameters. NBC WAS NUMBER ONE IN EVERYTHING! ENTERTAINMENT, NEWS, SPORTS, EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY. IT LED THE ENTIRE INDUSTRY FOR THE NATION! It was a time and an experience that words fail to convey. YOU PN'ERS WERE THE BEST PART OF MAKING IT HAPPEN!.....TAKE A BOW YOU PN GREATS!

All departments were of equal importance. In some areas special talents were called upon to lead the way. I recall many talented people in production and administration that were vital to the growth of the new medium. There were notable producers and directors, wise corporate presidents, especially those that brought original programming ideas to reality, and thus shaped the industry. In entertainment and news NBC ranked at the top! New technology from RCA/NBC made TV into a reliable valid viable experience. In engineering, there were those that brought us some of the technology that we still use to this day. Within our ranks were some that were exceptional in their capacities. I'm going to take a privileged moment to recall a few friends. Sadly, we have just lost several to our Silent Microphones column. I could go on with considerable words of tribute for Jack Durkin, Video Engineer and Fred "Red" McKinnon, Lighting Director. They were at the top of their profession, in those glorious days. They made NBC look better in every artistic and technical way the state of the art allowed. In the 40's, as an NBC Radio Broadcast Engineer, I worked with Jack Durkin's father who

was a Senior Radio Broadcast Engineer. He was a wizard at handling records on live or transcribed shows. His expertise and example set the pattern for Jack to follow in an "expert" manner in TV. When I worked in with Jack in TV, I could see the carryover from his dad, and its positive benefit to NBC. Then there was Lighting Director Fred "Red" McKinnon; he always had a happy smiling grin despite whatever difficulties faced him. What fun and pleasure it was working on a really big show and have Red as the Lighting Director! It was perfection! He always made BIG TV STARS look better!

Sadly, as we go to press, we have learned of another outstanding engineer who joins the Silent Microphones — William "Billy" Goetz. Bill was a cameraman on all the major shows. He won an Emmy for his camera work on the original NBC production of "A Night To Remember," the teleplay about the sinking of the Titanic. He later accompanied President Nixon on his famous trip to China in the 70's. Bill was well liked and was extremely proficient and skilled, as were the others mentioned. They will all be missed. They were pioneers in the "TV Production Arts," and their work was enjoyed by audiences across the nation. It's not easy to receive the sad news about these old friends. They come from all the various departments of NBC, talented people that we all revered for their contribution to the art and our personal relationships with them. The pain we feel today by their deaths is in reality an element of our own fabric being torn away from us.

We were fortunate to have another wonderful get-together at our spring luncheon. The large turnout was reassuring to all of us here at PN headquarters. It reflects the personal feelings we receive in the many nice cards and letters from our members encouraging us carry on. Rippy, Frank, Danny and I, and all the others say thank you for the kind words of praise. Our feature writers are marvelous, and we invite you all to join in by sending in your ideas and reflections. Please consider sending us a bio, and tell us how you came to have a career at NBC. Pictures of yourself then and now, or just whatever, will be appreciated. Why not let everybody into your hidden good news of how you got into all of this and the fun of being part of the great PN group! So just please — **DO IT!**

We're coming into summer vacation time, so its time to enjoy! We hope to reconvene this fall for a birthday party to celebrate PN's 12th birthday. Time and place will be announced later. Thanks again for all your kind words for the PN staff. Yes! We love you all!

Regards,

Pete

P.S. Tentative date for our next LaMag luncheon is set for Sunday May 24, 000000000000! NOW THAT'S MILLENNIIIIUUUMMMMM TALK!



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*And a special thanks to
Peg Peterson and Lois Vierling*

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First Class Mail

Have a great summer.
See you next fall.

