



Radio Delaware Valley Newsletter

WTHA-FM
88.1 Berlin, NJ

WRDV-FM
89.3 Warminster/Hatboro
107.3 Philadelphia
97.1 Bensalem
105.7 Lansdale

WLBS-FM
91.7 Bristol/Levittown

CELEBRATING OVER 44 YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE



TRADITIONAL GOSPEL SINGING

JIM BAKAY

On Feb. 25, 2024 I had the privilege of attending Rev. Brenda Boone-Smith's annual gospel program in Chesapeake VA along with my friends Pam and Charlie Horner, Dr. Bob Smith, and Carl Tancredi.

Read the full article on page 2

THE GOOD MORNING SHOW

TED TAYLOR

Since early May, 2013, I have started every Tuesday morning at 8 AM by welcoming our listeners to "The Good Morning Show" where, until noon, I spin the great sounds of the middle decades of the 20th Century.

Read the full article on page 4

EARLY FM RADIO

FRED RICE

These days when one speaks of listening to the radio, one could assume that we are talking about FM radio broadcasts. Since the early days of broadcasting which began commercially in 1920, broadcasts were done with amplitude modulation...

Read the full article on page 14

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TRADITIONAL GOSPEL QUARTET SINGING ALIVE & WELL IN HAMPTON ROADS VA

Rev. Dr. Brenda Boone-Smith
& Higher Praise Community Choir
Presents
A Handclapping, Footstomping
Gospel Praise Festival in
Celebration of Black History

February 25, 2024 @ 4pm

Chesapeake Conference Center
700 Conference Center Drive
Chesapeake, VA 23320
\$30 in advance, \$35 @ the door.
Children discounted at the door.

Rev. Dr. Luther Barnes & The Sunset Jubilaires
Rocky MT, NC

The Pilgrim Jubilees
Chicago, IL

The SOUL STIRRERS Featuring Frankie Davis

Brooklyn All-Stars
Brooklyn, NY

Elder Ronald Harper & The Harmonizing Echoes
(757) 676-1560

The Word Singers
(757) 403-7337

Danny Hill & Group Determination
(757) 289-9437

The Gospel Travelers

MCs: Donald L. Eason, WPCE, Steven Alexander, Impressionist & Elder Willie Brown WTJZ

Bishop Elijah Smith & Angels of God
(757) 738-9265

Minister Paul Boone & The Temple Aires
(757) 291-4093

Gospel Vocalist Amelia Goodman and Linda Porter

Bryan Williams & Poplar Run Baptist Church Male Chorus

Saxophonist Joseph Major
gjb

Contact Groups For Tickets

Jeffrey Newberry Sr. & The Keynotes
TYLER, TX
BOOKING

(757) 477-3828

By Jim Bakay - Saturdays 9AM - 12 Noon

On Feb. 25, 2024 I had the privilege of attending Rev. Brenda Boone-Smith's annual gospel program in Chesapeake VA along with my friends Pam and Charlie Horner, Dr. Bob Smith, and Carl Tancredi. Rev. Boone-Smith has been producing these programs for many years; I attended for several years until the Covid lockdowns came upon us. With those restrictions and some scheduling conflicts, this recent program was the first in four years that I'd been able to attend.

With each passing year, Rev. Boone-Smith has enriched the program more and more, featuring not only some of the many local gospel talents in the Hampton Roads area, but also bringing in national acts. The 2024 was truly a storied lineup, with the "household" names (in the gospel music world, of course) The Keynotes, The Pilgrim Jubilees, The Soul Stirrers, and the Brooklyn All-Stars. Closing the program, as is the tradition at this annual event, were Luther Barnes and the Sunset Jubilaires, one of the major contemporary star performers in gospel music.

It's difficult to convey the overall good feeling that courses through the atmosphere at this program. The performers, the hosts, and of course the attendees come from a tradition that wonderfully marries faith with joy and exuberance. The one thing that is assuredly not in abundance there is quiet, although the occasional reflections in prayer do appropriately bring moments of silence quite easily.

During the program, some of the highlights for me included:

- The audience members singing along with so many songs. I am a bit of a student of gospel music, and am acquainted with what I thought was a reasonable number of songs. But as Dr. Bob pointed out, these folks seemed to know almost EVERY song the performers sang. There are several radio stations in the area devoted to gospel music (some of their personalities alternated as hosts during the program) and it's apparent that they have an attentive listening audience.

TRADITIONAL GOSPEL QUARTET SINGING (CONT.)

- My friends Charlie and Pam Horner were presented with an award for their contributions to research and promotion of gospel, rhythm and blues, and other types of music, with a special appreciation for the contributions of African American artists. As many of you know, Charlie was a long time radio disc jockey in Philadelphia, and he and Pam have done a lot of work in preserving the history of these types of music, including having written two books.
- The Soul Stirrers carry on and on. One of the best known of the African American gospel groups, they began in the 1930s, and, with many iterations over the years, have continued recording and performing. Their stardom was supercharged when the immortal Sam Cooke became their principal soloist from 1950 to 1956. Today's Soul Stirrers are led by Hampton Roads native Frankie Davis. When you close your eyes and listen to Frankie sing you hear Sam Cooke whispering through his vocal chords.
- The Brooklyn All-Stars, one of my personal favorite gospel groups, were magnificent and, for me, stole the show. I saw them in 2020, when Thomas Spann, the original bass singer when the group formed in 1950, was still performing with them at age 94. (Photo of him and me on the right). He'd passed away some months before this 2024 program; singing bass with them now is a young man who is truly amazing. Their set was exquisite.



Charlie and Pam Horner accepting award



Jim Bakay with Thomas Spann of the Brooklyn All Stars

I've been able to observe how hard Rev. Boone-Smith works on the night of the program. I can only imagine the work that is involved in putting the program together and arranging logistics and so many other factors in the many months leading up to the event.

I thank her sincerely for bringing this wonderful music to us, and look forward to the next program.

THE GOOD MORNING SHOW

By Ted Taylor, Tuesdays 8 AM - 12 Noon

Since early May, 2013, I have started every Tuesday morning at 8 AM by welcoming our listeners to "The Good Morning Show" where, until noon, I spin the great sounds of the middle decades of the 20th Century. I call it "musical comfort food for the soul".



Ted Taylor at WRDV

The first show of every month is usually what I call "The yearly salute" during which I pick a year between the late 30's and late 50's and then play the top tunes as determined by the "Billboard Hot 100" lists. I will comment on what was happening that year - the news, sports, economics and what else was of interest. By late in the show I will count down the top five tunes while, during the show, soliciting guesses as to the number one tune. These shows generate a lot of nostalgia with people calling in and telling me what was going on in their lives in that particular year.

While I will occasionally do shows that I call "From the vault", featuring random selections of the best music of that time period, but mostly I will have a specific theme around which I play music that lends itself to the topic.

Some of those shows deal with holidays which generate specific music such as Mardi Gras (with a nod toward Dixieland), Cinco de Mayo (a good chance to spotlight Latin influence on pop music), The Academy Awards Show (where I play Oscar winning music and runners up from 1934 through the early 60's), Hallowe'en and many others.



Ted Taylor in his early radio days

I'll also spotlight the great vocalists like Ella Fitzgerald, Bing Crosby, Peggy Lee, Perry Como, Frank Sinatra and many others' also the big bands such as Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman, Count Basie, The Dorsey Brothers and vocal groups like the Boswell Sisters, Andrews Sisters, Pied Pipers and the Modernaires.

We start each show with a light hearted look at what "day" should be celebrated during the coming week such as Eat a pickle day, take a friend to lunch day, tuba appreciation day and so many, many more. Since the shows are pretty tightly structured, we seldom take requests. We will, however, be happy to hear from you and make a dedication on your behalf. I hope you like what we do and will become a part of our friendly audience every week. I look forward to hearing from you.

THE DOO-WOP DAVE SHOW

By Dave Blatt - Saturdays 2 - 4 PM



Doo Wop Dave and son Evan

During my high school years, I discovered a great radio station known as WPGR 1540 AM. I had first heard Harvey Holiday on WPGR long before he was on Sunday nights on WOGL.

WPGR played the music I love and was a sunrise to sunset radio station. Its broadcast day would start at 6:00AM and would go off the air at sunset each day. I would leave my radio on all night listening to static (after the station would go off the air for the evening) and jump out of bed to go to school when Harvey would play "Reville Rock" by Johnny and The Hurricanes at 6AM. I knew at once that I wanted to be part of the WPGR team.

Shortly after graduating high school, I attended the National School of Broadcasting at 8th and Arch Streets in Philadelphia. I had graduated Broadcasting School in 1988 and had acquired an internship with my long-time hero "The Geator With The Heater" Jerry Blavat and I then became "Dave-O-Phonic Dave" on the air everyday Monday through Friday from 1988 through 1990 at WPGR.



Doo Wop Dave, Evan, and Fred Rice

I would get to 1 Bala Plaza (the location of WPGR /WSNI) at 6:00AM and start my day working with Hy Lit, Andy Volvo, Tommy McCarthy, my good friend

Armand Coliani (who would eventually end up at WRDV also) and of course, my main man, The Geator with The Heater.

In 1990, I left WPGR and went to Arizona to obtain my College Education at Arizona State. Returning to Philly in 1993, I found out from my friend Ronnie I, that there was a gentleman named Ritchie Blustein that created an organization in the Philadelphia area known as PGHA (Philadelphia Group Harmony Association). I hooked up with Ritchie and took an active part in establishing PGHA. Ritchie introduced me to Mr. Lee Jolles (who would eventually take over as President of PGHA) and Lee introduced me to Todd Allen. I started taking classes at WRDV in 1993 and filled in many times for Mr. Lee (who gave me the name Doo-Wop Dave) and was on the air many times with my good friend Sy Kaplan (writer of "Bongo Stomp" by Joey and The Flips")

Since 1993, I have been at WRDV, having taken a slight leave of absence from 1998 until I returned in 2000.

In 2004, my youngest son, Evan was born, and I am proud to say that he has inherited my love of Doo-Wop music. Evan is deeply knowledgeable about the history of music and knowledgeable about the groups that sang the music. He has started writing a book about the Doo-Wop music and has been answering the phone for me at the radio station for the past couple of years. I am very proud of Evan as he takes the time to research information about music and has quite an extensive record collection also. He hopes to someday have his own show at WRDV. It does my heart good to know that Evan will keep the music alive. Long live Doo-Wop music and WRDV-FM.

IN MEMORIAM



David April at WRDV studio

He was warm, gracious understanding from the moment I first spoke with him on the phone. After a couple of years listening, David asked for a volunteer to help answer the phone during fundraising. I was hooked.

Since I had been on Villanova's radio station as an undergrad and on WRTI for 3+ years during post grad, I felt at right at home with a microphone in front of me. David was very encouraging and helpful on my way to being on the air.

I was also DJing some parties in the area and have a nice sound system. David asked me if I could bring the system with him to nursing homes in West Philadelphia and Germantown. These were eye opening experiences for me and everyone and incredible to see music theory at its best.

David's warm personality made everyone feel good and the music opened up a flood of joy for all in attendance, residents and nursing staff. People who did not appear to be joyful were energized by the R&B music but especially the Gospel music. People who could barely speak were

A HOMECOMING CELEBRATION FOR DAVID NORMAN APRIL

By: Peter Blaikie

DJ David April brought joy and inspiration to countless listeners on WRDV-FM, at Johnny Brenda's Gospel Brunch, in West Philadelphia nursing homes and many events with music including The Gospel Train and The Roots of Rhythm & Blues. The music elevated the spirit of all in earshot, tapping their feet or snapping their fingers. David brought hope and love to everything and person he touched through out his life. Everyone was special in David's eyes and he just naturally made you feel that way.

As a long time music lover I am lucky to have found WRDV-FM radio when I moved to the Delaware Valley from NYC. David's R&B music caught my ear and I tuned in each week. The Gospel Train soon had me captivated as well.

mouthed the words to the songs as though they were singing. One gentleman came in on a gurney. He appeared lifeless, except his foot was tapping to the music throughout the evening.

David's love of music was contagious. He brought me and other people to churches in North Philadelphia for very inspirational performances. He related a story to Jim Bakay and I once about going to a music show in a church and the pastor asked David to come and say a few words to the congregation. David said: But reverend, I'm not a religious man." That was fine with the pastor and David spoke about the long history of gospel music and how it has affected and inspired popular music for many generations.

David helped organize and MC'd a tribute concert to Philly's own Gospel extraordinaire, Sister Rosetta Tharpe, with many gospel legions. The tribute was a fundraiser to obtain funds to erect a gravestone at her interment Philadelphia.

David was a giving person, so say the least. After hurricane Katrina whipped out the listener sponsored radio station in New Orleans, WWOZ, David organized a fundraiser at the Commodore Barry Club in Mt. Airy, Philadelphia, for the New Orleans station. He then personally delivered the charity check to the station himself. Like WRDV, a 100% listener sponsored station, WWOZ-FM continues to be "The Guardian of The Groove" everyday.

Even when he was on the air, we were DJing and some street festivals and parties in Philadelphia. I had the honor of doing David's show for about 8 months when he was on sabbatical. It was extremely rewarding. Among other things during that time he founded The Fishtown Beer Runners, a whole other story of camaraderie in itself. You can watch the 2014 documentary made about him on YouTube called Beer Runners. It's amazing what one man like David can do.

When he left WRDV, he had to keep bringing the music to people, so he did a Second Sunday Gospel Brunch at Johnny Brenda's, a hip bar and restaurant at Frankford and Girard, in Philly. He was the mayor of Fishtown on those Sundays with loads of people stopping by the DJ booth. I was again honored to fill in for him on occasion there.

David worked at Font Hill Museum and gave tours there for years. He then worked in Trenton at the State Capitol giving tours there. David loved talking with people and asking them for questions. He gave tours of the Philadelphia Brewing Company Brewery on certain Saturdays, via his love of education.

David April had a 9 year fight with cancer that he would not let consume him. Cancer tragically took his life at age 58. During his treatment, David found ways of helping other cancer patients and joined The Legacy Of Hope board of directors. David's story of bravery and perseverance brings

Legacy of Hope's mission close to my heart as a cancer survivor.

With David's work as a board member at Legacy of Hope, he saw firsthand how their mission supports oncology patients with the quality of life that they all deserve. Legacy of Hope is a Philly organization that helps cancer patients find new cures and receive emergency patient support. They partner with hospitals and local groups to assist financially-struggling patients who have no other options. He personally would deliver needed groceries to people just after walking out of treatment sessions himself.

Additionally, Legacy of Hope funds cancer research by using the expertise of Philly's top researchers to select and support promising scientists. With a focus on expediting new cures and making a meaningful difference in cancer treatment, Legacy of Hope is an important resource for Philadelphia's cancer patients.

David passed away in Spain, on December 10th, 2023 accompanied by his wife, kids, and other family. In his 9-year long fight, he was able to meet every Thursday evening with Beer Runners that he founded, officiated many of their weddings, shared his love for music, DJ-ing on Gospel Sundays and Radio Delaware Valley Tuesdays; go on antique-shopping dates in Lancaster with his wife, and on scuba diving vacations in Mexico; he was able to see his son graduate from his same alma mater, the University of Virginia, and visit his daughter during her year abroad in Italy.

David Norman April lived a fulfilling life with his loved ones, during every chapter of his journey. I'm sure many WRDV staff and listeners have wonderful moments and stories to remember him by. These are just a few of mine.

Peter B. Blaikie

[David April Legacy link](#)

[Fishtown Beer Runners Documentary](#)

THE RDV LEARNING EXPERIENCE

By: Anders Jacobson

I will always remember RDV-FM as a nucleus of knowledge. Some of my earliest memories at the station involve watching in awe as Bill Jacobs and other great minds repaired hardware and talked about the endless technical work of running a radio station. It seemed trivial to seasoned pros like them. "It's simple," Bill once told me while fixing the Sony CD player. "The Sony is great. You could stick a taco in that thing, and it would figure out how to play it." I imagined it would play salsa.

Just as early, the station provided many formative life lessons. When I was a child, the legendary Polka Bill once bent down to me and showed me the scar on his palm that had been opened with a chainsaw. "Sometimes, you got to be tough," he advised. Years later, after his last Polka show, he showed me his palm again. I repeated his advice from memory, just one of the many pieces of wisdom the station has blessed me with over the years.

It was not until the pandemic that I began a formal education here. To cut down on the time two people spent crammed together in the tiny production room, Bill, the production director at the time, had me record Laurie straight into my laptop so I could send the recordings to him for editing. One day, my name showed up with "Production Director" on the staff roster, and I have been producing ever since. Bill showed me the ropes of the production room and the editing process, neither of which I would have understood without his signature wit and intellectual patience, and I was soon producing polished spots all on my own. I was taking my

first year of a multimedia technology class at the Middle Bucks Institute of Technology, and the production training blended seamlessly with the standard education I received there. In fact, my teacher had been a longtime listener, and even he was impressed. While my peers spent their time catching up on school gossip and wasting away on TikTok, I was soldering circuit boards and installing hardware on equipment racks. Most kids my age was not even out of bed on Saturday morning when I was already at the station, climbing on the roof to look at an antenna with the station owner himself, Charlie Loughery. The knowledge I have absorbed just from being around the staff members is more valuable than any written diploma can convey.

Becoming a DJ at RDV-FM is a fantastic way to get into broadcasting, but to say that your learning stops at the studio door is a mistake. The station has so much to offer, and it is all thanks to the boundless experience and generosity of its members. True education happens when there is a genuine connection between minds, and that friendship and its scholastic power extend far beyond the microphone and into everything we do at the station.



Anders Jacobson
broadcasting live at the
2023 Hatboro Holiday
Parade

I'D WALK A MILE FOR A CAMEL

By: **Connie Gayle**

When our RDV Remote Team was on location to broadcast the 2024 Warminster Memorial Day Parade, the slogan, "I'd Walk A Mile For A Camel", popularized in the 1940's, took on a whole different meaning in 2024!

Fred Rice, Anders Jacobson, and Chris Burden, were stationed at the Warminster Township Building to provide a live broadcast of the Memorial Day Services. A warm and heartfelt memorial, honoring the service personnel who gave their lives to keep our country free.

Following the memorial service was the fanfare of a spectacular parade, which began at the Township Building and ended at the VFW Post 6493.

Camel" from the Peaceable Kingdom Mobile Petting Zoo. What a treat that was to meet and interview Einstein and his handler. (I even got a



Connie Gayle greeting Einstein "The Snow Camel"

friendly camel grunt from Einstein!)

He is named the "Snow Camel" because in November of 2018, there was a major snow storm. Einstein was being transported to an event, but because of the weather Peaceable Kingdom had to head home instead. On Route 309 near Souderton, Einstein was taken out of his trailer and his handler walked him along side the road so his trailer could get up the hill. He was a good boy and took this crazy weather in stride. Our very own Vic Miles was caught in this traffic jam on 309 and remembers the day very well. Talk about coincidence!

After the parade, the RDV Remote Team enjoyed some awesome food at the Douglas A. Post - Harry C. Wilson II Memorial VFW Post 6493 - Named for 2 young men from Richboro, who were killed during the Vietnam War. It was a lovely way to wrap up the day.

Walk a mile for a camel? You betcha, for Einstein!

Another fun and flawless remote is in the books. Because we are RDV DJ's, we have each other's back, we are a family!

Love, Luck, and Lollipops,

Connie Gayle

"Connie's Canteen"



Connie Gayle and Vic Miles with WRDV banner

Rudolf Sawyer, Vic Miles, Ed Salkowski, DJ student Karen Joyce, and yours truly Connie Gayle were on location, at the corner of York Rd and Henry Ave, to broadcast the parade.

Dave Solomon was monitoring the remote "in studio".

This " Good Old Fashioned Hometown Parade", consisted of local Bands, Businesses, Scout Troops, Rotary, Activity Groups, Police and Fire Departments, Military Reserve and Auxiliary, and Elected Officials. And then what do my wondering eyes should appear? A Camel !!!!

When I became an RDV DJ, it never entered my mind that I would be interviewing a camel. But low and behold here comes Einstein "The Snow

WHAT'S COOKING AT WRDV: PHILADELPHIA GOOEY BUTTER CAKE

By: Connie Gayle

In Memory of Ken and Mary Kittel - long time listeners and supporters of RDV

Ken and Mary were Medical First Responder colleagues back in the 70's and 80's. We remained friends after our Pre-Hospital Care commitments and met for lunch every month.

If our birthdays were on or near our lunch date, Mary would always bring this cake for us to enjoy and she made sure the restaurant staff got a piece also!



Connie with Ken and Mary Kittel & Friends



Philadelphia Butter Cake

Philadelphia Gooey Butter Cake - Recipe

- 1 pkg. Butter Recipe Cake Mix (Duncan Hines works best). Can also use a lemon cake mix instead
- 4 eggs
- 1/4 lb. (1 stick) butter - melted
- 8 oz. Cream Cheese - softened
- 1 box (1 lb.) 10X Sugar
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees
- Lightly grease 13" X 9" pan
- Mix cake mix / 2 eggs / and melted butter, and pour into pan
- Mix Cream Cheese / 2 eggs and 10X Sugar, and spread over cake mix
- Bake at 350 degrees for about 35 minutes. (May be 5 minutes less or more depending on your oven)

FIND THE RADIO WORDS

Radio Word Search
Can you find these radio words?

B	Y	X	Z	S	E	I	C	N	E	U	Q	E	R	F
V	E	D	S	B	V	T	S	E	U	G	D	F	S	N
F	D	N	U	O	S	V	O	L	U	M	E	Y	O	R
Y	R	Z	D	E	N	O	H	P	O	R	C	I	M	X
S	D	R	O	C	E	R	A	T	G	T	T	T	R	B
R	E	C	N	U	O	N	N	A	R	A	U	G	Y	R
A	T	L	O	Z	N	G	C	A	T	N	Q	X	Z	O
D	K	C	Z	E	T	C	N	S	E	D	N	A	B	A
I	Y	A	T	S	I	S	Y	P	V	O	I	C	E	D
O	J	N	O	S	M	S	P	E	A	K	E	R	F	C
M	A	H	U	I	E	U	J	U	K	E	B	O	X	A
Q	F	M	T	U	W	A	V	E	S	E	U	L	B	S
E	N	T	E	R	T	A	I	N	M	E	N	T	R	T
U	E	A	K	L	O	P	G	S	Y	E	C	N	A	D
R	J	R	O	C	K	Q	C	O	U	N	T	R	Y	D

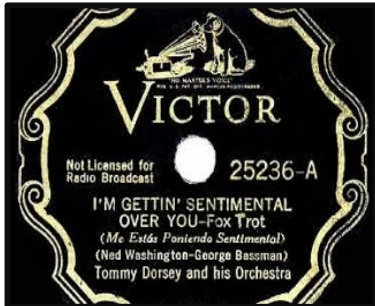
ANNOUNCER	ANTENNA	BAND	BLUES
BROADCAST	COUNTRY	DANCE	ENTERTAINMENT
FREQUENCIES	GUEST	HOST	JAZZ
JUKEBOX	MICROPHONE	MUSIC	POLKA
RADIO	RECORDS	ROCK	SOUND
SPEAKER	STATION	TRANSMITTER	TUNE
VOICE	VOLUME	WAVES	

See the Radio Word Search solution on page 17

ON THE 78 RPM RECORD

Useless Information from the 78rpm Era

By: George Hagerty, WRDV Music Historian and Record Collector



“I’m Getting’ Sentimental Over You” is the famous theme song of the great Tommy Dorsey, one of the biggest names of the Big Band Swing Era. (Recorded October 18, 1935)

Thomas Francis Dorsey (11/19/1905 - 11/25/1956). Tommy Dorsey with his older brother Jimmy started their musical life as children in Scranton, Pennsylvania, as their father, Thomas Sr. taught musical instruments. Tommy started with a trumpet, switching to trombone early, yet he was also a good trumpet player.



Tommy made his first record in the spring of 1923 with a group of men he and Jimmy had assembled called The Scranton Sirens. Their first record was never commercially issued and only sold at their shows. The A side was: “Fate” and the B side was: “Three O’Clock in the Morning” (Sirens 1001). There are only two known copies of this record.

The young Dorsey brothers broke up their band and stayed around New York. Both brothers were in big demand in the recording studios by such artists as: Jean Goldkette, Bix Beiderbecke, The Varsity Eight, The California Ramblers,

Bailey’s Lucky Seven, Sam Lanin, The Little Ramblers, Broadway Broadcasters, Henry Thies, Fred Rich, Joe Candullo, The Goofus Five, Ted Wallace and Paul Whiteman, just to name a few.



On 14 February 1928, the Dorsey Brothers made their first record, under their name and it was issued on the O’Keh label. The A side was: “Mary Ann” and the B side was: “Persian Rug” (O’Keh 40995) Tommy was the front man and the band made many records on O’keh, Columbia, Brunswick, and finally Decca before the famous break up at the Glen

Island Casino.

Tommy made his first record on 23 April 1929 with a small group which Tommy called “Tom Dorsey and His Novelty Orchestra,” He was the leader and played the trombone. Also in the group was Frank Signorelli, piano, Eddie Lang, guitar, and Stan King on drums. The A side was: “Daddy Change Your Mind” and the B side was: “You Can’t Cheat a Cheater” (O’Keh 41422). This record did not sell well and is hard to find, but was the start of a musical career that would take Tommy throughout his life.

Tommy Dorsey will always be remembered as the “Sentimental Gentleman of Swing”.

NEXT: We will look at the early Benny Goodman

EARLY FM RADIO

By: Fred Rice

These days when one speaks of listening to the radio, one could assume that we are talking about FM radio broadcasts. Since the early days of broadcasting which began commercially in 1920, broadcasts were done with amplitude modulation which means the size of the radio wave is impressed with the information being sent. The electronics methods were in their infancy stage and simple amplifier tubes were the only amplification devices available. Most of the technology was patented by the Radio Corporation of America, more commonly known later as RCA. Prior to 1920, different corporations, Westinghouse, General Electric, ATT, and United Fruit owned major patents. Each company had patents that without the others, could not build radio equipment.

Two individuals from these early days are involved with the development of FM technology and it ended up being developed because of a simple remark. One fellow is David Sarnoff who headed RCA until his passing around 1968. Early broadcast receivers were generally either crystal sets or one tube receivers that could receive stations from hundreds of miles away but needed fine manipulation to get stations tuned in. The popular circuit was called the regenerative radio and is credited to Edwin Armstrong who besides inventing technologies still around today was also a professor at Columbia University. He realized the limitations of the available vacuum tubes and invented a circuit to convert signals to a much lower frequency allowing more gain and sensitivity than ever before possibility. His design of a radio circuit improved by reducing the number of tuning knobs from up to four, down to two. This occurred during WWI. His circuit eliminated the need for 50-foot antennas strung from tree to tree and eliminated cold water pipe ground connection. He called his circuit the "Superheterodyne" and is still used today. It had so much gain and sensitivity, that a coil of wire referred to as a loop antenna

could bring in stations from thousands of miles away.

RCA bought the Superheterodyne from Armstrong in 1922 for \$200,000 plus 60,000 shares of RCA stock, increased to 80,000 shares. In March 1924, RCA announced their new line of radios that missed the Christmas 1923 timeline. It featured two Superheterodyne radios, a large table model 6 tube set that sold for \$260 that contained everything including batteries but required a separate speaker. A large floor model was also sold called Radiola Super VIII which sold for \$425 in 1924. The story is told that Sarnoff and RCA made huge profits from just these two models alone.

The story is told that Sarnoff asked Armstrong if he could build a magic box that could eliminate static. Armstrong studied it and realized that static and radio noise is all amplitude modulated (AM) and another method of putting the music and speech onto a radio signal would be needed. FM theory had been discussed but it was not actually done with much success. Narrow FM modulation had been tried but it did not sound any better than AM broadcasting. Armstrong felt that if the signal were wider, (more deviation of the central frequency) that it would sound much improved. Another feature of the system he developed was the function he called a limiter. His design used a balanced detector to retrieve the audio from the radio signal, but his detector called a "discriminator" would distort when it received an AM signal. The limiter would chop off and eliminate static, noise and other interference and reproduce clear signals. RCA originally let him broadcast from the top of the Empire State Building in NYC where his equipment was among RCA's NBC equipment.

The results of FM were astounding with results exceeding the amplifiers and speakers available at that time around 1935. Sarnoff feared the obsolescence of his NBC network and is known to

have turned against FM. ATT, which we remember had an interest in patents, had a whole business model of renting telephone lines to send radio programming to other NBC stations around the country. Some experimental signal hopping was done in the 1930's of sending programming from New York City to Boston with excellent fidelity and this was seen as a threat to ATT.

In 1936, Armstrong built a facility and tower in Alpine, NJ (it still exists). The call letters were W2XMN and was the first FM station in the US. Electron tubes had improved since the early 1920s but even by the late 1930s and RCA working on television, the highest frequencies that would work were limited.

Around this time the FCC allowed experimental stations to operate 75 channels in what was referred to as the APEX band which covered 41.02 megahertz to 43.98 megahertz. These stations were AM. Several manufacturers of high-end receivers had the dial go up to 60 MHz even though the tubes of the day would barely work at these frequencies.

The FCC mandated that on January 1, 1941, all remaining AM stations on the 42 to 50 MHz band switch to FM. There would be 40 channels 200kHz wide. The new stations had call letters that sound like translator call signs today.

The first FM station to go on the air in Philadelphia was W53PH. The 53 signifies channel 53 which is 45.3 MHz, (A 4 and decimal point added to the channel number gives the frequency). Many early FM radio dials were calibrated with the channel and not the frequency. The PH is city of license, in this case, Philadelphia. W53PH became WFIL-FM and eventually became WIOQ 102.1 MHz where it is today.

If you are a listener to RDV, you may notice that three of our frequencies have different types of call letters. These hark back to the early days where the FM call sign references the channel and not the frequency of the station. Because of overlap there are 100 channels designated channel 200 to

channel 300 with the frequency ranging from 87.8 to 108 MHz. Because each channel overlaps, counting the center of each channel, they go from 87.9 to 107.9 MHz. Our WTHA station is designated to be on 88.1 MHz, channel 201. Even though the channel is listed in the FCC database, it is not used in the ID.

The FCC has continued to this day to use a channel ID in a translator legal ID. Therefore, if you listen to our Philadelphia signal on 107.3 MHz, it is on channel 297. The FCC assigned W297AD as the legal ID for it. The W signifies a US radio station east of the Mississippi River although that rule is sometimes not followed. The "AD" is assigned as the next available letters in the FCC data base.

In the pre-war FM days, the frequency range for FM broadcast was 42.1 MHz to 49.9 MHz and the channels designated were channels 21 to 99 as mentioned earlier. At the end of this article, I will show several early FM radio dials from 1948 and earlier which show the "channel" style radio dials.

In the 42 MHz band, signals tended to travel farther and could cause interference. RCA used this claim against the FM interests to lobby the FCC to force them to the 88 to 108 MHz band. It would take new vacuum tube development after WWII to be able to design FM receivers that would work on the new band. The old 42 to 50 band was given to the television interests for Channel 1. It was a short time until they abandoned channel 1 by 1948. If you can remember your old analog TVs before 2006, all had VHF channels 2 to 13, no channel 1.

After WW2 when consumer electronics were back in production, several manufacturers, Zenith, Stromberg Carlson, and Magnavox offered two band FM receivers but as per the FCC mandate, all broadcasts on the old 42 to 50 MHz band would cease at midnight, January 8, 1949. The previous manufacturers mentioned and some smaller ones also, all dropped the 42 to 50 MHz band from their sets now just having the 88 to 108 MHz band.



Philco model 42-350, Philco's least expensive AM-FM and short-wave radio which sold for \$49.95 in 1942. The 21 to 99 MHz scale at the top was the 42 to 50 MHz FM band.



This dial is from one of the more expensive Magnavox Radio/Phonographs from about 1948 showing dual markings for both frequency and channels.

RDV's Bensalem translator W246AR can be heard at 97.1 on this radio. It could also be tuned to channel 246 on the lower number scale, putting it exactly at 97.1.

Stromberg Carlson was another higher end manufacturer who used only the channel scales but finally just using frequency markings after 1948.



This dial is from a 1948 Stromberg-Carlson model 1210 Radio/Phonograph that still had both FM bands.

Frequency Modulation 1 was the channelized 88 to 108 MHz band while Frequency Modulation 2 was the pre-war 42 to 50 MHz band that still had a few stations around the US broadcasting on it. The FCC mandated that as of January 8th, 1949, all broadcasting on the 42 to 50 MHz FM band would cease.

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Please visit our RDV Online Store at WRDV.ORG and click [Donate](#) to view and purchase premium items available.

WRDV is everywhere! See us at the following events in 2024:

58 th Polish American Family Festival & Country Fair	Saturday, August 31, 2024 12PM - 4PM
Warminster Day	Saturday, September 28, 2024 11AM - 3PM
Hatboro Halloween Stroll	Saturday, October 26, 2024 2PM - 4PM
WRDV Annual Fund Drive	Sunday, Oct 20 - Saturday, November 9, 2024
WRDV Open House	Saturday, November 16, 2024 12PM - 4PM
64 th Hatboro Holiday Parade	Sunday, November 24, 2024 2PM - 4PM

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Rudolf Sawyer

Note of Appreciation:

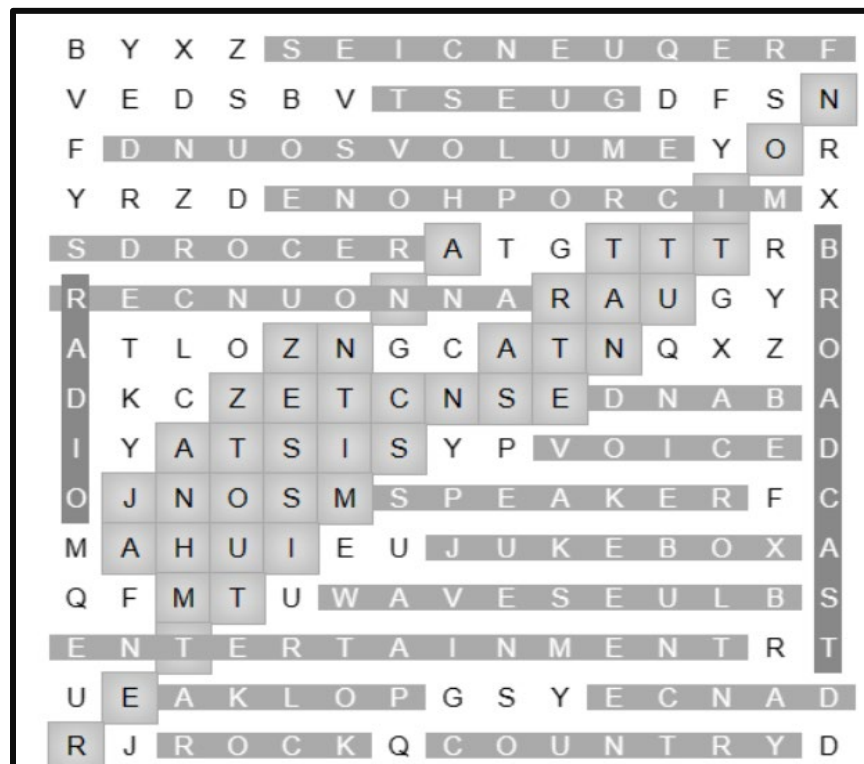
It is our greatest appreciation for the help and assistance we have received from the Griffith Pottery House in Oreland, PA. Kevin, and Dawn have helped us out with their creative ideas and recommendations with our annual fund drive and including our online market. Previously Kevin and Dawn worked with Todd Allen, one of our past General Managers. They have given us gratis support on occasion and expedited our product delivery when we needed them. Once again, we want to thank Kevin and Dawn at the Griffith Pottery House in Oreland, PA.

To our Listeners:

Dear listeners, do not forget our online market is open throughout the year. The online market is not our annual fund drive. The online market is an additional way to help us generate funds for our yearly operations. We will change out the premiums on a quarterly basis in the online market. We appreciate your continuous support of WRDV RADIO.

To Vic Miles:

We can't thank you enough for your support in doing the layout for our newsletter.



Solution to the Radio Word Search puzzle on page 11