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1012 South Fair Oaks Avenue  
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# DREAM - HOUSE

BY

BILL EARL, M.A.

"THE OFFICIAL KRLA HISTORIAN"

THE COMPLETE 30 YEAR HISTORY OF A MAJOR WEST-COAST RADIO STATION  
AND HOW IT BECAME THE SOUNDTRACK TO A GENERATION!

A DESERT ROSE PRODUCTION





FROSTY HARRIS

## FOREWORD

### "ONCE UPON A FROSTY NIGHT"

Music to strengthen your heart;  
To soothe your soul.  
Enter the dream-house leaving your  
Debts asleep, your history at the door.  
This is the home for heroes,  
Our music, a love you can afford.

Drew Struzan  
February, 1967

Military school was a drag. Especially those weekends when my parents didn't come. It was sad seeing the parents come and take the cadets home or wherever, but they came once in a while, and those Sunday afternoon lunches at the Orange Fair with those harlequin lamps smiling down at me. There's got to be a better life for a ten-year-old than marching with welded rifles and longing to be outside the fence. But it's the summer of 1961, and I'm out. Boy, I like the little transistor radio Father Billy gave me. "Made in Japan." Well, you can't win 'em all. I know that means cheap, but it works. Hey, this can be fun. Let's see what's on. Wow! This is great, the "Bonanza

Theme"! And I like this one, "The Mountain's High". This sure doesn't sound like Ira Cook at KMPC that Mom used to play for me. Who's this? Charlie Brown? And his daughter in the studio with him? Hal Murray and the Murray-Go-Round. Jim Kelley. Art Nelson. These guys are great. I really like Don French. So that's what they look like, this little KFWB folder from Mitchell's El Rancho TV. Don French. He looks like Skipper Frank. Hal Murray looks like those TV game show hosts. But this radio, it just doesn't have much power.

The ten-year-old was walking down Altura to the Hugo Reid primary school, little transistor in hand, tuned to 980. KFWB. That was the station you were supposed to listen to, right? And those KFWB folders are fun to collect, different color every week, different pictures every week. I think KFWB had just had a strike, and now air personalities seemed to be popping up each week. What happened to Charlie Brown? I really liked him. He was there last week? And who's Jim Kelley? Bobby Dale -- he's bald like my Dad!

The ten-year-old continued to walk, now turning down De Anza. It was clear that this ten-year-old liked this new "toy," a 6-transistor radio, even better than those Dick Tracy comic strips.

The boy was now walking home. The Mar-Keys "Last Night" was coming out of the radio. The boy was walking to its beat. Suddenly, without notice, a car came around the corner pretty fast. The boy got out of the way by the house with the bottle caps hanging from the tree. I think a jockey lived there, or something. Well, the boy got out of the way, but in doing so, there went the radio, right down to the curb. It was clear that his decision to walk around with the radio without the case might not have been a good idea. Maybe that would have saved the radio. Well, it served its purpose. The boy turned on the radio, and the radio turned the boy on, too. It was time for a new radio. That radio just was static. Hmm! Here's a station down to the right of 980. Is that Linda Scott I hear? No. It's not KFWB. Well, the radio just isn't working. I think it's shot. The only station that's coming in is this sort of loud channel where it sounds now like "Tradewinds, Tradewinds". Static. This radio is beyond repair.

The big white Chevy Delray pulled into the driveway. It was so neat having Mom drive. And her own car! Well, being a high school teacher now, that's real nifty! Just think, my Mom, the high school teacher. I bet she'll hear a lot about that music I've been listening to. Mom suggested, "Let's go up to Hastings Ranch." You know that Foothill-Rosemead shopping center by the A&P Market and Drug King. Drug King! That's where I bought the Dennis the Menace's father puppet. That seems so long ago. Radio is what I like now!

Mom's Delray pulled up in front of the center on the lower side. There's the Ontra cafeteria. And there's Bank of America. And look at that huge star!! The star was a huge one, shining silver. And it was right above the door of the Phillips company. Looks like an appliance shop. I hope they have a new radio.

The boy got out of the big Delray in the parking lot, and the night was so clear. You could see for miles clear down the valley. The boy stood in the parking lot looking south. He could see the lights far below, as the shopping center parking lot was so high. Off in the distance red tower lights were blinking on and off south of Arcadia, south of Temple City. I KNOW THOSE LIGHTS! The boy suddenly knew where he was looking toward. About a year before, his grandmother had passed away, but for all of his life he remembered visiting her at the Delta Rest Home on Delta Street in Rosemead, sitting in the back seat of his Dad's blue and white Chevy, as his father and uncle drove his grandmother back to the rest home on a Sunday evening after the weekly Sunday visit. The ride down San Gabriel Boulevard was always a fun one, looking at all the signs and all, but the farther south on San Gabriel Boulevard the more rural it seemed. Fields were common, and as we turned left on Rush Street to Delta, it seemed like we were in a different world. Open spaces. Oil wells that hummed like hungry grasshoppers.

As the car turned east on Rush Street, off in the distant fields there were towers standing proudly in a pasture. It looked like six of them. The red lights were blinking on and off. I wonder what they are? An airplane landmark? A radio station? Down here in Rosemead or El Monte? I think that's El Monte over there. Well, the boy knew he was near his grandmother's because when those tower lights were in sight he's just about there.

His grandmother's rest home always had a lot of importance for this ten-year-old because his parents always told him he was dressed in a red scotch plaid jumpsuit when he walked for the first time! A lot of happy memories at the Delta Rest Home. But no more. His grandmother had died in 1960 about a year before.

The boy stared out at those tower lights. Those were the same ones he always remembered from those Sunday drives down to the new land -- the land of fields and giant towers with flashing red lights.

It was time for the boy to go into the store. As he walked into the store with his mother, the huge silver star hung overhead on the frontage of the building above the front door.

The Phillip's store had a lot of appliances. But radios? In the back of the store was a pegboard display. Wow! Take a look at that! Look at those transistor radios. They're black and chrome! And wow! They're made by G.E., American made. General Electric. Isn't that what that actor Ronald Reagan talks about on TV? Buy a G.E. Made in the U.S.A. No more made in Japan. Those are cheap. This radio is gonna last!

The boy's mom bought the G.E. radio for her son and the boy couldn't be happier. The radio had a silver "ring" style antenna on the top, where you could hold onto it. A lot easier not to dump.

As the boy's mother walked to Woolworth's a few doors down, the boy walked back to the Delray and waited for his mom by the car clutching his new prize, a G.E. transistor radio! It was almost 9 o'clock. The stores were about to close. The boy decided to turn it on. He turned the dial. One station seemed to leap from the radio with a sharp, clear sound, the loudest of any! The boy stared out into the valley, south toward the distant lights and in the direction of those flashing red towers.

"Standby Los Angeles! KRLA now proudly presents the Frosty Harris show on Radio Eleven-Ten!!" (Cha cha cha!!).

For a moment, the boy was mesmerized. He discovered a new station. This wasn't 980. This was Radio Eleven-Ten. As the boy held the transistor radio to his ear as his mom drove them home, he heard more of his newfound friend. The voice was so happy sounding, so jolly, so cheerful! He sounded so fun! Frosty Harris. The show continued.

"You're in tune to Frosty the Showman at KRLA! Now more songs from the Tune-Dex with The Showman!!"

Frosty the Showman! Frosty Harris. I wonder why he's called "Frosty?" I bet its cold from nine to midnight. That's got to be it. I wonder what he looks like? I bet he's jolly and maybe on the plump side! Frosty the Showman!

The boy took the new G.E. transistor radio into his room and fell asleep with the radio under his pillow. As he drifted off to sleep, he faintly heard, "You're listening to the B.E. Show!" B.E.? Those are my initials, the boy said to himself. The clock was after midnight. The boy drifted off to sleep with a whole new adventure under his pillow.

And far south of Arcadia, where the boy slept, the powerful towers by the wide open pastures and fields continued their blinking. Something had come full circle into the boy's life. The towers in the field by his grandmother's home were the same towers he saw in the distance from the parking lot with his G.E. transistor radio. And the station he had discovered was the loudest on his dial, obviously, since the towers were so close, just a few miles south in South El Monte right next to Rosemead.

KRLA had entered this boy's life that late summer of 1961. And for the next 28 years, this station would be the soundtrack to his life.

The poem at the beginning of this FOREWORD was painted below the beautiful painting that graces the cover of this book, which was one of the winning Valentine s that was presented to KRLA on Valentine's Day 1967 toward the end of the KRLA that had been so strong, so proud, so mighty, and so important to so many young people in Los Angeles, California. The title of our book, the first from Research Archives, comes from this poem. The owner of this painting, who has asked to remain nameless, has given us permission for its use in this book as both title and cover. We thank our associate for making this happen.

Dream-House is the story of an important soundtrack to the baby-boomers of Southern California, as this radio station and all of the talents who walked through its door and over the transmitter towers in both South El Monte and Irwindale, as this radio station in its 30-year history touched the hearts and souls of a generation of our leaders of today, the Pepsi Generation, the Hullabalooers and the people who grew up listening to Radio Eleven-Ten during its 48 years, 1941 through 1989 where this volume stops, in a rightful place, as the new KRLA celebrates its 30-year history in special programming over the Labor Day weekend in September 1989, 30 years after the beginning of the KRLA call letters.

The purpose of this book is to tell the story through 48 years of programming of the station that touched so many people. As the author of this book, we grew up between the towers of KRLA in South El Monte, and the studios in Pasadena at the Huntington Hotel, and by living between KRLA's two locations, were able to spend many days over the years visiting the facilities, talking to the various engineers, air personalities and other staff members to gather much of the behind-the-scenes information provided in this book.

Because we have never actually been on the KRLA payroll, even though we have contributed to KRLA's programming in several on-the-air projects in 1974, 1977, 1981 and 1985, we have been able to write a book of what really

happened during the 30 years of KRLA without being under any management pressure to write "the company line." We are a purist historian who believes that unless history is presented accurately, memories tend to fade and pretty soon what really happened becomes a foggy blur that may even not be true. Some of the principals who we've written about in this book we have talked to "off the record." And frankly, many of the people involved at KRLA over the years have quite honestly forgotten what happened even though it affected themselves at the time and seemed quite important then.

Also, there is another aspect of KRLA that we do not cover in Dream-House and that is the behind-the-scenes technical or legal aspects of KRLA from 1959 to 1979 when a permanent license was awarded the station. Let us explain why. In 1977, KRLA engineer Don Beem had heard about our 80-page thesis on KRLA which we had written for Pasadena City College in October through December 1969, and when Beem was enrolled as a Masters Degree candidate at Cal State Fullerton, Beem contacted us and invited us down to the transmitter site in South El Monte to discuss possible collaborations, and help from us for his own thesis on the legal struggles of KRLA in losing and gaining a station license. Beem knew we had done a lot of research eight years before and now in 1977, Beem wanted to write his version of the KRLA story.

Because we did not want to loan out primary source material for an unspecified length of time and because we felt that the importance of KRLA was in its programming rather than legal or technical situations the general public and listeners may not even know about, Beem and us were unable to come to an understanding. Since then, we have reviewed Beem's college paper on KRLA, and it goes into very good detail on the legal and license problems of KRLA that can really not be topped. However, our thesis in 1969, the first ever written in detail on KRLA, and Beem's in 1980, 11 years later, are the only publications ever written on KRLA and approach the station from two different viewpoints.

This book, Dream-House coupled with Don Beem's college thesis, make a very good contribution for those scholars who wish to study KRLA further. As far as our original thesis that we wrote back in October through December 1969, after discovering many inaccuracies due to the lack of resource material at the time, being a perfectionist, our copy was scrapped, and the other two copies that existed had been given to Tom Beck, now deceased, and to Johnnie Darin, then-PD at KRLA. Darin told us he believes that Jay Stevens may have our 1969 thesis in his home in packing boxes. But this book not only replaces that original thesis, but goes much, much further into detail and also covers the entire 30 years of KRLA, not just the first 10.

To the people who did help us in the endeavor, we wish to thank for their help and recollections, especially Dave Hull, Johnnie Darin, William F. Williams, Jimmy O'Neill, Jay Stevens, Frosty Harris, Ted Quillin, Mark Denis, Bob Dayton, Pat Moore, Mike Wagner, Bob Hudson, Penny Biondi, Bob Eubanks, Roy Elwell, Bill Keffury, and Tom Murphy.

If any area of KRLA we have left out, is because of not having enough information to give a full account, was not able to get a second corroborating story to keep all recollections correct and accurate, or in the case of KRLA's legal and license situations, we felt that this aspect of KRLA had been already covered by other sources, including Don Beem's thesis which, as said before, looks at the station from a point of view that may not be that interesting to readers or former KRLA listeners who only knew about KRLA from its "sound," its programs, and its people.

This book, Dream-House, does not claim to be complete. It is impossible for any researcher to cover everything, and we've tried to cover as much as possible that a listener or fan could remember or identify with.

Again, we can say that the facts in this book and the extraordinary detail to the book has been presented to you, the readers, with lots of care and lots of attention to make sure all the facts are true. And as a research historian with a Masters Degree ourselves, we have decided to approach this book as a critic, and in so doing, may apply critical thinking and sometimes comments that reflect our opinion and might not be thought of the way we do, if someone else were to write this. We feel we have been fair in this book and have given constructive criticism and exercised our researchers' opinion on our presentation of facts. We stand by the facts, because we believe fully that history should not be revisionist, but should be an as-close-as-possible story of what really happened, because you can't change history.

This book, Dream-House, looks at KRLA from the perspective of a long-time listener, a fan, a communications scholar and graduate, as an educator, and as a research historian. We do not claim to have at all times the complete "insiders'" point of view or frame of reference, as we were never a full-fledged insider.

One other question comes up. Why now? After all, it has been 20 years since the "A+" thesis we wrote at Pasadena City College, and it has been 18 years since KRLA was actually a force in the Los Angeles radio scene. Why now? Well, KRLA turns 30 years old under those call letters in August of 1989 and also, let's face it, we're all getting older and if the story of KRLA is not told now, it might never be. Memories are fading. We know of KRLA Eleven-Ten men that are no longer with us, Jim Washburne, Dick Moreland, B. Mitchel Reed, Tom Beck, Hal Goodwin, and John Rydgren. But because October 1969 will be the 20th anniversary of our first college thesis on KRLA and because August 1989 will be 30 years since the first time the KRLA call letters were heard on the Eleven-Ten frequency, we felt that it was about time to dust off the notes, the memories, and preserve them for mankind.

With these comments, we invite you, the readers, to sit back and enjoy this history of not only a radio station but more a soundtrack to so many people's lives. We hope this book brings back some memories for you and talks about that special personality or memory of KRLA that made the station special to you.

It's time now to enter the Dream-House, the 30-year history of KRLA as it really was, and to enjoy a station that was the soundtrack to so many lives over its 30-year period, especially its halcyon days 1964 through 1967. KRLA ... this is the Home for Heroes -- and we hope your special hero can be found in these pages. KRLA, the dream-house of 30 years is open. Enter. And enjoy.

Bill Earl  
June 1989





# CLASS IS NOW IN SESSION at KRLA-1110 on the dial

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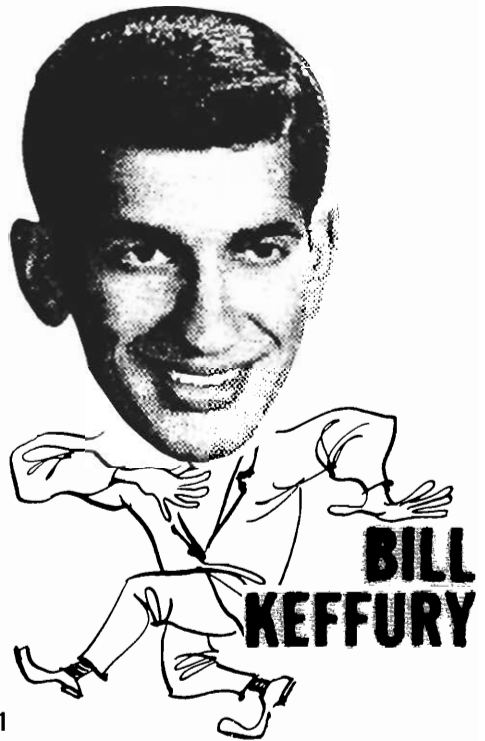
ARLEN SANDERS

SAM RIDDLE





**WINK MARTINDALE**



**BILL  
KEFFURY**



**JIM WASHBURNE**

**CHAPTER 1**

**"BLUE SKIES AND GREEN LIGHTS"**

The teenage disc jockey turned on the microphone. He took a deep breath. For at only 19, he had a big responsibility. He would be the first voice ever heard on this new radio station. The sounds of the country station had come to an end. The twangy guitars and fiddles had just finished. The 19-year-old teenage disc-jockey was on.

"You have been listening to KXLA. You are now listening to KRLA-Radio For The Young at Heart."

Jimmy O'Neill, the first voice of KRLA, had launched a new radio station. It was September, 1959. KRLA was born. But before KRLA, there was something else on Eleven-Ten on Los Angeles AM dials. We set the clock back to September, 1941.

In early September, 1941, in the rural farmlands of South El Monte nestled below the Whittier hills and next to a man-made lake built by the Army Corps of Engineers, a pasture that had been the feeding grounds for horses and cows was about to be transformed into something else. A small white building was built on 823 North Lexington-Gallatin Road. Big red-and-white towers were to be installed just north of the small white building. KPAS. A 5,000 watt station to be serving the farm community of South El Monte and the San Gabriel Valley. It was called KPAS for its studio would be built in an old "carriage house" building on the grounds of the fashionable Huntington Hotel. The station would start out at just 5,000 watts because of the war. But the following year, on November 1942, the power would be raised to 10,000 watts, a mighty voice for the growing San Gabriel Valley.

However, after the ownership changed in 1945, new call letters would be given to KPAS. KPAS would not just serve "PAS" - Pasadena, but "LA" - Los Angeles. So KXLA began anew in 1946. The programming of KXLA in 1945 would

be a mishmash of all types of music, such as country western or light opera and also feature news, editorial comment, cooking lessons, bridge lessons, and since KXLA was in Pasadena, a deal was cut to have the performers at the nearby Pasadena Playhouse perform some of their acting sketches. Most of the programming would originate from the Pasadena studios, but there would be a booth with turntables in the small white building in South El Monte so some broadcasting could take place from that location at the heart of KXLA as well. Because KXLA was a local suburban station in a farm area east of Los Angeles, special attention was given to local programming and local advertising to serve the El Monte and Pasadena communities.

As stated earlier, KXLA had a mishmash of various programming, some featuring the talents of Jim Hawthorne who was highly creative and popular and a young disc-jockey named Arthur Egoian who used the name Art Laboe. However, one of the more popular shows on KXLA was a syndicated country western show, highly popular with the farm community in the agricultural pasture lands surrounding the KXLA transmitter. Because of the strong agricultural community surrounding the KXLA transmitter "tower farm," it was decided that KXLA would, instead of offering a mishmash of various programming, instead concentrate on one format and that would be country-western. Many of the farmers in the South El Monte area had come from the Mid-West Heartland where the music of country-western music was very close to them and their pleasures. KXLA had not only recorded country western shows and remote broadcasts from country-western nightclubs and the nearby El Monte American Legion Stadium, but had live musicians and bands who performed from the studios in Pasadena.

Some of the early staff names at KXLA were Ernie Ford, an announcer for KXLA, and Cliffie Stone who would be a performing musician at the Pasadena studios. This country-western format would be so successful and KXLA was thriving with its agricultural audience, that in April 1955, a new beige-colored transmitter building was built directly east, right next door to the little white building. This new transmitter building for KXLA would have state-of-the-art facilities and be built complete with a kitchen and complete lounge facilities along with UPI "rip-and-read" news-wire printer, and shower and toilet, and also large water-cooled transmitter consoles that could be jacked up to 50,000 watts if the FCC allowed the station to increase its power in the years ahead. The new transmitter building was at 825 North Lexington-Gallatin Road. The old building at 823 would be dismantled inside, and the small building itself would be used as primarily a storage building for parts. So for the next four years KXLA served the farm area of the neighborhood surrounding its transmitter facilities quite well. Again, a radio station should try to serve its community, and with so much agricultural and farm developments in the El Monte area, KXLA provided a good service.

However, Los Angeles was growing in the years after World War II. The baby-boomers were starting to move into their teenage years and it was clear that programming for the huge number of baby boomers would be an important way to go. KFNB could see that, and on January 1, 1958 started its TOP 40 "Color Radio" programming featuring such big name personalities as Elliot Field, Bruce Hayes, and Joe Yocam. KFNB soon became the number one station in all of Los Angeles, and it pretty much had the city to itself. These teenagers (and their parents) all listened to KFNB. It had extremely high ratings, and the format was quite slick and well produced.

In 1959, a Canadian entrepreneur, Jack Kent Cooke and his American brother Donald Cooke, wanted to acquire a Los Angeles radio station. They were able to purchase KXLA in early 1959 and had plans to change the format to that of a TOP 40 contemporary music station to compete with KFNB and try to attract some of that audience. Even though Jack Cooke was a Canadian, because his brother Donald had American citizenship, the deal was able to go through even though Jack Cooke would not be allowed by law to have any hands-on role at KXLA. Jack Cooke did anyway, which would cause problems for the station and its license along with other miscalculations that we will outline briefly and not in too much detail, as this book deals primarily with the "sound" and programming of Eleven-Ten and not so much on what was happening behind the scenes that was relatively unknown to the public. (For further detail, we recommend former KXLA/KRLA engineering employee Don Beem's college thesis on the shelves of Cal State Fullerton library.)

The Cookes wanted this new rock-and-roll TOP 40 format to start in August of 1959, but because of various delays, the new format on KXLA would not start until 12:00 midnight, August 31, 1959/September 1, 1959. Because of the identification of KXLA being known as a country station for the last 10 years or so, the Cookes decided that new call letters should accompany this new change in format. So on September 1, 1959 at midnight, KXLA would become KRLA, the new call letters chosen for "Radio Los Angeles." Even though KXLA/KRLA was primarily a suburban station in El Monte and Pasadena, the Cookes wanted the public to think of KRLA as a Los Angeles station. Again to compete head on with KFNB, and others.

The Cookes put together a team of disc jockeys under the guidance of the first KRLA program director, Bill Wheatley. The first lineup that was to "tentatively" be heard on KRLA was Jimmy O'Neill, a 19-year-old disc jockey and personal favorite of Jack Cooke's from 7-10 a.m., Wilson Hurst 10 a.m. to 12 noon, Ken Barnes from 12 noon to 3 p.m., Greg Mason 3 to 7 p.m., Hal Goodwin from 7-11 p.m., and Frank Pollack from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. It was understood with what would be in the 5-7 a.m. hours as to satisfy the FCC, some talk was made of having some type of farm programming in that slot, but if the Cookes could still satisfy the FCC's requirements for other types of "agricultural targeted" programming, then TOP 40 music could be played in those hours. The Cookes wanted consistency in the broadcast day and even though knew they should have farm area programming to serve the El Monte-Pasadena communities, they would prefer all music for the entire 24 hours. After an off-the-air "dry run" of this lineup, the Cookes found some of these talents unacceptable and so Wilson Hurst and Ken Barnes would not be part of the new lineup on the air after all, as soon as they could be replaced.

The Cookes also had asked the FCC to raise the station power from 10,000 watts to 50,000 watts to launch the new station with a bigger power to serve the entire Los Angeles area and not just the farm communities of El Monte and Pasadena.

Because the disc-jockey lineup was still being formulated by the Cookes and Wheatley, from 12:00 midnight on the early morning of September 1, 1959 through 6:00 a.m. on September 3, the new KRLA would just feature TOP 40 music played back to back with promos for the new station and its first contest that was thought up by the Cookes, "The Golden Key" contest. The live disc-jockey lineup was to start on September 3, 1959 at 6:00 a.m. "The Golden Key" contest was that a golden key that would symbolically turn on the new 50,000 watt transmitter in South El Monte (to kick off the increased power of the station) would be hidden somewhere in the Los Angeles area and that "clues" would be given over the air as to where its location was. Whoever found this "Golden Key" would be able to "pull the switch" at the KRLA transmitter site in South El Monte to jack up the station's power and also win a large cash prize.

The problem was, during the time of the promos announced on KRLA from September 1 through September 3, it was not decided exactly where the key would be hidden. So the "clues" broadcast over the air were meaningless. This would cause problems for KRLA and their new license in hoodwinking the public by giving "clues" that were incorrect. There was a certain standard of ethics that contests were supposed to have, and if a radio station did not follow the letter of the law, the station's license could be in jeopardy for not serving the public interest properly.

During this time, however, people in the "Land of Eleven-Ten" swarmed all over the Huntington Hotel grounds and even the fields adjacent to the South El Monte transmitter site, thinking that the "golden key" might be hidden on station property, a likely place. However, while all these people were scrambling around, the key was not hidden anywhere, as the Cookes had not decided where to put it. In other words, the contest was fraudulent at that time as there was nothing out there the public could find. However, the Cookes decided to "hide" the key at Marineland and gave very obvious clues to its location where it was indeed found over the Labor Day weekend, when the Cookes knew that Marineland would have a "big gate" (lots of ticket buyers.) Jimmy O'Neill told us that once it was determined the key was hidden at the Marineland "area," people actually "combed the hills" adjacent to Marineland to look for this key.

So on September 3, 1959 KRLA went live with its lineup of disc jockeys, all except for one who was still under contract back East and who would not be available until a short time afterwards. The lineup of disc jockeys starting September 3 were Jimmy O'Neill, Bob Cole, Greg Mason, Hal Goodwin, Frank Pollack and Frosty Harris. Harris originally was going to be going by "Bruce Harris," and even jingles were cut to that effect. But because the morning man at KFMB was Bruce Hayes, it was decided that the "Bruce" was to be dropped and instead the catchy sounding "Frosty Harris," "Frosty the Showman," and "The Showman" names would be used. Of this lineup only Harris and O'Neill showed any real promise. O'Neill's youth made him very attractive to the young audience that KRLA wanted to attract, and Frosty Harris was probably the best of this lineup over all. Harris had a bright, happy style that really made a radio come alive. We feel that Frosty Harris would have been a terrific morning man at this time, but the Cookes had someone else in mind for the morning drive spot.

The man that Cooke wanted was Perry Allen, a popular disc-jockey in Buffalo, New York, who because of commitments to the station there, could not come out to Los Angeles for a short time later after the live disc-jockey format began. The Cookes thought of a promotion that would be built around Perry Allen. They launched a "Find Perry Allen" contest where listeners in the Land of Eleven-Ten were supposed to walk up to anyone who bore the described

resemblance to Allen, and if the person they walked up to was actually Allen, they would win \$50,000. Suddenly, as in the Golden Key contest, KRLA listeners were indeed walking up to strangers trying to find Allen. KRLA gave the impression that Allen was in the Los Angeles area. However, Allen was still in New York unknown to the public. Again, as in the first few days of the Golden Key contest, the Cooke brothers had staged a bogus contest that was impossible to win by its listeners. The station made its listeners think that Allen was in Los Angeles when they knew he really wasn't. Again, as in the Golden Key contest, both contests were not conducted in "the cleanest sense"; and so this too would cause problems for KRLA's new station license with the FCC. However, Bob Purcell, KFNB's general manager, knew that Allen was still in Buffalo. So Purcell sent KFNB newsman Charlie Arlington to New York to "find" Allen, and when Arlington did, KFNB demanded that KRLA pay them the \$50,000. KRLA refused to pay its "rival" at first, but after legal negotiations were forced to. When this was brought to the attention of the FCC, along with the Golden Key contest, KRLA was in trouble, and the FCC began investigating if KRLA was operating in the public interest as it was supposed to.

So Perry Allen finally did join KRLA as the new morning man. Shortly after that, Jimmy O'Neill recommended to the Cookes that he knew of another personality Roy Elwell that would be excellent in the mid-morning housewife hours, being older than some of the others and balding, and had the maturity for that audience, and so Roy Elwell was signed by KRLA at O'Neill's suggestion.

So after the dust settled, KRLA was able to put together its first "real" lineup: Perry Allen, 6 to 9 a.m., Roy Elwell 9 to Noon, Bob Cole Noon to 3, Jimmy O'Neill 3 to 6 p.m., Greg Mason 6 to 9 p.m., Frosty Harris 9 to midnight, and Frank Pollack midnight to six. Hal Goodwin by this time had left KRLA and had gone on to KFNB as a newsman.

We need to mention at this point that KRLA had its first jingle package (before Elwell was signed and Goodwin was still part of the lineup) in which "Pasadena" or "El Monte" was never once mentioned but "Modern Radio Los Angeles" and "KRLA Los Angeles" were. A station is supposed to on its hour and half-hour ID's identify itself from the city on its license as in KRLA's case Pasadena, as this is where the studios were. It would have been more accurate if KRLA had identified itself as "KRLA, El Monte" or "KRLA, South El Monte" as this actually is the physical location of where the sound of KRLA is coming from as being sent out over the transmitter towers, but the FCC didn't require "transmitter site" identification and so the license read "KRLA, Pasadena." However, the ID jingles played said "KRLA, Los Angeles."

Again, this was not appreciated by the FCC when this was brought to their attention. So far, the FCC was beginning to develop a list of problems with this new station KRLA involving contests that bordered on fraudulent, a Canadian making major decisions for an American radio station which was against the law, and now improper station identifications. KRLA was making a lot of mistakes even though its programming was developing into a good product. Other problems that the FCC would discover would be "doctored logs" to show religious programming that was supposed to have been broadcast and never was, and "farm programming" (that was supposed to serve the El Monte farm area) that actually was just a list of produce that could be purchased at the market! This was not acceptable "farm programming" as far as the FCC required.

But these behind-the-scenes legal problems were unknown to the listeners, and the listening audience was continuing to sample KRLA even though it was way way way behind the mighty KFNB for TOP 40 programming. KFNB was still the overwhelming number one station in Los Angeles. With KRLA still a "rural" station for El Monte and Pasadena, and with its growing problems with the FCC, KFNB had not much to worry about. There was speculation that KRLA would not be on the air much longer as the FCC might "pull" its license for these early miscalculations and violations of FCC rules.

KRLA entered 1960 with its lineup of Allen, Elwell, Cole, O'Neill, Mason, Harris, and Pollack in place but would suffer one casualty in early 1960 when Greg Mason would be replaced in the 6 to 9 p.m. spot by a young, fresh sounding personality, Sam Riddle. Riddle had two distinguishable features on his show that started on KRLA in early 1960 6 to 9 p.m. Riddle would always start out his show with the trademark phrase "Hello Music Lovers" and made frequent references to his favorite sandwiches which some listeners would actually bring down to the station, "peanut butter and banana sandwiches." Riddle also liked calling himself "Sambo" Riddle too. Riddle was young and good-looking and fit the youthful image that KRLA had wanted to develop in contrast to the slightly older and more "slick sounding" seven swingin' gentlemen at KFNB.

KRLA's philosophy at this time was to have young, attractive, youthful personalities who would be playing this new TOP 40 music and their visible youth alone was thought would attract younger listeners who would like a "younger

sound" than say Yocam or Field at KFNB. This was one of the KRLA programming strategies at this time in 1960. Whereas the KFNB Seven Swingin' Gentlemen were "older" personalities in their 30's or 40's, the KRLA "Eleven-Ten Men" would be on the average much younger, in their 20's for the most part. It was thought that listeners would prefer personalities closer to their generation.

By June 1960, KRLA was in need of a weekend man and relief jock, so the next to join KRLA, in June 1960, in the station's formative years was a young man from KACY in Oxnard, Bob Eubanks. Eubanks had the good looks and young image that KRLA was looking for at that time. And Eubanks had a memorable tag on his show, "And remember one thing ...". Eubanks was indeed a star on the rise.

Shortly after Eubanks joined KRLA, Frank Pollack, the all-night disc jockey, was developing back problems and didn't like playing TOP 40 music, and because of those and also because Cooke did not "like" Frank Pollack as an air talent, Eubanks moved into the midnight to 6 a.m. spot where "The B.E. Show" brought a youth crispness over the older, more subdued sounds of Frank Pollack.

Also that summer in 1960, Bob Cole would be leaving the Noon to 3 show to go back to the Midwest where we were told he would be more comfortable. When this new Noon to 3 slot opened up, Bob Eubanks made a strong bid to move into those hours from the midnight to six shift, but instead KRLA signed another relatively youthful talent, Roger Christian, to the Noon to 3 show replacing Cole. Christian told us about how it was either Eubanks or Christian for that opening. Christian said to us,

"He wanted it, but I got it."

However, by the fall of 1960, KRLA decided to do an interesting programming change that happened only once in Los Angeles radio history. KRLA would make a "swap" or "trade" like is done in baseball for a disc jockey at another radio station in Los Angeles. In baseball this is common, but not in radio. Here's what happened. Perry Allen did not want to be a TOP 40 disc jockey any more. He preferred going to middle-of-the-road programming. At the same time, a young disc jockey at "Radio 93" KHJ from the twin towers at the corner of Venice and Fairfax in Southwest Los Angeles, Winston Martindale, who used the air name "Wink Martindale," wanted to expand his audience and get greater visibility on a TOP 40 station. "Radio 93" was one of the steadfast MOR stations in Los Angeles, also being one of the oldest stations in Los Angeles, too. It was decided to make a cross-town trade. Martindale for Allen.

Both stations were happy. Both personalities were happy. The trade was made. And Wink Martindale became the new 6 to 9 a.m. morning man at KRLA. Because Martindale had already been already known to Los Angeles listeners from his days at KHJ, he already was an established persona and so because of that, KRLA felt it got the better deal. Also KRLA wanted to move away from any "cloud" that might have hung over the station from the disastrous "Find Perry Allen" contest. Martindale, even though not a strong morning talent, as he conducted his show pretty straight with no real humor, had that youth and vitality that KRLA was trying to project in contrast to KFNB. Martindale also had begun to host a dance show from Pacific Ocean Park in Santa Monica, and so Martindale's good looks and screen image for television was thought to be a big plus for KRLA. Martindale as morning man did have a rubber toy sound effect he called a "winker" that he squeezed very frequently, which emitted the same kind of sound when you squeeze a child's toy, like a rubber duck or something. Also Martindale had a "Wink Awake" contest involving listener's birthdays. On Martindale's "Dance Party" shows on television, Martindale would use this show as a way of introducing some of the other telegenic "Eleven-Ten Men" to the viewers. We recall one show where Martindale introduced Bob Eubanks, which was said to be Eubank's first television appearance in Los Angeles! So on October 1, 1960, Wink Martindale became the new morning man on KRLA, and the station lineup went as follows: Martindale 6 to 9, Elwell 9 to Noon, Christian Noon to 3, O'Neill 3 to 6, Riddle 6 to 9, Harris 9 to midnight and Eubanks midnight to 6.

KRLA needed a weekender and relief at this time, so at the recommendation of Bob Eubanks, a deep-voiced air talent from KACY, where Eubanks had served before KRLA, Dick Moreland was signed for KRLA part time. Moreland had a deep voice, a rather country-type style, and always closed his shows by saying,

"This has been a Desert Rose production." and "Bye Bye, Buy Bottled and Bond, Bye Bye."

Moreland also read a poem with the closing line "I know you're everywhere, so there!!!" The reason for the Desert Rose production? Well, when Moreland was in Oxnard, there was a lady who lived nearby who used to be a devoted fan of KACY and sometimes brought refreshments to "the boys" at the station. Her name was Rose and she used to always let Moreland know she would be making an aircheck (tape off her radio) of Moreland's show. Since Moreland knew she would usually be recording it, he would always say,

"This has been a Desert Rose Production."

Rose still lives in Oxnard and is as much a buff of KACY as we are with Los Angeles radio. When Moreland joined KRLA, it was only on a part-time deal at first, but like Eubanks before, would be able to join the starting lineup at earliest opening.

It was about this time in late 1960 after Martindale took over mornings, that KRLA started its survey folders of the weekly top selling hits. The early folders featured a vertical folder with its cover similar to KFNB's but shortly after switched to a different style where the KRLA disc jockey faces were in the forms of musical notes. Most of these later surveys were on yellow paper, one week was on salmon, and the earlier style used various colored paper. All had black ink, as opposed to KFNB's which was a different color paper and different color ink each week. Also on these KRLA surveys, KRLA had a contest involving a rather unknown Elvis-like singer named Ral Donner where various pieces like a jigsaw puzzle would be shown of not only Donner's face but also of the "Eleven Ten Men" like Frosty Harris's eye or Wink Martindale's nose. It was less slick than what KFNB had been doing and again helped make this new KRLA closer to its listeners.

So KRLA concluded 1960 with an air personality lineup that was younger and more energetic than KFNB's, and that was the KRLA edge at that time they hoped for. The first casualty of 1961 was the departure of Roger Christian. Christian left his Noon to 3 show because he said it was "time to move on." Christian would later go to KFNB in later 1961 and then to KHJ in 1965 to become one of the original 93/KHJ Boss Jocks. Christian would then go to KBLA as that station's last "morning man," KGBS, KIQQ-FM, and KRTH-FM before returning to KRLA in 1983 under the programming of his friend Jim Pewter. Christian left, but he would be back many years down the road. Christian also would co-write many songs with Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys, and his songwriting about fast cars and drag racing would be legendary.

With Christian off the KRLA lineup as of January 20, 1961, the following week by January 27, Dick Moreland was placed in the Noon to 3 spot. With Roy Elwell 9 to Noon and Dick Moreland Noon to 3, KRLA had a strategy of using its two "oldest" air personalities in a sort of "housewife block" that would attract female listeners and slightly older demographics than the others.

Replacing Moreland on the weekends was another KACY air personality, Bill Keffury. Keffury would remain at KRLA in a variety of weekend show positions but would never become part of the starting lineup as he would be drafted in June of 1963. But for this time in KRLA's history Bill Keffury looked like he too would sometime be a regular KRLA "Eleven-Ten Man."

At this time in 1961 was the time that we first heard KRLA as described in the FOREWORD to this book. What got us even more interested in KRLA was that in the fall of 1961, we were attending the 5th grade at St. Phillip's School on Hill in Pasadena only a mile away from the KRLA studios at the Huntington Hotel. A lot of the kids from St. Phillip's lived near the hotel, and told us about how they had this big, huge station lobby with "On The Air" signs that would light up whenever the mike was turned on, and there actually were couches and sofas in the station lobby where listeners could sit in the lobby and watch the disc jockey do his show through a big glass window! Plus, at St. Phillips, it was very fashionable to carry in your lunch pail a little 6-transistor radio where we all listened to "Pasadena's own KRLA" during lunch and recesses. Since we lived not that far from the KRLA transmitter site in South El Monte and went to school right near the KRLA studios, it was obvious that being so close to KRLA physically would play an important role in this 10-year-old "adopting" KRLA as his favorite station. Also KRLA was fun to listen to at this time with its many "fun tests" where if you can identify a song you could win \$11.10 ("Eleven dollars and ten cents").

However, it was in late 1961 that a rather substantial change would come to the KRLA lineup. Jim Washburne would join KRLA as program director and take over the 3 to 6 p.m. shift. Washburne would refer to the L.A. basin as "The Washbasin," had a pleasant enough style and kept KRLA on a good path of energetic programming and happy sounds. It needs to be said that before Washburne joined KRLA, the station would order in early 1961, a new KRLA jingle package that would feature such great jingles as "You hear more music than any other station," "Life begins at Eleven Ten," and "Radio Eleven Ten (YAY! YAY!)" The sound of KRLA was certainly brighter and younger than what was happening on 980 up the dial.

With Washburne in the 3 to 6 p.m. show, it changed the schedule in that Jimmy O'Neill would be now 6 to 9 p.m., Sam Riddle now 9 to midnight, and Frosty Harris would switch over to part-time 9-12 midnight on Saturday and 6 to 11

p.m. on Sundays, following Bill Keffury's 3 to 6 p.m. Sunday show. Harris would also do news under his real name "Bruce Harris."

Harris was one of the best at KRLA in the top tier with Moreland and Elwell, but Harris wanted to perhaps do something else besides radio. The job security, or lack of it, of radio bothered him and so he began taking classes to obtain a teaching credential to teach Social Science. Harris never realized how good he really was and if Harris had pursued radio as a major career goal, we're pretty confident that he would have gone on to be a major air personality in Los Angeles. Harris had a bright, happy sound, and "Frosty the Showman" did an air-tight show.

Jimmy O'Neill told us recently that Washburne did not like O'Neill and that Washburne was not the easiest person to get along with. O'Neill felt that his getting moved out of his afternoon drive shift into the less desirable 6 to 9 p.m. hours was a demotion by Washburne and that Washburne wanted O'Neill's prime hours in afternoon drive.

One thing that air personalities did in the 60's was having a "farewell" show when a beloved "Eleven-Ten Man" would drop off the lineup. It was thought of as a special treat for listeners so that the talent could thank the listeners for their support and be able to also inform the listeners about their plans.

Wink Martindale had just accepted a management position with Dot Records, and because of his involvement with a record company, would not be able to continue hosting a radio show, as to a possible conflict of interest. However, Martindale had informed the listeners that he would be leaving ahead of time to allow the listeners to be able to send postcards to KRLA to "vote" for who they thought should take over for Martindale in the important 6 to 9 a.m. show.

Our research was unable to determine if this was "legit" or not, but just the same on Martindale's final show on Saturday, April 14, 1962, it was announced that Bob Eubanks had won the vote, and on the following Monday, Bob Eubanks would take over the 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. show. Management felt that Eubanks had the same boyish, clean-cut image that Martindale had and that it would not have been that much of a shock to listeners, as Eubanks already was on right before Martindale midnight to 6. However, this was a programming error on KRLA's part, as Martindale was not that "strong" a morning personality and having a sort of "Martindale-style" talent take his place did not strengthen KRLA's morning show against the excellent Gary Owens at KFNB. Eubanks tried to continue the same features that Martindale had, such as the "Wink Awake Club," but it was obvious that Bob Eubanks was miscast as a morning man and was no match for the creative witty Gary Owens on KFNB in the early morning hours. However, the KRLA lineup was weak on "personality style" disc jockeys and so KRLA continued to go with its "younger" image to counteract KFNB.

It was at this time at KRLA that KRLA would come out with a "Chicken Delight" promotion where large yellow posters featuring all the KRLA disc jockeys with "photo" heads and "cartoon" bodies would be featured on the walls and windows of the Chicken Delight stores. The Chicken Delight store on Duarte Road in Arcadia gave us their poster at that time, and we have it still after all those years in Research Archives' morgue. Since "The Twist" was very popular then as a nationwide dance craze, KRLA had a promotion with Chicken Delight and played the "Chicken Delight Twist" over the KRLA airwaves.

It was also in early 1962 that we had the opportunity to visit the KRLA studios for the very first time. One day during Easter vacation, we were driven to the KRLA studios at the Huntington Hotel for the very first time. We opened the door and was amazed to see this huge lobby and the big glass window where one could sit on sofas in the lobby and watch the "Eleven-Ten Man" on the air do his show. We can still remember all the "I'm a KRLA Nut" bumper stickers featuring cartoons of peanuts stuck all over the KRLA booth and seeing Roy Elwell read the weather off a small "blackboard style" slate held up by the engineer on the other side of the glass. We can still remember Roy Elwell wearing a long-sleeve white shirt with cuff links waving at us through the glass. As this was before 12 Noon, Dick Moreland also was in the building and he gave us a copy of "Twist To KRLA" record album that featured all the "Eleven-Ten Men" in "Twist" dance positions on the cover. We still have that record in Research Archives' morgue!! Moreland also gave us a small buff postcard similar to the Chicken Delight poster described earlier. So this was KRLA!

It was exciting to an 11-year-old, as at KFNB where we had tried to visit the year before, the disc jockey booth was not allowed to be seen by the public, but at KRLA the "Eleven-Ten Men" were right there through a window with sofas set up to encourage people to come into the lobby to watch the shows. This was a station that really cared about its audience and was a station that was close to its audience too.



So now in Spring 1962, KRLA had a solid lineup of the "Eleven-Ten Men," Bob Eubanks 6 to 9 a.m., Roy Elwell 9 to Noon, Dick Moreland noon to 3, Jim Washburne 3 to 6, Jimmy O'Neill 6 to 9, Sam Riddle 9 to Midnight, and now back on the KRLA starting lineup Frosty Harris midnight to 6 a.m.

Harris did the midnight to 6 a.m. show, then went immediately to college to work on his teaching credential and told us it was quite a strain at that time to have that schedule. During Harris's time as the midnight to 6 personality at KRLA, he would feature in the early morning hours "Frosty's Fish Finder" where Harris would read over the air which fish were "ready to be caught" over at Legg Lake, half a block away from the KRLA transmitter.

Many fishermen who liked to fish there at Legg Lake used to listen to Harris each morning right before sunrise to get an early start at the tackle-and-bait shops, and get ready to fish. It was a common sight at that time at Legg Lake to see dozens of fishermen camped out on the shores of Legg Lake with the KRLA towers right overhead above them in the foggy early morning air, listening to Frosty the Showman give fishing advice.

However, right after that time in early 1962, the strain of going to college and the all-night show would prove too much for Harris who would leave his midnight-to-six show and just do news on KRLA as "Bruce Harris," before leaving KRLA entirely in the spring of 1962. And whatever happened to Frosty Harris? Harris got his credential and then got a job at Arroyo High School teaching Social Science in El Monte. Harris would later become a P.R. representative for the El Monte Union High School District as he still kept his ties to radio by working weekends at KIEV, Glendale, in a Gold format. "The Showman" later would become a counselor and administrator at the El Monte Adult School where he would be in a position to hire and supervise Adult Ed instructors in the English As A Second Language and Amnesty program. One of the instructors that Harris hired in 1984 was a young, former KRLA radio fan who when he first turned on KRLA as a child, it was after 9 p.m. on the Frosty Harris show, on a new little transistor radio he had just bought. And the name of that instructor? Bill Earl.

Replacing Harris in the midnight to 6 spot in the Spring of 1962 was a pleasant, sincere sounding air personality named Arlen Sanders, who would be the new midnight to six "Eleven-Ten Man."

It needs to be mentioned at this time that in late 1961 and early 1962 KRLA had an interesting music show on Sunday mornings hosted by a KRLA newsman Ed Perry that was sponsored by a company that was always "liquidating" its stock. As an 11-year-old we did not know what "liquidators" meant, but soon learned a new word -- thanks to Ed Perry, and KRLA. So KRLA entered the Summer of 1962 with Eubanks, Elwell, Moreland, Washburne, O'Neill, Riddle and Sanders and on the weekend Bill Keffury from 6 to midnight on Saturday and 6 to 10 a.m. on Sundays.

However, in June 1962 KRLA would do a first for Los Angeles radio. KRLA's "traffic" director, Sie Holiday always had a very pleasant, sexy and super good voice, so once in a while Holiday was used for promos on KRLA, such as its "Sounds exciting!" and "Sounds delightful" ones that were cut in the Jim Washburne era. Washburne at that time decided to make Sie Holiday the first female disc jockey in Los Angeles and gave her the 6 to 10 p.m. Sunday night show! This was long before female air personalities and again KRLA was first with another original. However, this would only last for a very short time where Holiday would go back behind the scenes and occasionally do a promo or participate in various skits and she would be very prominent in 1964 in another era of KRLA's history. The voice of Sie Holiday would be heard at KRLA for many, many times over the years ahead!

1962 was a good year for KRLA under the supervision of P.D. Jim Washburne. Washburne even invented a clock in the disc-jockey booth that would be divided up like a pie that would tell the air personality when to play a certain record or spot. The immortal clock with the sign "KRLA Big Time" below it would be a familiar fixture in the KRLA booth for a long time ahead in KRLA's history.

However, in September 1962, another change was about to be made in the KRLA "Eleven-Ten Men." As said before, Jimmy O'Neill was quite unhappy under the P.D. ship of Jim Washburne, especially when he lost his 3 to 6 p.m. show to make room for Washburne and was "demoted" to 6 to 9 p.m. O'Neill also was getting involved in television work with a late night show "The Jimmy O'Neill Show" on Channel 13. So O'Neill left KRLA after a beautiful farewell show where the last record was one co-written by his wife, "You Won't Forget Me" sung by Jackie DeShannon. O'Neill would, the following year, turn up on weekends at KFVB, but for now "the first voice of KRLA" and the last of the originals from August 1959 was gone in September 1962. It wouldn't be until 1984 that Jimmy O'Neill would be heard on KRLA again for its 25th anniversary year.

To replace O'Neill, Washburne signed a young jock from the East, James Dennis Bruton, known on the air as Rebel Foster, to the KRLA air staff. Washburne decided that to keep a strong "familiar" personality in the 6 to 9 p.m.

hours, to move Sam Riddle back to his original 6 to 9 p.m. shift and Rebel Foster would be nine to midnight. Foster was a relatively straight air personality, but did have a character he "created," named Mrs. Maude Skidmore, an older lady who Foster "took care of," and it appeared that "Maude" had a thing for Foster. Foster was always quite polite by calling her "Mrs. Skidmore." (We are assuming there was no Mr. Skidmore.)

So in September 1962, the "Back-to-School" lineup of KRLA was Bob Eubanks 6 to 9 a.m., Roy Elwell 9 to Noon, Dick Moreland Noon to 3, Jim Washburne 3 to 6, Sam Riddle back in his old stomping grounds 6 to 9, Rebel Foster 9 to midnight and Arlen Sanders midnight to 6. Bill Keffury did now the Saturday night 6 p.m. to midnight show.

To promote this new lineup KRLA came out with a full-newspaper-page ad of cartoon drawings of the September 1962 KRLA lineup all sitting around a "board room" table with "class is now in session at KRLA-1110 on your dial" written on the blackboard. The "Eleven-Ten Men" were depicted as school kids with yo-yo's, chalk, books, and slates. These drawings were quite good, and again it created in the public's mind a fun station with good likeable personalities.

However by December 1962, Rebel Foster and Dick Moreland would "trade" air shifts, moving Foster noon to 3 and Moreland 9 to midnight. Moreland, it was said, did not want to be pigeon-holed as a "daytime housewife jock" and so greeted moving to a nighttime show with much enthusiasm. Also Foster's "Mrs. Skidmore" character was thought to be popular with female daytime audiences.

So KRLA was now moving into its 5th year in 1963. However by February 1963, Roy Elwell decided to become the morning man at KFNB's sister-station in Oakland-Berkeley KEWB, but because of all the toll bridges in the Bay Area, would drop the name Roy Elwell, and call himself on KEWB "Scott Bridges." A feature that Elwell had on his show "The Coffee Break" Club would continue with his 9 to Noon replacement. However Los Angeles would miss "Ridin' with Roy" and his coined trademark expression calling listeners "Angelenos."

KRLA needed a strong, mature housewife appealing personality for its 9 to Noon show now that Elwell had departed to the Bay Area. Who KRLA chose for the 9 to Noon show was a former KFNB "Seven Swingin' Gentleman" who for an unspecified reason did not return to KFNB when their 1961 labor dispute was over with. Ted Quillin, or TQ, had been one of the original KFNB Good Guys when the Color Radio format started in 1958. Quillin started at KFNB in the midnight to 6 show but when Al Jarvis went into semi-retirement, Ted Quillin was moved to daytime in the Noon to 3 show where he instantly had a down-home country type rapport with a mostly female audience.

Quillin was somewhat earthy with a slow southern-type style and was the perfect choice to replace Roy Elwell. Quillin even continued Elwell's "Coffee Break Club" where listeners could win prizes from their membership cards. "The Coffee Break Club" was so popular that KRLA had a song made that was played during this mid-morning feature. Of all the KFNB disc-jockeys who left KFNB in July 1961 during its labor dispute, all of them eventually came back to KFNB, except weekender Joe Smith and Ted Quillin. But Quillin now found a home on KRLA and gave the mid-morning show even a more "mature" feel than even Elwell had done.

Ted Quillin had one memorable line that closed his show every day that he had used at KFNB and now used at KRLA as the clock approached twelve noon.

"This has been Ted Quillin wishing you blue skies and green lights ... and mama come get your little baaaaby boy!!"

Quillin was perfect in those mid-morning hours and proved quite popular with KRLA's female listeners even though TQ was known to throw out "blue doubles" once in a while on his show like "Quillin Quickies" and so on.

So it looked like it was going to be "Blue Skies and Green Lights" for KRLA. It still was lagging way, way behind KFNB in the ratings. But KRLA did survive.

By this time the FCC had come down real hard on KRLA behind the scenes because of those problems in 1959; a Canadian in charge, fraudulent contests, doctored logs etc., and ordered the station "Off the air" at the end of 1963. But when Rosarito, Mexico's XERB "next door" to KRLA on the dial at 1090 was going to increase its power to something like 250,000 watts, the FCC decided that KRLA could stay on the air with an "interim" non-profit operation the following year in 1964 until new owners could be issued the license of the station.

But the public was not familiar with this. What they heard was a new, fresh radio station, that seemed to be more in touch with the local community and its listeners than the number one station in town, KFNB. Listeners could see the KRLA booth from its lobby, its transmitter was in a growing area of the San Gabriel Valley, still rural, but by 1963 growing very fast with new homes being built in El Monte and the surrounding community, and it was clear that KRLA, even though a far behind "second," would be still there at Eleven-Ten.

However, as good as Jim Washburne was as program director, it was clear that to compete with KFWB, some much stronger personalities would have to be brought in. Bob Eubanks was weak in the morning drive and now with former KRLA "Eleven-Ten Man" Wink Martindale now on KFWB 6 to 9 a.m., it was clear that KRLA needed to make some changes. The KRLA lineup was adequate, but it wasn't that unique. KFWB still had a lot of strong people with a lot of listener loyalty. KRLA would have to do something big to get people to switch over to KRLA in the morning drive and to stay with the station the rest of the day.

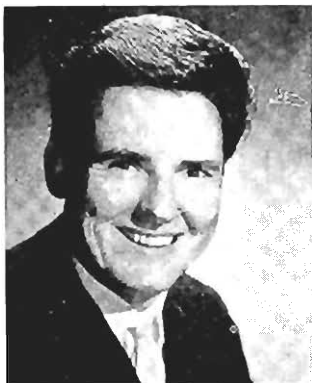
But by this time in 1963, Jim Washburne was thinking of moving to a bigger California market, the Bay Area, and so whoever would take over for Washburne would be faced with a big challenge. So far KRLA was clearly facing its "blue skies" in South El Monte and plenty of "green lights." But it would take some real "stars" to make KRLA something that people would really stick with!

The "Dream-House" had been built and showed that it had a lot to offer. 1963 would be the year that KRLA just might be able to run even a closer race with KFWB. As KRLA approached April 1963, KRLA saw some stars up above the clouds of Princess Blue Sky and KRLA was going to reach for them. As we approach April 1963, we will see if KRLA would be able to keep its feet on the ground and still be able to get the "stars" it wanted. Another room of the "Dream-House" is about to be unlocked.

DAVE HULL



TED QUILLIN  
KRLA DJ



ARLEN SANDERS  
KRLA DJ





BOB HUDSON



*Conroy*

## CHAPTER 2

### "REACHING FOR THE STARS"



DICK BIONDI

As discussed in our last chapter, the KRLA of February 1963 had a successful lineup of different style personalities and the relatively young image to KFNB that made KRLA a good second -- still far behind 980 in the ratings. The year 1963 was one of rather peacefulness in the top hit music, and KRLA continued to spin the hits. The only real fad that was of any major significance at this time was surfing, but it wouldn't be until later in the year that this sport coupled by radio with the music would have any impact on KRLA's fortunes.

KRLA still was the small, little station from a horse pasture in South El Monte, whereas the big heavyweight KFNB with its studios right in the heart of Hollywood and transmitter out on Soto Street on the East Side still was the major station to listen to. Still what KRLA tried to do was slowly and steadily build a station, have a bright attitude and youthful sound, and be a pleasant alternative.

Under program director Jim Washburne, KRLA had a nice sound, some good contests, and had a more honest and genuine approach than the glamorous tin-pan alley/Madison Avenue tones of KFNB. The signing of Ted Quillin in February, as we discussed in our last chapter, was a good coup for Eleven-Ten. Quillin continued in the 9 to noon show, with maturity, down-home humor and earthiness, and the "Coffee Break Club" rolled on.

The problem with KRLA at this stage in early 1963 was with its lineup. True, the personalities were good, certainly not the big names such as at KFNB, but had a certain style and certain closeness to the listeners that KFNB was unable to do. Just the fact that KRLA was right on the premises of a local hotel with a big glass window for the disc jockey to do his show while listeners would come into the lobby to watch, whereas KFNB was on the 2nd floor of a building in downtown Hollywood with its booth way back in the bowels of the 2nd floor, was a contrast in itself.

As reviewed in the last chapter, KRLA had a lineup of "Eleven-Ten Men" that at this time in history was not a strong one but had potential for development. In February 1963, KRLA's lineup was Bob Eubanks 6 to 9 a.m., Ted Quillin 9 to Noon, Rebel Foster Noon to 3, Jim Washburne 3 to 6, Sam Riddle 6 to 9, Dick Moreland 9 to midnight, Arlen Sanders midnight to 6 and Bill Keffury on the weekends. But the station still lacked an identity. It did struggle along with teen-oriented contests and personalities that were at least individualists but there still wasn't that "draw" that one thing that would hook a listener and get people to not only listen but to make KRLA part of their lives.

The main problem with KRLA in February 1963 was that Bob Eubanks as morning man was not the strong "draw" the station needed to get listeners to tune in the mornings and stay with the station the rest of the day. Eubanks continued to have the "Wink Awake" contest that he inherited from Wink Martindale, but when Martindale joined KFVB a few months earlier, Eubanks had to drop that feature as KRLA did not want to advertise another radio station -- especially number one KFVB. The reason Eubanks had originally been placed in the morning show is that Washburne thought that Eubanks had the same young image that Martindale had already showed on KRLA in those hours, and since Eubanks had already been on midnight to 6, having Eubanks start at 6 rather than end at 6 wasn't that big a change.

But at crosstown KFVB, 980 had already shown that having a funny, comedic and "up" type of morning man was a big draw to get people to listen to the station. However, there was really no one in the KRLA lineup that came close, except for Rebel Foster with his developing "Maude Skidmore" voice in the Noon to 3 hours, but Foster still was too green to be a major morning draw. Still KRLA had to make do with what it had until a change came into the KRLA evening lineup and some "musical chairs" were played.

As stated before, KFVB was the station that all TOP 40 personality-inclined air talents had longed to work. KFVB was the big time, even though Jim Washburne as a tongue-in-cheek move, had a sign made below the KRLA clock in the booth featuring the immortal words "KRLA Big Time." KRLA was not the "big time." It was simply a little station in Pasadena with its towers in a field in South El Monte way on the outskirts of Los Angeles. KFVB was the big time. The Seven Swingin' Gentlemen at KFVB had already lured Roger Christian, Jimmy O'Neill and Wink Martindale over to its 980 spot, and for any young jock trying to make a name for himself in Los Angeles radio, KFVB was the ultimate goal.

Following the defections of O'Neill, Christian, and Martindale, the next KRLA personality who was offered a chance to join the Color Radio good guys was Sam Riddle. As stated in Chapter 1, Riddle had been moved out of his 6 to 9 p.m. show when Washburne joined Eleven-Ten, and his show even though good during the nine to midnight hours still didn't have a sparkle when he was 6 to 9 p.m. So when O'Neill was lured over to KFVB, Riddle was given his 6 to 9 p.m. show back where he remained until this point in the history of KRLA. When the opportunity to join KFVB came, Sam Riddle took his "peanut butter and banana sandwiches" and "Hello Music Lovers!" and joined KFVB shortly after leaving KRLA in March 1963.

KRLA was definitely experiencing a talent drain. KRLA had the young, fresh sounding personalities and seemed to be grooming them for the big time but unfortunately so many left, one after another, and it was time for KRLA to try to get some big name heavyweights if it had to from out of town or even out of the state, to take on KFVB. Too many were leaving, and now with the defection of Sam Riddle there was only one "Eleven-Ten Man" left who had been on KRLA from the early months in 1960, and that was Bob Eubanks.

And that was part of the problem. Eubanks was not a strong personality. He did have good looks and even had put out a record album about this time sponsored by the "Formula 42 Lemonized Cream Shampoo" people with his handsome face right on the cover. It was that Bob Eubanks had other plans. He wanted to do something big on television someday. Eubanks was the morning man at KRLA at a moderately successful radio station even though suburban, but wanted to go to television. He already had been on the Wink Martindale "Dance Party" show and Eubanks as morning man had done numerous personal appearances including appearing at Alhambra High School in a Dick and Dee Dee mini-concert during the lunchtime for the Moors. But Eubanks knew he was not a strong morning man, and after almost a year in the mornings as Wink Martindale's replacement, wanted out for the pressure and visibility that being a morning man can bring.

His first love was still radio, but perhaps if he was in a lower visibility time slot he could continue his pursuit of television and not have the pressure of having to be the strong man in the lineup in the important morning drive show.

KRLA also knew it needed a change in the mornings and someone who would be a formidable contender to the superstars on KFVB like Elliot Field and Joe Yocam. What KRLA did is to move Bob Eubanks from 6 to 9 a.m. into Sam

Riddle's 6 to 9 p.m. shift when Riddle exited Eleven-Ten for 980. Eubanks was able to breathe a little easier and be in a time slot that would still give him the visibility from teens that he wanted and at the same time give KRLA the opportunity to bring in a real superstar into the morning drive show. Eubanks, like Riddle, had the right young image for the 6 to 9 p.m. primarily teen-show where most teens would listen doing their homework, and KRLA knew that Eubanks, like Riddle, would attract the right teen audience. So Bob Eubanks began the 6 to 9 p.m. shift, a shift where Eubanks was able to carve a niche for himself and appeal to those hard-core teens, who were the biggest bulk of the KRLA listening audience during those night-time hours.

What Bob Eubanks developed in the 6 to 9 p.m. show was something that not even Sam Riddle before him had attempted, and that was developing his night-time show around a theme that would appeal directly to teenagers and each night a different group of students would have a major reason to listen to KRLA.

The show was called "Teen Toppers" and it would feature a different high school each night. There would be a student representative of a particular high school who would poll the student body as to what their favorite songs were, then relay that list back to Eubanks on KRLA along with names of particular students, administrators, and popular faculty members.

Eubanks each night would salute a different school, mostly public high schools, but sometimes parochial schools and even sometimes junior high schools and in several rare occasions, even junior colleges. And each night Eubanks would pick a different school to salute and play the top records for that school. KRLA would also publish a Teen Toppers Top Sixty Tune-Dex which would feature the favorite, most popular songs followed by several "Postriphaiting Platter Picks" that were the special school picks of the week followed by 20 up-and-comers.

Considering today where computers or research "consultants" tell stations what to play, this was truly a fresh, spontaneous type of programming. We recall being a student at Foothills Junior High School during 1963 and remembering a fellow student polling all the "Highlanders" about their choices for the Bob Eubanks Teen Topper Show.

Eubanks had found a hot topic. No longer was the center of the show Eubanks himself as had been the case in the morning show, but the show had a hot direction and became extremely popular in the 6 to 9 p.m. hours. The image of Bob Eubanks along with the Teen Topper Show every night from 6 to 9 p.m. gave KRLA its first number one show over KFNB. This also gave Bob Eubanks who was not a strong radio personality, an identity he could be comfortable with.

With Eubanks now in the 6 to 9 p.m. shift replacing Sam Riddle who had gone to KFNB, a vacancy was created for the morning show. And this time KRLA was not going to shift another member of the "Eleven-Ten Men" in that shift as it had before with Eubanks. Instead it was going to bring in from the Bay Area a funny and very strong personality air talent, Robert Howard Holmes, better known to Bay Area listeners as Bob Hudson. Hudson had been quite popular at KYA in both the all-night and morning drive shifts and also more recently at Oakland/Berkeley's KEWB which was a sister station of KFNB. Bob Hudson was truly a funny, a certainly not-straight personality, who might be the lightning rod that KRLA needed to draw listeners to the Land of Eleven-Ten, from KFNB. KRLA had not had a talent like Hudson before. He was a total personality and one of the greatest.

When Hudson first joined KRLA, his primary act was to refer to himself by how good looking he was, sort of a Gorgeous George on the radio. He called himself various names to highlight his "good looks" and "handsomeness" such as "The Lovely One" and "Beautiful Bob." Many times you could hear Hudson say,

"This is the Lovely One ... Beautiful, blue-eyed, hairy-chested Bob!"

This was truly a departure from the teen-idol personalities such as O'Neill, Riddle, Eubanks, and Martindale. This guy Hudson was a real star! As KRLA was located on Oak Knoll in Pasadena, ironically the street directly east of Oak Knoll was of all streets, named "Hudson." Of course, this was long before Bob Hudson joined KRLA but the fact that Hudson had this huge ego on the radio made listeners think that maybe they actually did name that street for Bob Hudson.

Hudson joined KRLA in March 1963 right after the successful KRLA "kontest," the "Tap Tap Kontest" where listeners had to walk up to strangers, tap them on the shoulder, and ask if they were the KRLA "key karrier" who had the keys to a new 1963 car. (Shades of Perry Allen).

Hudson as the morning man was exactly what KRLA needed. It finally had a morning man of the quality of personalities that reigned at KFNB. After all, Hudson was part of the KFNB chain of stations, being on KEWB in the Bay Area right before KRLA.

"Beautiful Bob," as Hudson referred to himself in the early days of his work at KRLA in March 1963, was probably the biggest of all the personalities that Jim Washburne had brought to KRLA. The new Hudson lineup with Bob Hudson

as the strong morning man for the rest to follow was Hudson 6 to 9, Ted Quillin 9 to Noon, Rebel Foster Noon to 3, Jim Washburne 3 to 6, Bob Eubanks 6 to 9, Dick Moreland 9 to midnight, Arlen Sanders midnight to 6 and Bill Keffury on Saturday nights from 6 to midnight.

Hudson, as the strongest man at the station, certainly made KRLA suddenly gain in its listening audience. Almost overnight people started to talk about Bob Hudson and his tremendous conceit and huge ego which was for the most part one big successful act! "The Lovely One" had got KRLA to suddenly become a contender in major Los Angeles radio. This is a perfect example of the theory that a radio station needs a strong morning man and that the most colorful air talent on the staff should be put in those early morning hours. It works every time. Every time KRLA had done so, it was successful. When it didn't, in this 30-year history, the rest of the schedule sagged somewhat.

Bob Hudson became such a popular hit with his "glowing praise" for himself and his overall "good looks" (blue eyes, hairy chest, just absolutely "beautiful") that KRLA had printed up button pins that in bold blue letters "Hudson Lover." If you were a Hudson fan, you were a Hudson lover. Hudson began to take the Los Angeles radio audience for his own. Also on KRLA's "Studio City" surveys there were full-page ads in those folders asking listeners to hear "The Lovely One" and one featured a drawing of Hudson's "beautiful blue eyes."

Shortly after Hudson was signed by Washburne, Jim Washburne decided to leave the Los Angeles radio market and give up the program directors chair to join KYA at Candlestick Point, San Francisco. Not only would KRLA lose this very important P.D. but also the holder of the popular 3 to 6 p.m. afternoon drive show.

Replacing Washburne as Program Director was Rebel Foster who moved himself out of the Noon to 3 hours and promptly into Washburne's former 3 to 6 p.m. shift. It was time for Foster to find a replacement for Jim Washburne on the air-schedule, as Foster could not afford to lose any new and growing audience to KRLA that had started flocking to the station with Bob Hudson's tremendous popularity. Since Foster knew that having Hudson come down from the Bay Area to save KRLA's up-to-then weak morning spot, perhaps this one friend of Hudson's that Hudson had strongly recommended might be a strong contender in the Noon to 3 spot, now that Foster had moved himself to 3 to 6 p.m. Hudson's friend from KEWB and the man who Foster would sign to be an "Eleven-Ten Man" will be introduced next.

But first we feel it is time to pay a tribute to Jim Washburne and his innovative programming to KRLA. We had visited Dave Hull at his former home in Arcadia one day back in 1975. When Hull paged through the KRLA scrapbook that we had brought for his inspection, Hull took his finger, pointed heartily to Jim Washburne's picture and as he tapped Washburne's picture hard, he said,

"This is the man who really built KRLA."

Most KRLA scholars agree that Washburne was the one who put KRLA on the road to success. But not all roads lead to success. Some lead to heaven.

The KYA transmitter and studio building is located on a steep hill in San Francisco's southeast corner near Candlestick Park Stadium. The building was designed by, of all people, the same female architect who designed the Hearst Castle! You see, at the time the KYA building was built in 1937 or 1938, reports vary, William Randolph Hearst owned KYA and his "Hearst eagle" is still carved into the art-deco building above the door high atop Candlestick Point in Bayview Park. The building is located at the edge of Bayview Park, a beautiful "park-like" setting at the top of the road that one can walk, or drive, all around the top of the mountain and see the San Francisco Bay, "The City" itself, and the impressive Candlestick Park Stadium below. (In fact the place where the Beatles last played as a group on a tour in 1966!)

The KYA transmitter building is an impressive sight on top of that hill and for many years up to early 1986, when it blew down to destruction in a storm, a tall self-supporting tower with the call letters vertically placed "KYA" with letters that lit up at night, could be seen from the face of that tower shining down on Highway 101 North.

The white Hearst-designed transmitter building even had neon letters above the door on the roof proudly lighting the letters "KYA" in the San Franciscan night. Inside this building were studios where the KYA personalities broadcasted from rooms with those acoustical tiles of all the many, many holes, and when we toured the facility in research for this book and Jim Washburne's work at KYA, we were taken through the old studios with its soundproofing, double glass so the disc jockey could see the engineer, and so on. Sadly a window in one of the booths looked out only to concrete blocks that were constructed over the window on the outside when the studios moved totally to their business office location in downtown San Francisco.

One night in 1966, Jim Washburne, the program director, was about to ride his motorcycle up the steep road to the KYA building. It was a very foggy night and visibility was not very clear, but Washburne being program director of KYA knew he had some production work to do and the late hour couldn't be a deterrent.

Washburne gunned his motorcycle up the steep road to the building. However about 500 feet or so up the road, the road suddenly turns into a rather hairpin turn as the road suddenly turns sharply right and inclines up to the KYA building standing so tall and proudly above San Francisco. The fog rolled in. The visibility was very bad. The motorcycle was fast. Too fast. Washburne's bike didn't make the turn. Washburne's saying was true. "Isn't it quiet when the goldfish die?" The world of radio was silenced too, and an eerie quiet took place that night when Jim Washburne died. For those who have hiked the path up to the transmitter building, the quiet, the stillness and the spirit of Jim Washburne filled the San Francisco breeze.

Shortly after this accident and the loss of Jim Washburne to broadcasting, a power outage occurred at the KRLA studios in Pasadena causing the station to immediately switch to stand-by programming in South El Monte at the transmitter site. The emergency tape switched on. The first voice heard was the voice of Jim Washburne.

Rebel Foster was now in control of KRLA. He took over the 3 to 6 p.m. show and increased his "character" Maude Skidmore to be almost at times a co-star. But to replace himself in his old Noon to 3 show, Foster took the advice of Bob Hudson, the man who was really building up KRLA in every way and would sign for the Noon to 3 show Hudson's friend from the Bay Area.

Kamel Kasem had worked with Hudson in the San Francisco Bay Area at KEWB, KFWB's sister station. Hudson had encouraged Kasem to come to Los Angeles to KRLA in that even though KRLA was losing its license having been ordered off the air in 1962 for various problems detailed in Chapter 1, KRLA was a station that because of this atmosphere would allow a creative talent to really expand, develop and grow with a lot of freedom. Also Kasem always had an interest in going in either movies or television acting. And Los Angeles was where its at!

So Kasem was signed by Foster to take over the Noon to 3 show. However, there was a slight problem with his name. Even though Kasem had taken on the nickname "Casey," the fact that his last name was Middle-Eastern and had a foreign sound to it might not go over with Los Angeles listeners who were used to easy, familiar sounding names like Hudson, Foster, or Sanders. So Kasem would not use his last name. At least not at first. Kasem would simply call himself "Casey at the Mike." If Kasem was a hit, it would be easy then to add "Kasem" later. In the meantime, the name "Casey at the Mike" was easy to remember and in a town, Los Angeles, that had two major league baseball teams, having a name indirectly linked to baseball was a definite plus.

So in May 1963, Foster's lineup at Eleven-Ten was one of a lot of strengths. Bob Hudson was getting extremely popular, not number one yet, but moving in fast on Wink Martindale at KFWB, not a strong morning personality at all, but more familiar to Los Angeles listeners from his days at KHJ and KRLA in years past. Ted Quillin was doing exceptionally well 9 to Noon. After inheriting the show from Roy Elwell in February, Quillin continued to make the show his own with down-home warmth.

"Casey at the Mike" Noon to 3 was an instant hit. Kasem had the mature sounding voice and a professional style that had a lot of class. Kasem used to open each hour of his show with the phrase,

"Curtain going up on Act I of the Casey at the Mike Show" and we recall only being 12 years old when we heard Kasem start on KRLA, that Kasem actually "closed" the curtain of the disc jockey booth at the Pasadena studios at the end of each hour, and then reopen the "curtain" at the start of the hour. Obviously, this didn't happen but in the impressionable mind of a 12-year-old and because as Stan Freberg, consultant to KRLA in late 1966 would say,

"Radio is the big screen" and the listeners actually thought that curtains were opening and closing on Kasem's show. The nickname "Casey at the Mike" only lasted the first month or so because by summer Kasem was using "Casey Kasem" on the air and no longer using "Casey at the Mike," as Kasem was becoming a star in his own right.

Two other important things to mention about Casey Kasem joining KRLA in May 1963. Kasem had a feature on his show where he would give "teaser" type stories of artists or records where the listeners would have to keep tuned and to tune in to see just who Kasem was talking about. This was something that Kasem had started in the Bay Area but when arriving at KRLA in May 1963 used it much more heavily.

But it was Casey Kasem's sign-off that ranks as probably the greatest sign off in broadcasting history.

"Keep your feet on the ground and keep reaching for the stars. And until you get the one you want, I hope you'll stay with the Station of the Stars -- KRLA."



Kasem was so true and correct. KRLA was becoming the Station of the Stars -- The station where real personalities were developing real talent that would within the next two years take KRLA up to the top and build it with great radio legends. A few more personality changes would have to be made first, and it would be two more years until May 1965 when the great "Station of the Stars" lineup would finally be in place. But Kasem had a dream ... And a vision. And with Hudson, Kasem, and Eubanks the strongest talent at the station, it was clear that the star called "Number One" would soon be in reach for KRLA up in the heavens, up to "Princess Blue Sky." (Princess Blue Sky will be discussed in Chapter 7 but for now think of it as the spirit that hovers above the KRLA towers in South El Monte sending good vibrations over the Land of Eleven-Ten on Lexington and Gallatin Road.)

However as strong as Hudson, Kasem, and Eubanks were as the key players in this lineup for KRLA, there was a missing major player, that certain overall star who would totally take over the station with an innocence and an excellence that would make this personality the greatest in the history of KRLA. A lot of names have been discussed so far in this book. There will be plenty more to follow. But one name that will live in legends as the greatest of them all will soon be finding his path to the Land of Eleven-Ten.

In our FOREWORD we talked about a young boy who first heard KRLA on a little transistor radio remembering a character called "Frosty the Showman". There was years earlier another young boy who lived in Alhambra and used to ride his bike up to the Huntington Hotel in Pasadena to watch Jim Hawthorne on KXLA and Hawthorne's magic and creativity on the air. The boy used to look into the glass and have dreams that maybe he too would be in the chair where Jim Hawthorne with his big round glasses was sitting waving to this youth from Alhambra from the other side of the glass in the lobby.

Years later when this boy, now grown up and visiting his brother at the beach and was discouraged by not being able to get hired by KFWB in 1963 where he had hoped to go, decided to make one more phone call. He called Rebel Foster, program director at KRLA and introduced himself. He said he had been a moderately popular disc jockey back East and in New Mexico and wanted to work in Los Angeles radio. Foster immediately said, excitedly, over the phone, "Get down here fast! Our weekend man Bill Keffury has just been drafted! We need someone for weekends and relief now!"

He then got into his car from his brother's house at the beach in Orange County and drove up to the Huntington Hotel. Little did Foster know it at the time, but Foster would be hiring the greatest talent to ever open a microphone at KRLA and would epitomize both the excellence and innocence of Eleven-Ten and be the one person that years later, a whole generation would remember as their favorite.

So many people we have talked to have all answered the same when asked who was the one overall personality who was your favorite and the one who really represented the greatness of KRLA, the Dream-House, the home for heroes. The greatest "hero" of them all had now joined KRLA in June 1963 replacing Bill Keffury in the four hour 6 to 10 p.m. Sunday show and filling in once in a while during the week. Dave Hull had entered the Dream-House.

Hull's first show on KRLA was on a Sunday night, June 6, 1963. We recall very vividly sitting on the curb on Altura Street near the corner of Paloma Drive in Arcadia where we grew up listening in at 6 p.m. that warm Sunday night. We had just walked back from watching a Little League game down at Hugo Reid Primary School Park when suddenly at 6 p.m. after the news, we heard these words on KRLA. A record had just started playing. The first record of the show. Not more than 10 seconds into the record, Dave Hull gave his first words over the Land of Eleven-Ten under Princess Blue Sky and the towers in South El Monte.

"Well, how do you like the show so far?" Dick Moreland told Hull it was the funniest line ever heard on the radio. With these words, Dave Hull started his show on KRLA.

For those who remember Dave Hull primarily as a funny and nutty, highly excitable personality, as Hull personified in 1964 through 1966, this Dave Hull of June 1963 was especially subdued and gave a very straight, more serious approach. His better-known "Hullabalooer" style would come later. So Hull started his weekend show in a very low-key manner, and would be the KRLA weekender for Sunday nights for the rest of the summer.

The next change in Foster's lineup was about to occur. Dick Moreland had been handling the 9 to midnight show on KRLA since December 1962 when Moreland and Foster traded shows. As we discussed in Chapter 1, Moreland did not want to be locked into the mid-day afternoon time slot as he didn't want to be pigeon-holed as a housewife jock, but one who had more potential. So he moved into the 9 to Midnight show where he was quite successful. However, when the opportunity arose for Moreland to get further involved in station management and production and music, Moreland

would give up his show in the KRLA starting lineup and move into the weekender slots where he would remain from June 1963 to early 1969. Because Dave Hull was on the weekends already it was assumed that Hull would be next in line to move into the starting lineup, but because of Hull's early straight-shows and because Hull was still rather unknown and had not yet developed into the wild and wacky "Hullabalooer," Foster looked outside the station to bring in a replacement for Dick Moreland 9 to midnight.

Foster had this strategy. Hudson in the mornings had this whole persona about being handsome, beautiful, blue-eyed and hairy chested. It was of course part of Hudson's act but it really worked, and for the first time KRLA was being noticed because of its strong morning man, Beautiful Bob.

Foster thought that how about just the opposite for 9 to midnight. How about bringing in "the ugliest and skinniest disc-jockey in the world?" This would be in total contrast to the rotund Beautiful Bob.

So Foster brought in to KRLA to start July 1, 1963, Dick Biondi who was already a pretty big name in the East Coast and Midwest, already having famous days in both Buffalo and Chicago. Biondi was not really ugly, he was tall and rather thin and did wear big horn-rimmed glasses but, like Hudson, had developed his own act around his looks, but unlike Hudson's tremendous ego in regard to his handsomeness, Biondi went into the opposite extreme to self-deprecation, all in fun. The best way to describe Dick Biondi is sort of like "Jerry Lewis on Acid." Biondi had a rather high, fast voice, and lightning-bolt style that made him a total contrast to the deep-voiced sound of Dick Moreland during the 9 to midnight hours.

Biondi, however, at this time in KRLA's history did not catch on as Foster had hoped, and after only 2 months, Biondi went back to more comfortable surrounds in the Midwest. Timing is everything in radio. The right personality at the wrong "time" or "era" can change the course of radio history. 1963 was not the right time for Biondi at KRLA. That would come later. But Biondi had a lot of potential and would be heard on KRLA in the years ahead when the chemistry that Biondi would bring to the station would jell with all the others into a "perfect" dream-lineup in May 1965. But we're still in 1963, and Biondi's right time had not come yet. Yet the summer Biondi was heard on KRLA he certainly was a better than average personality and had a style all his own calling him "The Wild Eye-tralian", a play on words from his Italian descent. The great days for Dick Biondi at KRLA would not be for another two years.

Before we move into the fall of 1963, KRLA in August of 1963 in the Los Angeles Times special radio supplement featured a full page ad showing a great photo of the Eleven-Ten Men gathered around an armored car. Bob Hudson was quite thin then, standing on the top of the truck, and it was a good picture of the Eleven-Ten Men that Casey Kasem called "The Stars" of the station of the stars. Only Dave Hull was not shown as he was on the air at that time and Dick Moreland was now mostly behind the scenes. Also during this "era" of KRLA, KRLA would come out with its second record album called "KRLA Million Dollar Sounds" featuring one side of "fast" songs and the other side of "slow" songs. A proud picture of program director, Rebel Foster, would be on the back and KRLA instrumental jingles would be heard on the beginning and end of both sides.

It was in September 1963 that KRLA would finally give Dave Hull his shot at the "big time" by moving Dave Hull into the 9 to midnight show when Biondi left, and taking Hull's place on the weekend would be an engineer/DJ Bill Ditty. Ditty, we recall interviewing at KRLA in late 1969 when the original 80-page thesis that this book was an indirect product of was being written, who told us that the song by Manfred Mann "Do-Wah-Diddy" was written for him. This we were unable to confirm, but is included here as our research shows that Ditty did work the Sunday evening show in September 1963 for a very short time in late 1963 and early 1964. Ditty at the time we met him in late 1969 told us he used the name "Do-Wah-Diddy" on the air as his handle.

Before we leave the year 1963, we need to mention at this point that Studio City Advertising had been putting out a "survey of hits" folder each week which included the major format stations of Los Angeles, but two very generous pages to KRLA. One of the pages, of course, was the KRLA Tune-Dex survey, but on the other one, usually on the back, was a full page ad having a different KRLA promotion, contest, or even better, featuring a full-size photo of the KRLA disc jockey on the back. These are some of the most collectible of KRLA memorabilia, and Research Archives is fortunate to have a good assortment in its morgue.

So KRLA ended the year 1963 with a lineup that had some great spots to it such as Hudson, Kasem, Eubanks and Hull. The lineup was still developing. But KRLA was better than it had been in years with some of its strongest personalities ever. The magic was starting to take place. Give it time. More ingredients still need to fall into place. 1963 did bring great changes to Radio Eleven-Ten. KRLA had a strong morning man, Bob Hudson, and had a big

talent in those hours to be the anchor of the station, to hold it all together and make people listen in the mornings and to keep Eleven-Ten on the rest of the day. Casey Kasem was becoming an instant legend with his stories about the stars, his sincerity and professionalism, and his legendary sign-off.

We chose the title for this chapter "Reaching For The Stars" because of not only Kasem's famous close, but KRLA was becoming a star-filled station with real names. Hudson and Kasem were not well known before 1963, but they came into town just two months apart and started to build the station into something that would be huge. Bob Eubanks created a massive following in the 6 to 9 p.m. show with his Teen-Topper Show which gave Eubanks an identity and gave him a chance to step out of the shadow of Wink Martindale, where Eubanks seemed to drift until moving into the evening hours where Eubanks would become a favorite of teens all over the Southland.

KRLA ended 1963 with Bob Hudson 6 to 9, Ted Quillin 9 to Noon, Casey Kasem Noon to 3, Rebel Foster and "Maude Skidmore" 3 to 6, Bob Eubanks 6 to 9, Dave Hull 9 to midnight, Arlen Sanders Midnight to 6 and on Sundays Dick Moreland Noon to 3, and Bill Ditty 6 to 10 p.m. However, the station still lacked an identity. It still was looked upon as a suburban station and not one that was in the same league as KFNB. KFNB was still on top. It still had major blockbuster personalities and listeners loyalty that had been developed for many years.

Both KRLA and KFNB had effectively jumped on the "surfing" bandwagon in 1963 where KRLA's presence had been at Surf Fairs and so on. Also during this surfing craze KRLA's Rebel Foster had started putting on dances at the Retail Clerks Union Hall Auditorium in Buena Park and also in Redondo Beach at Foster's own nightclub "The Reveleaire." Some memorable words heard on KRLA in late 1963 and into early 1964 were Foster's memorable,

"Let's wail at the Retail," and "Be there or be square!"

Bob Eubanks' night clubs, The Cinnamon Cinder, also steamed along with its many locations from the Traffic Circle in Long Beach to Main Street in Alhambra.

As KRLA moved out of 1963 in 1964, two events would cause KRLA to suddenly become the major station in Los Angeles radio in 1964. The first was a very simple one to explain. Charlie Brown (Chuck Blore) the man who had developed KFNB into Color Radio had left KFNB and the new program directors that followed Brown were unable to keep the magic that Brown and his staff had so excellently done in 1958 up to this point. With Brown gone from KFNB, some of the magic and chemistry had left too. Also KFNB was starting to show its age. Some of the KFNB personalities were not keeping up to the latest fads and were also aging chronologically too. Elliot Field and Joe Yocam were no kids. And the second? The surfing craze and dance parties were about ready to make room for the biggest phenomenon in music history and one that would affect not only KRLA, but the baby boom generation, and even the world.

Before we discuss this major, major event in early 1964, we'll have to set the stage right now. The state of the country since JFK's assassination had been one of shock, and the country wanted to feel good again. There was no real big direction in popular music. Rock-and-roll music had tamed somewhat into the Bobby Vintons and Singing Nuns. As we said before, timing is everything and the time was right for a revolution in popular music and culture. The closest thing up to now was surfing, but because surfing requires an ocean and that left out so much of the U.S. and its heartland, surfing never caught on as it could have been. Because of its limitation to oceans, surfing wasn't the answer. Something else was.

As so much has already been written about how the Beatles suddenly took America by storm in early 1964 and with great promotion from Capitol Records and a world looking to be happy again after JFK, the Beatles came about at the right time and their impact on fashion, hairstyles, attitudes, and the whole pop culture are well known. We're not going to retell the story of the Beatles here. What we will talk about is something that has not been covered before, and that is that the Beatles would give KRLA the identity it needed and make Dave Hull a superstar.

KRLA in early 1964 had great personalities, some much stronger than others. But it was when KRLA decided to get behind the Beatles totally, whole hog, that KRLA became not only number one, but the soundtrack to so many young people's lives. KRLA could see the magic potential of the Beatles. KRLA could see something that was big. Real big. Bigger even than Elvis.

KRLA decided it would do something that would leave KFNB biting its dust way far back on the track. KRLA would become the station for Beatlemaniacs. KRLA not only would play all the Beatle singles but also the Beatle LP cuts.

Dave Hull in early 1964 would start "the Official Southern California Beatles Fan Club" and make himself President. The Beatles gave Dave Hull what he needed to emerge as the number one personality on KRLA. Hull jumped all the way onto the Beatles bandwagon and at the same time developed and let loose his wacky "Hullalalooser"

personality. No longer was Hull the subdued jock of June 1963. "The Hullabalooer" was born with sound effects, horns, and every Beatle song made would be played on the Dave Hull show. Dave Hull would become the "5th Beatle."

The Beatles along with the great emerging talents of Hudson, Kasem, Eubanks and Hull were about to make KLRA number one for the first time ever. A station that could go off the air any day because of difficulties with its license was suddenly the Number One station in Los Angeles. The Station of The Stars was Number One. KFMB, after the shock of losing Charlie Brown (Chuck Blore) and its failure to jump on the Beatles bandwagon first, did not know what hit them. KFMB tried to do something with a Beatle connection but it was too late. KFMB was being turned off by listeners in droves, and now everyone in Southern California it seemed was listening to KRLA. KRLA was the place to be! The station was about to become "Beatle Radio" very soon. But before that would happen, a new voice would be joining KRLA that would further add to the chemistry of greatness and be another "star" that would lead to KRLA's all-star lineup in May 1965.

One of the most popular shows for young people on television was American Bandstand, and since its beginning it had been shown out of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with Dick Clark and his co-host sidekick announcer Charlie O'Donnell. When Clark decided to move American Bandstand to the West Coast, Clark also took Charlie O'Donnell, the well-known American Bandstand announcer and "Ed McMahon" to Clark's "Carson," to the West Coast. That would mean that Charlie O'Donnell who had also done radio disc-jockey work in Philadelphia would need a new radio home in Los Angeles, now the home for American Bandstand.

So KRLA, seeing that a major personality like Charlie O'Donnell, highly visible from television, was now looking for a station in Los Angeles, invited Charlie O'Donnell to become one of the "Eleven-Ten Men." O'Donnell was signed by KRLA to work the Sunday morning 6 to Noon show and later moved into the 6-10 p.m. shift also.

O'Donnell had a great voice, good image for KRLA, recognizable from his work on television and American Bandstand, and was just what KRLA needed. We were so impressed upon hearing O'Donnell's first shows in May 1964 when he joined KRLA that we called the station saying O'Donnell should be on everyday, not just on Sundays. That would come later. So KRLA in May 1964 "Charlie O", the "Jolly Lean Giant", he called himself because of his being the tallest of all the "Eleven-Ten Men", joined KRLA on weekends and instantly became a hit. KRLA was now number one, and it was totally behind the Beatles. KRLA had even bigger plans with the Beatles that will be discussed in our next chapter.

With O'Donnell now in the KRLA lineup as its top weekender calling himself "The Jolly Lean Giant" another of the "Eleven-Ten Men" would also acquire a new nickname which would be one of the most successful in radio history. So successful that the idea would actually be "copyrighted" by its creator and "leased" out to other radio stations as well. The story of "The Emperor" begins here.

As we have said before, Bob Hudson had joined KRLA in March of 1963 and built his whole persona around his good looks, blue eyes, hairy chest and "Beautiful Bob" image. Hudson had carried this whole "handsomest" act as far as he could and decided he would top that. "Beautiful Bob" would become "The Emperor".

As we discussed earlier in our chapter, Bob Hudson had been a top personality at KYA and KEWB in the Bay Area and in spending a lot of time in the Bay Area, one gets to learn a lot about legends in San Francisco. The entire city of San Francisco is full of stories about its legendary eccentrics. One such character that Bob Hudson always thought was a good one was that of "Emperor Norton."

Norton apparently was a super eccentric in the Bay Area around the turn of the century who proclaimed himself to be "Emperor of San Francisco" and even printed up money with his picture on it. At that time, people in the Bay Area thought that Norton was totally funny and even went along with Norton humoring him and encouraging him with his Emperor delusions. Hudson remembered this character, and when he came to Los Angeles he played with the idea of letting Southern California in on this big joke, a guy who runs around thinking he's an Emperor.

It was at this time in early 1964 that Bob Hudson had a brilliant brainstorm. Hudson himself would drop the "Beautiful Bob" persona and become himself "Emperor Hudson", the emperor of KRLA! It was absolutely brilliant. No radio personality had ever done anything like this before. Hudson not only called himself "Emperor Hudson" but acted the whole part dressing in robes and crown for KRLA personal appearances and created a whole fan club for himself called "Hudson's Commandos" where listeners could receive an actual certificate suitable for framing signed by Emperor Hudson stating Hudson was your emperor and KRLA listeners were to be his loyal subjects. Again this was brilliant!

Hudson even produced skits on the radio where in short vignettes Hudson would be assisted by KRLA newsmen Richard Beebe as "Colonel Splendid", Casey Kasem would use his acting talents as "Lieutenant Cavendish," and Sie Holiday would be the voice of "Daphne," the Emperor's secretary. The vignettes, written by Hudson who was a brilliant comedy writer, would become so popular, an actual record album produced by Hudson and available on KRLA and in stores would become one of the hit albums of 1964, ranking up on the LP charts in top tier positions with Beatle albums! The album "The Adventures of Emperor Hudson" was a collection of the best of all the vignettes and are truly funny even to this day. Hearing these integrated into the KRLA broadcast day were clearly a treat with an invitation to join "Hudson's Commando s" at the end of the vignette. In one of them, Emperor Hudson wanted to straighten Sunset Boulevard and make it one long bowling alley, or cover San Francisco Bay with ice and make it a giant ice rink.

Hudson truly was at the top of his form and once he became "Emperor Hudson," became the number one morning personality in Los Angeles radio, totally wiping out Martindale at KFMB and even the venerable Dick Whittinghill at KMPC. Hudson had tapped into something that was a total hit almost as big as the Beatles in giving KRLA an identity and a super image of the best disc jockeys in Los Angeles or for that matter the whole country.

Also after Hudson became "Emperor Hudson," he coined one of the most memorable closing lines in radio history. As we all know, the KRLA studios were located at the Huntington Hotel in Pasadena, not too far from the oldest freeway in California, "The Pasadena Freeway." Hudson had used this freeway to get to work and to go home and because of the many curves in the freeway and its small several lanes, the freeway was always pretty crowded and congested even then. Because of this, Hudson's closing tag was one in which all of us who have ever been in a traffic jam on the freeway would magically do, if we could, is get everyone else on the freeway to pull over and let us pass without any blocking or congestion. No one would be in our way. Just think of it. Hudson's great line that is immortal in radio history was, "Clear the freeway, peasants, his highness is coming!" As Stan Freberg has said "Radio is the big screen" and at this time in our life at 13 years old, you could actually imagine people seeing Bob Hudson driving down the Pasadena Freeway where cars are pulling over right and left allowing Bob Hudson to drive freely. It was great theater of the mind and a fabulous illusion.

This idea of a morning disc jockey becoming an "Emperor" was such a big, big hit that other radio stations around the country picked up on the idea. KCBQ in Santee had both a "King Seamus O'Hara" and later a "King Jack Hayes". KFXM in Colton had a "Conqueror Dave Fransen" complete with blond goatee like a medieval leader. And Hudson even copyrighted his trademark handle "The Emperor" and allowed personalities in other radio markets to use the whole act. Ironically at KYA where Hudson had served back in the early '60's before coming to KRLA, one of its moderately successful air personalities Gene Nelson called himself "Emperor Gene Nelson" but this did not work very well because unless you're really funny and do the whole act, it just doesn't work. Nelson was not funny, in reviewing several of his airchecks, and just calling yourself "Emperor" does not make you a morning radio star.

But Hudson had it. He had the talent. He had the tremendous ego and colorful persona that really made this work. And in the entire 30-year history of KRLA, Hudson became its most colorful and most popular morning man, the greatest morning man in the history of KRLA by far. Hudson may not have been as overall influential to the history of KRLA as Dave Hull was, but came pretty darn close! Hudson has been quoted as saying that he and Casey Kasem built KRLA! We don't disagree. Emperor Hudson was one of the strongest personalities not just in KRLA's history, but in the history of Silver Age Personality radio.

Bob Hudson as "Emperor Hudson" had one of the most colorful acts in the history of KRLA. Nobody came close. And nobody did that style better. Hudson was dynamite in the morning as Emperor Hudson and created a tremendous following of fans. Even though we feel that Hudson was at his "funniest" when he was the first part of Hudson and Landry for KGBS in Lynwood, Hudson was at his most "influential" in the history of KRLA and modern-day radio with his days as "Emperor Hudson".

Hudson in the Los Angeles Times once was quoted as saying, "The kids really thought I was nuts," and that they couldn't wait to turn on their radios to hear the Emperor. Some kids used to actually wake up at 6:00 a.m. and set their radios where they wouldn't miss one moment of the Emperor Hudson show before school. We should know. We were one of them. Hudson even printed his own play money called "Beautiful blue-eyed bobs" with his picture on the bills as Emperor Hudson. (Shades of Emperor Norton.)

Hudson took an idea from the Bay Area and made it truly his own. Emperor Hudson was truly the biggest and brightest star at the "Station of the Stars" and with Hudson in the morning with his Emperor routine, Kasem

afternoons Noon to 3, Eubanks with his "Teen Toppers" in the evening, and Hull 9 to midnight with his Beatle gossip and all the latest Beatle records first, before anyone else in Los Angeles radio, KRLA truly became the Station of the Stars. A few more superstars would have to be added later to give the station the magic and chemistry for a 24-hour day of radio greatness. But for now in early 1964, KRLA was at the top of its life and headed for even greater heights in the clouds of Princess Blue Sky.

One last thing that needs to be mentioned as we approach the summer of 1964 where we now have landed in our story, and that is a very memorable feature of summertime KRLA, was the KRLA beach reports that had the song "On the beach, on the beach, on the beach" playing in the background. This was a memorable feature for a young 13-year-old to remember and brings happy memories of visions of two girls for every guy and an endless summer with the warmth of the sun high overhead. In a way these "on the beach" reports signified the end of an era since the surfing craze was now moving into the British Invasion where KRLA would be in our next chapter.

So KRLA entered the summer of 1964 when the Station of the Stars would move into a new direction. The station would have its identity, and the Dream-House would expand to not only its disc jockeys as heroes but a link to the Beatles and a home for anyone who wanted to know anything about the Fab Four would turn on KRLA. KRLA was Number One. It had its identity now. It had a chemistry now of major talents and truly at this point "The Station of the Stars", as noon-to-3'er Casey Kasem called it, had truly lived up to its name. It was about to acquire a new name that of "The Original Beatle Station for Los Angeles" or simply "Beatle Radio". Our story continues as we move into August 1964 where KRLA and the Beatles would consummate its marriage made in radio heaven high above the horse pasture in South El Monte in the Valley of the Jolly Lean Giant.

JOHNNY HAYES



CASEY KASEM



**KRLA 1110**  
**TRANSMITTER**



GARY MACK



CASEY KASEM



DAVE HULL



*Dick Simpson*



DAVE HULL



*Charlie "O"*



### CHAPTER 3

### "VALLEY OF THE JOLLY LEAN GIANT"



Bobby Dale

KRLA up to this point had been a proud station. But even the proudest station without a real identity can be lost in such a major market as Los Angeles, where at this time KFMB had been a strong force, but weakening due to tragic programming errors.

In August 1964, KRLA had a lineup that was a hybrid of both the old and the new. The Beatles had been on the scene since February and KRLA decided to, whatever it took, use the Beatles to catapult itself into the top tier of Los Angeles radio. Dave Hull had started a Beatle fan club, and also a fan club for Dave Hull himself was in full swing by August 1964. In August 1964 KRLA's license problems came full bloom where by that time KRLA needed to have a certain "clean-cut" look to its programming in order to try and be awarded a permanent license at this time, which would elude KRLA for many more years. By August 1964 KRLA was known as the station to which if you want to hear the latest Beatle track, this is where it would be played.

You see, up to now on Los Angeles radio, your young adult contemporary TOP 40 radio stations primarily played the top selling 45's. The Beatles changed that in that every one of the Beatles songs was "starting lineup," first tier and was not filler as up to now record albums had been. Record albums for young adults had always subscribed to this formula: the hit, the flip, the follow-up, a cover version or two, and filler. That's it. The Beatles put out albums that were unities unto themselves and where all cuts were first rank. No one up to now had that distinction. The Beatles changed all that.



KFWB by August 1964 was a station that had ruled the roost since 1958 for six strong years. But it was starting to show its age. Charlie Brown (Chuck Blore) had exited KFWB the year before. KFWB also had a stable of solid but aging personalities that kept to the "slick" formula that made the station big and thought of the Beatles as a passing fancy, something that was hip now, but maybe not next week. KFWB never understood the importance or the major significance of the Beatles, and by the time they did, the listeners had turned elsewhere and KFWB was over.

But KRLA had nothing to lose. KRLA needed an identity. The Beatles gave it to them. The most important factor to KRLA at this point is that the station was willing to roll the dice and risk all on getting behind the biggest music group in the history of popular music. KRLA seemed to know something was really, really special here. And with that foresight, KRLA stepped on the gas, wiped those KFWB tears away, and made one sweet dream come true.

In this book, we don't intend to write about the significance of the Beatles. It has been done so many times over. What we intend to do is show how a radio station, a suburban station coming out of a lower-middle-class farm community in South El Monte would be the Beatle soundtrack to so many people's lives. The Beatles were not just another music group. But after the death of JFK and excellent promotion by Capitol, the Beatles caught fire and became not only the tops in music, but trendsetting in fashion and attitude. Nothing like the Beatles ever happened before, and nothing since has even come close. Hairstyles were changed, attitudes were changed, the entire English way of life suddenly became in vogue in the United States. The Beatles not only hit big themselves, but a whole onslaught of other groups suddenly caught fire; the Dave Clark Five, Gerry and the Pacemakers, Billy J. Kramer and the Dakotas, Peter and Gordon and so on. The whole pop culture in the U.S. changed. If it was British, it was gear, hip, boss, it was where it's at.

KFWB up to now had been perfectly content keeping up its format. The station played what was popular but did not go overboard and rally behind any particular group or act. Acts come and go, but the steady station KFWB would not budge. The station had a good formula, and they stuck with it. But as in David and Goliath, KFWB was the giant and KRLA was the little station from South El Monte that had nothing to lose and everyplace to go but down ... they were already there. KRLA had already lost its license two years earlier in 1962 and could very easily be gone the next day, a new format with new owners, etc.

KRLA lived from day to day. And because of this it took chances. It rolled the dice for the high risk. KRLA, as the Beatles once said before achieving success said,

"We're going for the top!" And it's an American success story. KRLA really made it. When the Beatles struck, KFWB which had been in a slight decline after Brown's exit never recovered. KFWB was suddenly seen as New York-slick. Whereas KRLA was a station where the teenagers would turn to for Beatle information, KFWB had very solid personalities but didn't really recognize the force that the Beatles would be to young people ... and the world. Their best personality, Elliot Field, had left KFWB the previous month and the current lineup was tiring.

So KRLA decided in February 1964 to become "The Original Beatle Station in Los Angeles." Beatle Radio. What did it have to lose? The decision to make KRLA Beatle Radio was both brilliant and a high rolling decision that only a station like KRLA could have made.

The lineup at KRLA as Eleven-Ten finished July 1964 was Bob Hudson 6 to 9, Ted Quillin 9 to Noon, Casey Kasem Noon to 3, Rebel Foster 3 to 6, Bob Eubanks 6 to 9, Dave Hull 9 to Midnight and Arlen Sanders midnight to 6. Dick Moreland did weekends. Charlie O'Donnell still hung out in the 6 to Noon Sunday slot in addition to later on 6 to 10 p.m. Sunday. In fact it was in the summer of 1964 that we had called Dave Hull on the air at KRLA and suggested Charlie O' have his own show. Hull stated,

"He does," and proceeded to tell me about his Sunday program. We at that point felt O'Donnell should be part of the starting lineup and that summer of 1964 was hoping it would happen.

By August 1964 KRLA had fully become Beatle Radio by not only playing the Beatles' latest singles but all the LP cuts on the Beatles albums both English and American versions. If a listener wanted to know about the Beatles, KRLA was the station to listen to. Dave Hull became the President of the Southern California Beatle Fan Club and not only gave away the Beatles addresses over the air, but also played all the Beatles songs before other stations were able to get them and always seemed to have the latest Beatles gossip. Hull wrapped himself in the Beatles Union Jack and became "The 5th Beatle" to Los Angeles listeners. However Hull did not go whole hog and grow a Beatle haircut. During the summer of 1964, Hull kept his neat crew cut and, even though was a Beatle buff during his nighttime show was actually a very conservative guy during his home life.

In August 1964, KRLA would present a major first which caused KRLA to reinforce its Number One in listeners and the Number One trendsetter. Up to that point, live music concerts were along the lines of Nat King Cole, Dean Martin, or Vic Damone. Rock groups did not have major concerts in Los Angeles or in the U.S.A. They, up to that point, if there were personal appearances, were part of "cards" made up of many different acts that toured sometimes the U.S. in big buses and played small venues. In August 1964, KRLA would undertake what it had never done before, and that is bring the Beatles to Los Angeles for a concert at the Hollywood Bowl.

Bob Eubanks in August 1964 was a personality at KRLA that had experienced a certain decline in his career as an air personality. Eubanks had reached the pinnacle of broadcasting by becoming morning man, the most important shift in a station from Monday, April 16, 1962 to March 1963. But as stated before, Eubanks was a relatively weak morning man and did not have the comedic appeal to be a major player in morning L.A. radio, the most important block in the station's programming.

So in March 1963 when Eubanks was "demoted" to the 6 to 9 p.m. shift, Eubanks had struggled along to try to carve a niche for himself in a station that had much stronger personalities behind the mike than Eubanks was. Eubanks would be the first to admit, and has so publicly at various times, that he was not a strong radio talent, but an adequate "time and temperature" disc jockey who was not the strongest link at KRLA at this time even though the Teen Topper features did help and was quite popular with the early evening teen audience. Eubanks decided to roll the dice and KRLA did too, at that time, and mortgage his house to take out a loan to be the promoter to present a full-fledged Beatles concert in Los Angeles.

Up to now any concerts presented were M.O.R. acts or classical, and having an act like a rock act, many banks would not agree to such a loan to present the Beatles or any rock act to Los Angeles listeners. It simply wasn't done. Eubanks had shopped around at several different financial institutions until he found one that would put a mortgage on his home and finance the concert. In a way this was a "do or die" situation for Eubanks who after being moved to evenings after not making a strong enough presence in the mornings, was trying to compete with the heavyweights around him, Hudson, Hull, Kasem, and O'Donnell. It worked because in August, 1964, KRLA had produced and sponsored the Beatles concert with all of the KRLA personalities to introduce the acts on stage. Eubanks may not have been a very strong personality, but he did score a coup over anyone else. He brought the Beatles to Los Angeles. That's something that did more for the listenership of KRLA than anything before it.

The station had moved away from the malt-shop sounds of O'Neill and Riddle and on the latest thing from England. The Beatles were everywhere on KRLA. Before the concert, KRLA's Beatle Fan Club President Dave Hull's "Saturday Night Special" show from 6 to midnight had featured 6 hours of solid Beatle music including special jingles KRLA had made where to the tune of Beatle songs a short jingle was played singing the yeh yeh yeh of KRLA!

During the summer of 1964, the Beatles were totally in vogue, and many commercial spots were heard on KRLA for Beatle-related products. A set of Remco Beatle dolls proudly displayed at our Research Archives office at the time of this writing sell for close to \$350.00. One spot on KRLA featured oil painting prints of the Beatles for sale, heard on Eleven-Ten.

The Beatles gave KRLA what it needed. An identity. The Beatles gave Bob Eubanks, up to then on a somewhat downslide, a major career boost. KRLA now billed itself as "The Original Beatle Station." KRLA created the perception, mostly true, that you could hear things about the Beatles you couldn't hear anywhere else. And it was true for one main reason.

The only other competing station in Los Angeles was KFMB. KFMB had a strict formula and format that in the late '50's worked. But, as said before, KRLA had nothing to lose so it "broke formula" by playing not only the singles but every cut on every Beatle album, even non-Beatle songs but "Beatle novelties" like Allan Sherman's "I Hate The Beatles" was played. KFMB stuck to its "Fab Forty" but did play Beatle singles. KRLA totally wiped them out.

The only real surprise which didn't happen at KRLA was in having a British disc jockey, as both KFMB and KHJ did the following year. But, you see KRLA's air personalities were "stars" in their own right, and frankly there was no place on the schedule to put one. Who would be replaced? The answer is no one could. KRLA, as stated in the last chapter, truly was "The Station of The Stars." It had the right combination. It had a strong morning man with Bob Hudson. And a strong evening sound from 9 to Midnight with Dave Hull with lots of Beatle hits and information.

However, even though KRLA was totally "Beatle Radio", its license problems did continue to hang over the heads of the "Eleven-Ten Men" like a Damocles sword, and it was privately announced that KRLA would need to make a program

change as the FCC was concerned about two air personalities that sometimes bordered on the "risque" side, Ted Quillin and Arlen Sanders (and didn't really fit into the Beatle/British Invasion direction of KRLA). And when the station in August 1964 was to undergo new ownership, even though interim, it was clear that Quillin and Sanders would be replaced.

Without going into all the legal mumbo-jumbo, KRLA had been under a private company as owners, Eleven-Ten Broadcasting. Because of events briefly detailed in Chapter 1, hearings were held against the station to determine its fitness to continue. On July 31, 1964 the KRLA powerful water-cooled transmitter in South El Monte was turned off for 20 seconds, then turned back on to show the start of new "owners" the Oak Knoll Broadcasting Company who would operate KRLA on an "interim" license and turn over all profits to KCET Channel 28, and U.S.C.

Because of this change, programming was affected on KRLA by the departure of both Ted Quillin and Arlen Sanders who we were told were somewhat on the borderline with their risqueness and therefore did not fit the total "clean" image that KRLA wanted. We had the privilege of talking to Ted Quillin at length during the writing of this book, and Quillin told us what really happened in his tenure at KRLA.

Quillin says that the pre-August 1964 owners of the station, Don Cooke and his brother Jack, always liked him from his days at KFMB, and when Elwell left KRLA in February 1963, signed Quillin to the mid-morning nine to noon show. As stated in Chapter 1, Quillin had an earthiness and honesty about his persona on the air that at times bordered on the "blue," as he put it to us (i.e., "blue doubles"). Quillin told us that he always used "doubles" (double entendres) but that's about it -- he always kept it clean except in the mind of the listeners who might have taken it a different way. But that's how "doubles" work.

One day in July 1964 during Ted Quillin's 9 to Noon show, he had just played "Do the Bird" by the Rivingtons and Quillin had said (quote),

"That's the Rivingtons doing their bird for you. If you don't like that beat they've got, its like hog maws and hog jowls."

At that point, Quillin proceeded to go into the next song. The KRLA disc jockey booth in Pasadena suddenly flew open and John Barrett, the station manager, came in excitedly and perturbed and said,

"That's the dirtiest thing I've ever heard anyone say on the radio."

Quillin didn't know what Barrett meant. Barrett told him that he just heard him say "hog balls" on the air. Quillin said to Barrett something to the effect that Barrett must not be that familiar with the South because he would have known what hog maws and hog jowls were. Barrett insisted that Quillin said "hog balls."

So, according to Quillin, Dave Hull who was in the studio area at the time was ordered by Barrett to go in and take the mike from Quillin and finish his show, as Barrett had at that point taken Quillin out of the studio and into his office to fire him on the spot for saying "hog balls" on the air and the double entendre "doin' their bird."

Barrett called Don Cooke who was back East to let him know he had just fired Quillin for saying "hog balls" on the air. Cooke told Barrett that he didn't care what Quillin said, and he gave Barrett a direct order to put Quillin back on the air at once. So Hull stepped out of the booth, and Quillin finished his show. Dave Hull confirmed this for us, that this really did happen just as we described.

After midnight July 31, 1964, as stated before, the KRLA transmitter in South El Monte was shut down for 20 seconds and when put back on, the Cooke brothers had no more say in KRLA's affairs, since it was now August 1st and the interim company was now in charge. According to Quillin within a few days after August 1, 1964 both himself and Arlen Sanders would be fired by Barrett for the reason that their shows were on the "blue" side and that was not where the station should be, as it badly wanted a new license since it was now under an interim, and that borderline "blue" programming would hurt the cause.

So Quillin first, and then shortly after, Sanders, departed KRLA in early August 1964 as the first change in KRLA's programming under the new Oak Knoll Broadcasting Company. The Cooke s no longer had any more say in KRLA from that point. For further information on the KRLA license switch in August 1964, we recommend Don Beem's college thesis on the shelves of Cal State Fullerton's library. But to listeners, where we're coming from, the departure of Quillin and Sanders a few days later, caused some solidifying of the Beatle Radio image that KRLA wanted at this time.

As stated earlier, Charlie O'Donnell had been since May 1964 working part-time as a Sunday "Eleven-Ten Man" while also being Dick Clark's American Bandstand announcer now that this show was originating on the West Coast. So with Quillin now out at nine to noon, that time slot was perfect for Charlie O.

First, O'Donnell had two main things going for him. He had a clean image. The show American Bandstand was an institution, and O'Donnell's connection with that show showed Los Angeles that here was a guy whose parents wouldn't mind their teenage girls listening to. There was never any question about O'Donnell using "blue" humor because O'Donnell didn't use humor at all, just a slick, mature style and in calling himself "The Jolly Lean Giant," because he was the tallest on KRLA at that time, O'Donnell was a natural to join the KRLA starting lineup in the first available opening, which happened to be the ideal 9 to Noon shift. Because O'Donnell had that certain image of maturity and was a year or two older than some of the other guys, O'Donnell fit into the housewife time 9 to Noon shift perfectly. He would not be replaced on the weekends then, as Dick Moreland moved his Noon to 3 Sunday show into the 4 to 9 p.m. shift where he remained for the next three years. So we had Hudson, O'Donnell, Kasem, Foster, Eubanks, Hull and Sanders, but the last name would now drop off the lineup for similar reasons as Quillin.

The all-night shift in any radio station is a somewhat looser one as, due to the late hours (or early hours) and being a longer shift, a certain amount of leeway is built in. It was never clear why Arlen Sanders was replaced at KRLA, but our sources say it was that the station wanted a different image for the all-night show and they certainly found it with Bobby Dale who joined the KRLA lineup in August 1964.

Bobby Dale was a very "colorful" personality who had a style that was truly his own. Dale first came to Los Angeles airwaves in August 1961 when KFNB had its big strike and brought in "good guys" from the two other sister stations including KDWB, Saint Paul, where Dale had been very popular in the important 3 to 6 p.m. afternoon drive show. Dale joined KFNB in the 6 to 9 p.m. shift where he developed a style that was "philosophically wise." However, this would be Dale's best time slot at KFNB, for when B. Mitchell Reed came back after the strike, Dale was moved into 9 to Midnight and finally before he left KFNB he was in the ultra-relaxed midnight to six spot. From there Dale went to KEWB, Berkeley-Oakland, where he remained before joining KRLA.

Immediately upon assuming the Midnight to six slot, Dale became the "third Bob" on KRLA becoming "Benevolent Bob" in contrast to Eubanks' "Bashful Bob" and Hudson's "Beautiful Bob." An interesting story of Bobby Dale on KRLA comes from Charlie O'Donnell who said he was given the job to train Dale on the operation of the board in the KRLA disc jockey booth. To the left of the board console was the vertical row of red buttons used to play the "carts" that had been set up by the engineer on the other side of the glass and also the jingles. The story goes that when O'Donnell told Dale to press one particular red button, Dale said to O'Donnell,

"Not me man. I've seen Dr. Strangelove!"

Dale had a style that was very casual, ultra-relaxed and almost "beatnik" in nature. Dale certainly did not fit the profile of a TOP 40 deejay at a teen station with his bald head and black-rimmed glasses and being a little on the pudgy side. But Dale did keep a pretty "clean" show, not reverting to the "blue doubles" of Quillin and Sanders, and so Dale became the second addition to KRLA in August 1964 in the midnight to six spot and certainly brought a style all his own. So in August 1964 the KRLA lineup was once again solid, and "Benevolent Bob" became another reason why KRLA was becoming the Station of the Stars.

By August 1964 and this new lineup on KRLA, the station had become Number One overtaking KFNB in the popularity of listeners, and KFNB continued its plunge downward. Ironically at this time, KFNB was staffed with former "Eleven-Ten Men" like Wink Martindale, Sam Riddle, Jimmy O'Neill and Roger Christian, but KRLA was "Beatle Radio" and that said it all.

During this time in 1964 KRLA proudly put out a very nice collectible "Teen Topper Tune-Dex" strip with an alternating picture of a KRLA disc jockey at the bottom and a listing of over 60 different songs that KRLA played in rotation, a full 20 more records than on KFNB. The Teen-Topper strips were quite attractive and are some of the rarest KRLA memorabilia around as they were not as easily found as say the KFNB Fab Forty folders.

At the bottom of these Teen Topper strips were, as said before, rotating pictures of the "Eleven-Ten Men." One of the rarest is Dave Hull with this description next to his picture,

"Listen for scuzzy no-good rat fink Hullaballooer Dave Hull."

and another one, with Rebel Foster, saying,

"Swing along with Rebel and Maude Skidmore. Rebel Foster."

The only two personalities not to be pictured on these colored strips were strangely enough Bobby Dale and Dick Moreland. Bob Eubanks was shown the most frequently, as the Teen Topper lists were debuted on the Bob Eubanks 6 to 9 p.m. show. Eubanks was the most visible of the "Eleven-Ten Men" not only because of his highly popular Teen-Topper

show, but because of what was going to happen this month on KRLA in August 1964, the presentation of the first Beatle concert at the Hollywood Bowl, presented by Bob Eubanks and KRLA.

That was the biggest coup for KRLA, and for months before August, the anticipation that the Beatles were coming made KRLA number one and never looked back. KRLA was "Beatle Radio." The station rode the coat-tails of the Beatles all the way to the top. Even on the bottom of the KRLA Teen-Topper strips was the proud exclamation: "The Original Beatle Station In Los Angeles." KRLA not only got behind the Beatles but seemed to heavily emphasize the second tier of "British Invasion" groups such as Peter and Gordon, Billy J. Kramer and the Dakotas, Gerry and the Pacemakers, and the rest. Again KRLA rolled the dice and the gamble paid off. The station linked itself to the most phenomenal trend in the world, "The British Invasion" and the Beatles. With Bob Eubanks mortgaging his house to put the concert on, and Dave Hull and his horns promoting the Dave Hull Beatle Fan Club every night, the station was reaching its all-time high. During this time the station even put out an album, called "Hear the Beatles Tell All," an album of interviews with the Beatles by none other than Dave Hull and KRLA newsman Jim Steck. This even today is a much sought after Beatle collectible and again it solidified in the audience's mind that KRLA was indeed "Beatle Radio."

But the biggest event of August 1964 was the first Beatles concert at the Hollywood Bowl. KRLA listeners were treated to an exciting sight and sounds of the Beatles live. There was no doubt that KRLA was the station that was the audience's link to the Beatles. As long as the Beatles were on top, so was KRLA. It was a winning combination. As a souvenir of the Beatles concert, a special was heard over the KRLA airwaves with interviews behind the scenes, man-on-the-spot reports, and was broadcast soon after the concert on KRLA so the listeners who were there had something to relate to, and the ones who didn't go could share in the excitement.

But what KRLA put out as the next souvenir of the Beatles concert is what goes down in broadcasting history as another first that came from KRLA. KRLA decided to print a four-page black-and-white publication that would have scrapbook souvenirs of photos of the KRLA "Eleven-Ten Men" at the Beatle concert, and of course exclusive pictures never before published anywhere else of the Beatles themselves. This four-page "paper" would be printed black and white on heavy white paper and would also feature a column by the most popular of the "Eleven-Ten Men", Dave Hull, right on the first page with his picture right there by the byline.

The publication, however, needed some kind of a name. One idea was "KRLA Beatle Concert Souvenir Program" but that would be too long. What did it finally end up being called? Instead of "KRLA Beatle Concert Souvenir Program," it was shortened to just the first word and part of the second. "KRLA Beat". The masthead would be big white letters in a black background and the letters KRLA would be irreverently at angles, and the word "BEAT" would be in big bold ones. The front of the paper would have the current KRLA Tune-Dex and a column by none other than Dave Hull. Inside there would be pictures of the Beatle concert and also various candid shots of the KRLA disc jockeys themselves at the concert, and also pictures for the very first time of the KRLA disc jockey booth where listeners could see where it all came from. The headlines of the first issue were "Ringo to Enter Hospital for Operation." These would be distributed free to music shops and at the KRLA studios in Pasadena. This would be the first actual publication ever put out by a radio station other than little survey folders.

After the success of the first issue, KRLA realized it had come up with something that was another first. If the first issue (by the way did not say #1 or even the date) was a success (it hit the stands in October) then the station would keep the momentum going by having news on other British Invasion groups as well. Besides Dave Hull's column, other KRLA personalities like Rebel Foster and Casey Kasem contributed to the next few editions.

So the first newspaper ever devoted to pop music and a radio station was born. The KRLA Beat. And this was three years before Rolling Stone, generally thought of as the first. But the KRLA Beat was the first, and you can't change history. So moving into the Fall of 1964, KRLA now had an important link with the audience. It's very own "newspaper." From the Beatle concert in August to the first KRLA Beat in October, the momentum of number one KRLA was hotter than a firecracker.

When a station is Number One, you try not to make changes in the lineup, the sound, or the programming because obviously the station is a winning entity. Any changes that are made should be additions to the programming, not major changes in the overall "familiarity" of the station. The first change since KRLA became Number One that past summer of 1964 was for one night to cut back Dave Hull's "Saturday Night Special" and bring in something totally unusual that just may turn out to be a regular feature if it works and if the audience liked it.

So on Saturday night, October 31, 1964, Dave Hull's "Saturday Night Special" was trimmed to 6 to 9 p.m., and from nine to midnight, Bobby Pickett was signed by KRLA to go on from 9 to midnight. However, Pickett was not an ordinary disc jockey. He actually wasn't a disc jockey at all, but a writer and performer who had a number one record several years earlier, "The Monster Mash," where Pickett did a Boris Karloff impersonation through the whole record.

So for Halloween night, Pickett recreated his Karloff impersonation and actually brought in a large metal ash can to create an echo effect along with all kinds of hammers, chains, etc. for this Halloween 9 to midnight show. Pickett not only did the voices of Karloff, but of other "monster" voices, and the show was quite excellent and actually at times scary. This was 5 years before Disneyland's "Haunted Mansion" by the way, and the revival of ghosts and monsters.

So KRLA was first again, because even the monsters-on-TV-fad trend that came the next year with the Munsters and the Addams Family, KRLA and Pickett were first, and some have said that Pickett actually started the revival in the monster fad. The first show was such a hit, partly due to the fact it was Halloween, and so Pickett became a regular KRLA "Eleven-Ten Man" even having his picture end up on the Teen-Toppers Tune-Dex strip and in the four-page KRLA Beat. This Saturday night combination of Hull from 6 to 9 which still played the majority of Beatle records, sometimes a full 3 hours of the Beatles back to back with Pickett's show made KRLA Saturday night a night to actually listen. Skip the drive-in, KRLA was almost as much fun!

Pickett's show lasted on KRLA Saturday nights through the end of the year, as after a couple of months, the show started to sound repetitive and after all, KRLA was at the top -- number one now -- Beatle Radio -- and didn't want to get stale or stagnant by any means. During its short run, the Bobby Pickett show was certainly one of the most innovative shows heard on radio and certainly was ahead of all the other monster fads such as Seymour and Elvira years later. Again KRLA was, as said many times,

"First in Music and First in Fun."

Earlier in this chapter we talked about how Ted Quillin, one of the more original KRLA personalities, was fired from KRLA right after the ownership change, as his earthy humor and "blue doubles" wasn't in the direction the station wanted to take now. When his replacement Charlie O'Donnell took over the mid-morning show from Quillin, that left an opening on the weekends that KRLA did not fill until November 1964. Here's the reason why.

When a station is Number One, it's in a position not to rush anything or not to make hasty decisions. It's best to just leave it alone and reap the rewards of high ratings and developing listener loyalty. The last two weekenders on KRLA that wanted to eventually join the starting lineup were Dave Hull and Charlie O'Donnell. It was very common at that time that if you were a "utility man" on the weekends, that when someone left, the vacancy was yours. The listeners like that too because the "new kid on the block" was given a chance to fill in for various jocks during the week due to illness or personal necessity and were able to develop a following for their own show too. Many times listeners would call in or write in commenting on the weekenders' talents encouraging the station to put him on during the week, like we did, impressed with Charlie O'Donnell in the early summer of 1964.

However, when Charlie O'Donnell was moved to the starting lineup in August 1964 when the new caretaker ownership came in and replaced Ted Quillin and Arlen Sanders for allegedly "blue material," KRLA did not right away sign a new weekender. True, Dick Moreland was working weekends but he was involved in station management and that tied up his time somewhat. Bobby Pickett as the Saturday night nine to midnight personality had limited appeal and because of his "monster" image, Pickett was never able to move away to a more broader audience, even though it was an excellent show.

So KRLA still needed a weekender and at that time, with KRLA as Number One, could be very choosy who it would sign. And because the weekender was someone who could easily move into the starting lineup at any time, it was important to have someone who had a lot of potential. The person tapped to take over the weekend shows and to fill in during the week joined KRLA in early November 1964. He was relatively unknown to Los Angeles listeners but had that adaptability to be successful in any time slot.

So Gary Mack was signed by KRLA to handle the weekend and relief shows. At the time Gary Mack joined KRLA, there was an implied understanding that Mack would be given the first vacancy in the regular lineup, as Mack's goal was to be on the air in the regular lineup in the Los Angeles market. During the fall of 1964 and start of 1965, KRLA had a very strong lineup with Hudson, O'Donnell, Kasem, Foster, Eubanks, Hull and Dale, with Moreland, Mack and Pickett on the weekends.

At this time KRLA initiated a contest that was a lot of fun and was exciting in a way to listen to, and that's the KRLA Music Man Contest. Even though this contest had been used in a limited capacity in 1963, during the fall of 1964 the KRLA Music Man Contest was in full swing. The idea was for a caller to guess which KRLA disc jockey name would "pop-up" -- A recording of Sie Holiday was played reading one after another, all the KRLA disc jockeys names and if you could guess when the horns came in, you'd win. So you were to pick one of the jock's names and listen to the rundown. This was a very successful contest in that it made recognizable to the listeners all the familiar ones like Hudson, Kasem or Hull.

So KRLA left 1964 in its most successful year to date. The station had now an identity. It was "Beatle Radio." The station had colorful survey strips, the Teen-Topper lists. The station now was under a new license control with an interim company replacing the Cooke brothers involvement and hopefully will keep the station strong. And the KRLA Beat was rolling off the presses and became one of the hottest items any radio station had put out up to that point. KRLA did have its most successful year so far. But 1965 was around the corner, and KRLA was ready to enter its most successful year in the history of the station. 1965 was here. And KRLA was about to be a strongest ever in its history.

The first casualty of 1965 was the departure of Rebel Foster who joined, as Martindale, Riddle, Christian and O'Neill before, KFNB, and for Foster in the nine to midnight show. Foster's leaving was a loss to the listeners because Foster had been a solid person in an important time slot, afternoon drive, and it was important at this point that KRLA handle Foster's departure in the correct way to keep the momentum.

As we have stated before, the strongest man in the station lineup should be in the morning drive and the second strongest in afternoon drive. Those are the times when more people are listening to radios because of auto commuting. Foster was not the second strongest man in the lineup but had been program director, and was able to put himself into that shift regardless. But now with Mel Hall as program director who would not be doing an airshift, the schedule could be adjusted to put the two strongest in both drive times.

KRLA already had a very strong morning man in Emperor Hudson. To move into Foster's old 3 to 6 p.m. show was the personality most closely identified with the Beatles and in some ways, the most popular at the station Dave Hull. Dave Hull, upon taking over the 3 to 6 p.m. show was in his strongest peak ever. Listeners would rush home from school or work to hear all the gossip about the Beatles in a more accessible hour than 9 to midnight. Kids had to go to school the next morning, and having Hull in the afternoons was a brilliant move and the combination of Hudson in the morning and Hull in the afternoon made two solid anchors in the important drive times. The mid-day lineup was equally as strong at this point with the combination of Charlie O'Donnell 9 to noon and Casey Kasem noon to 3, a proven number one combination. Bob Eubanks in his 6 to 9 p.m. "Teen Topper Show" was also a big hit especially with the survey strips coming out faithfully every week.

To replace Dave Hull in his old 9 to midnight show was none other than Dick Biondi brought back to KRLA in February 1965 when Hull replaced Foster 3 to 6. As you may recall earlier in this book, Dick Biondi already had made a splash in the Los Angeles market from July 1963 to September 1963 in the 9 to midnight hours. But because Biondi had been on for such a very short time and because he was primarily a Midwest-Eastern personality, getting Biondi to come back to KRLA in February 1965 gave KRLA another relatively "clean" personality who had a wacky sense of humor and high energy that again took KRLA in the direction it wanted to be in, and that is clean-cut, teen-appealing personalities with high visibility, all-individualists who any parent would be proud to have their kids listen to. Biondi still called himself, self-deprecating, "The Ugliest and Skinniest disc jockey in the world" and kept up the momentum that Hull had shown in the 9 to Midnight spot. More on Biondi later in this chapter.

However, two months later in April 1965, KRLA decided to again reinforce its night-time sound by bringing in the most successful midnight to 6 personality in the history of KRLA and make the midnight to six slot long a "graveyard" of low key talent in more ways than one, a new hot slot with an outstanding personality in that time slot. The story of how KRLA brought Bill Slater to the "Eleven-Ten Men" lineup is an interesting one and important to the story of KRLA, as Bill Slater midnight to six became the most successful all-night personality in KRLA's 30-year history.

As we have said before, KFNB up to 1964 had been the main station to be at, it had a solid reputation as being the most popular radio station in Los Angeles in all age groups and for years jocks all over the country longed to join KFNB. Not too many openings occurred at KFNB, as their lineup had long-time favorites as Elliot Field and Joe

Yocam and had a long-time following since 1958 when KFWB began its Color Radio format and even before as Yocam, for example, had been at KFWB since the 1940's.

Still the allure of becoming a member of KFWB's Seven Swingin' Gentlemen was enough for very capable personalities to join KFWB in a weekend slot knowing that someone might leave and then they would achieve the dream of being one of the Seven Swingin' Gentlemen. That was Bill Slater's goal when he joined KFWB in 1964. It was clear that the glory days of KFWB were over as KRLA "Beatle Radio" certainly swept KFWB away. But the mystique of KFWB in Hollywood as a legendary station caused jocks to want to be there from their Hollywood studios and Soto Street towers.

Bill Slater joined KFWB in 1964 and was given the Sunday 1 to 5 afternoon shift with the understanding he would be moved into the KFWB lineup at first chance. Slater waited, but the vacancy never came. When Slater was moved into the more popular 5 to 9:30 p.m. Sunday night slot of KFWB in early 1965, Slater was further positioned to move into the lineup. The change never came as the spot that was going to be Slater's noon to 3 p.m. when Joe Yocam left for his first "retirement" was given instead to a super powerhouse personality, Don Mackinnon.

Slater, disillusioned on being passed up for this noon to 3 shift at KFWB and in seeing that KRLA was way ahead in popularity, Slater left KFWB to join KRLA in the midnight to six spot. Even though the hours were not as visible, Slater still wanted to be on every day in Los Angeles radios and so when Bobby Dale wanted to return to the Bay Area, Slater was given the midnight to 6 show and transformed the show into a big hit. Bobby Dale was rather eccentric and being bald and overweight did not have that appeal to teenagers, as KRLA wanted at the time.

Slater was good-looking, very clean-cut, lived in a suburb in a Pleasant Valley Sunday town West Covina with his wife, family, and even a dog. In many ways Slater was said to be almost a radio version of a young Ward Cleaver, and with the innocent type humor of Biondi, having Slater follow Biondi was a brilliant idea, as Slater seemed to attract an audience that up to now KRLA in a way wrote off.

Slater had his own army of fans who used to go down to the station and actually sit on the porch, camping out on the steps, during Biondi's 9 to midnight show and staying over into the Slater all-night show. These fans who always seemed to hang around the station at various times during the era of Dick Biondi 9 to midnight and Bill Slater midnight to 6 really turned out in big numbers, so many that the Huntington Hotel in which the station was located in an adjacent building, actually had to put up curfew signs to discourage the "porch people" from camping out on the steps all night.

Bill Slater had two important features on his midnight to 6 show. One was what he called "all-night happies" where listeners could call Slater up personally in the KRLA booth and request their favorites. KRLA always at various times took requests, but this was the first major attempt on KRLA to really go all-out behind requests. The success of this format would reach fruition next year where the station would go totally "All Request," but that will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, Chapter 4, "Bursting of the Beautiful Balloon." But the most memorable feature on the Bill Slater show was a direct throwback to radio being a fantasy adventure and theater of the mind. And that is Bill Slater's "Weather Room."

Giving the weather had always been a rather tedious task on the radio, and many times was strictly an interruption of the music that KRLA listeners wanted to hear. So what Bill Slater did in the freedom of his all-night show was to create a situation that was reminiscent of early radio where Jack Benny would describe going into his vault. What Slater did was create the illusion of a room, probably right off the KRLA disc jockey booth, that would be filled with dials, gauges, boiler steam sounds and ticking clocks, that Slater would enter, and by going over all the "gizmos" would figure out the weather. This was an extremely clever act and when we first heard it, being only 14 years old, actually thought there really was a "weather room" right there at KRLA. In fact, when we went to the studios in 1965 to try to see the room and get a "tour of the weather room," it was disappointing to find out this room only existed in our minds. Our father was involved in the weather business and the fact that KRLA and Bill Slater might actually have a "weather room" would hold a special significance.

So in April 1965 when Bill Slater joined the KRLA lineup, the Station of the Stars got even stronger and developed a following where every KRLA personality was number one in their time slot. For the first time in KRLA's history the entire lineup, Monday through Friday, was Number One in all shows, Hudson, O'Donnell, Kasem, Hull, Eubanks, Biondi, and Slater. The station was never stronger. The Beatles were still on top, and it looked like KRLA was going to keep running ahead with victory and never look back.



However, an interesting development was about to happen across town over on the corner of Venice and Fairfax in southwest Los Angeles, that would come on the scene just as KRLA was basking in number one, and would directly affect the KRLA weekend lineup over the next two months. That side adventure and its direct connection to KRLA will be discussed at this time.

KHJ at 930 AM, "Radio 93" it called itself, had been one of the first radio stations in Los Angeles when the two twin self-standing towers were constructed in a field at the northwest corner of Venice Boulevard and Fairfax Avenue in southwest Los Angeles in 1922. At that time, radio stations were given the "3 call letter" combinations, and so KHJ was one of the first radio stations to actually exist as in 1922 commercial radio, was pretty much brand new.

Up to April 1965, KHJ "Radio 93" had a solid middle-of-the-road style programming featuring over the years such M.O.R. personalities as Robert Q. Lewis, Michael Jackson, Mort Crowley, Paul Compton and Lucky Pierre, and even at one time as we discussed in Chapter 1, both Perry Allen and Wink Martindale, both who opened the KRLA microphone in early KRLA history. By April 1965 KHJ was calling itself "The Happy Medium" and had a pretty solid M.O.R. audience but no major force in Los Angeles radio.

Bill Drake had been a TOP 40 disc-jockey in Northern California and was given the opportunity to program station KGB in San Diego in an experimental KGBeach Boys format, which tightened the playlist to 30 from the traditional 40, cut down the disc-jockey patter, and trim station jingles down to just the essentials, all in order to present more music. Drake was so successful in San Diego at KGB that he was asked by RKO's KHJ to turn KHJ into a major hit music station like he had done to stations in both San Diego and Fresno. Drake had a solid lineup in San Diego featuring such strong personalities as Johnny Hayes and Steve Jay, and so when given the opportunity to program RKO's KHJ to take on Number One Giant KRLA, Drake moved full speed ahead.

First, what Drake did was to "steal away" from KRLA Gary Mack from the weekends. As said before Mack wanted a regular time slot at KRLA, but when it was obvious that none would open up soon except the midnight to 6 slot which was unacceptable to Mack, Mack left KRLA in April of 1965 to join Bill Drake's new KHJ as part of the original team of KHJ personalities called "BJ's" or "Boss Jocks", as KHJ "Radio 93" was now "93/KHJ Boss Radio." Besides Gary Mack, Drake also signed former "Eleven-Ten Men" Roger Christian and Sam Riddle, and future "Eleven-Ten Men" Dave Diamond and Don Steele.

Replacing Gary Mack on KRLA was Johnny Williams, who worked just one weekend shift at KRLA before being snatched away by Bill Drake to be the all-nighter at the new KHJ. It was clear that Drake's 93/KHJ would be a big force against the Station of the Stars KRLA, basking proudly in South El Monte from the Valley of the Jolly Lean Giant. It was Boss Radio against Beatle Radio, and KHJ became the toughest competitor ever to KRLA. It deemphasized personalities, offered more records played each hour and was a clear alternative. KHJ did not neglect playing the Beatles but wrote the Beatlemania listener off by emphasizing the Rolling Stones, and non-stop contests offering more money than KRLA could afford.

But at this time in 1965, KHJ was strictly the new kid on the block, the latest challenger. True it did lure away KRLA's Gary Mack and Johnny Williams but who were they compared to Dave Hull and Emperor Hudson? And besides, KRLA had the Beatles and Bob Eubanks, and the second Beatle concert would be presented this summer of 1965. KRLA wasn't worried. KFNB had already been mortally damaged, and the new KBLA in Glendale had a very weak signal and no personalities at this time, just automation.

With this new vacancy on the weekends, KRLA looked South for its new weekender, a dark-haired and handsome Johnny Hayes. Hayes had been doing the 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. important drive time shift at KGB in San Diego in early 1965 and was supposed to be the all-night man at the new KHJ when Drake took it over, but somehow wires got crossed and Hayes instead went with the proven winner KRLA becoming its weekender and also a very frequent and much heard voice during KRLA's production announcements and promos. An article in the KRLA Beat had stated that Hayes was the handsome "boy next door or the son away at college" and had a handsome clean-cut image that really fit the 1965 KRLA direction. And because Hayes was not a strong personality like Hudson, Kasem or Hull at this time of his career, Hayes was perfect to assume the second tier weekend slots where he broadcast the KRLA "Tune-Dex Show" debuting the new KRLA survey every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and also early on Sunday mornings at 6 a.m.

Hayes had been known as "Danny Day" during his early days in Georgia, and when he came out to California along with Bill Drake in the early '60's in the Bay Area at KYA Candlestick Point, he started using the name "Johnny Hayes"

dropping the "Danny Day" moniker from Georgia, and was the all-night man at KYA. When Drake took over KGB in San Diego in April 1964, Hayes again went with Drake and did the all-night show at KGB, but due to superior performance, was moved to the important 4 to 8 p.m. shift where he was Number One in the afternoons in this important time slot. So Johnny Hayes joined KRLA, "The Station of the Stars", and became probably the strongest weekender in KRLA's history, an adaptable utility man that could take over any shift and make it really work. Johnny Hayes also had the handsome boy-next-door looks that so many girls from the "porch people" really fell for and had unrequited crushes on, and with these combinations Johnny Hayes was the last important link to number one KRLA, Beatle Radio, from the pasture in South El Monte in the Valley of the Jolly Lean Giant.

The lineup of KRLA was solid and fully complete. The strongest lineup ever in the 30-year history of KRLA was solidified in May 1965 when Hayes joined Eleven-Ten. The "Eleven-Ten Men" in mid-1965 were the strongest lineup ever. Bob Hudson 6 to 9, Charlie O'Donnell 9 to Noon, Casey Kasem Noon to 3, Dave Hull 3 to 6, Bob Eubanks 6 to 9, Dick Biondi 9 to midnight, Bill Slater midnight to 6, and Johnny Hayes (and Dick Moreland of course) on weekends. This lineup had all the right combination of success and a magic and a chemistry that is hard to describe. But we'll try. Hudson had the great humor, O'Donnell the maturity, Kasem the sincerity and warmth, Hull the Beatle connection, Eubanks the connection to so many high schools all over the southland, Biondi the innocence and corniness, Slater the listening ear to requests all night long, and Hayes the handsome good looks and crushes from girls all over the Southland and the top ability to fill in for any of them with polish and class. And of course Dick Moreland, who by now was sort of the "Dean of the Deejays" at KRLA and was an "uncle" figure to all. Never before and never since had KRLA had such a lineup of such chemistry, such magic, and such power. All that KRLA had ever worked for finally came true in 1965. KRLA was never stronger.

Even the KRLA Beat which started as just a free four-page giveaway back in October 1964, was now a full-fledged newspaper printed on professional newsprint, and since October 1964 went through three or four different format styles before growing into a regular major teen newspaper featuring pictures of the Beatles and all the others, and most important featured a column "Inside KRLA" where each week, the column talked about everything that was happening with KRLA, the fans, the jocks and the station. It is impossible due to printing costs to reproduce here in this book all the "Inside KRLA" columns, but in reading them all over, the main two years of the KRLA Beat give quite a history of KRLA from 1965 to 1967 that even this writer can't top. They really shed light on the strength, power, chemistry and magic that KRLA was basking in at this pinnacle and highest point of KRLA's life.

The only critique about the new KRLA Beat were that the early issues featured more about KRLA, more pictures of the personalities, more pictures of the disc jockey booth, more news about KRLA, whereas the paper got bigger, the news about KRLA was cut back and the news about the music world grew. The reason for this is when the KRLA Beat started, it was primarily a giveaway advertising promotion about KRLA and the exclusive pictures from the August 1964 Beatle concert in the first issue.

As the KRLA Beat grew, the paper eventually became a syndicated newspaper where stations in other cities would simply put their call letters above the huge red letters "Beat," and where the entire paper would be the same from city to city except for the middle "centerfold" pages which would be localized with news about the station that had "bought" the Beat for their market. Therefore the amount of news about KRLA did drop, but no one noticed because all the other articles about music, fashion, trends, movies and the whole teen lifestyle more than made up for it for most teenagers in the Land of Eleven-Ten in the Valley of the Jolly Lean Giant.

The promotions at KRLA during this time took on an even more special importance, because with the KRLA lineup so stable and so secure the station could instead now concentrate on the other aspects of KRLA's popularity. The "Music Man" contest gave way to the similar "Jockey Race" contest where the disc jockeys were in a fantasy horserace and you'd "bet" on which disc jockey would win. This was great radio, and KRLA never sounded better.

KRLA was heavily involved in the Easter and summer "Teenage Fairs" where the star attraction Dick Biondi would be either in a dunk-tank or in a cage with a monkey, where Biondi tried to get the monkey to type "K-R-L-A" on a typewriter before he could be let out of the cage. Biondi that is. Dick Biondi also at this time started "The Dick Biondi Road Shows" where Biondi would put on high school assemblies and charity shows where all the profits would go toward that fundraising goal.

During this entire summer of 1965 KRLA had a whole array of promotions and activities that kept KRLA's name in the limelight more so than ever before. KRLA once sponsored a public appearance of Bob Hudson wrestling a bear!

(Hudson won.) Also during this halcyon period of KRLA, KRLA sponsored a basketball team called the "KRL-Apes" where the KRLA disc jockeys played basketball games against high school student teams, usually the warm-up for the school games, and sometimes even opened for professional teams. Again KRLA had high visibility and was very much in the public's eye.

KRLA also sponsored, along with Bardahl, a Model "A" old-time car that was fully restored and had a Bardahl sticker and Maltese cross KRLA sticker which drove the streets of Southern California drawing massive crowds. At this time of the KRL-"A" making personal appearances, KRLA released a record album featuring the Bobby Fuller Four with two songs about the KRLA car. "KRLA-King of the Wheels" and "KRLA Top Eliminator". The back cover of the album had a memorable black and white picture of all the KRLA "Eleven-Ten Men" standing around the car in the basement parking lot of the KRLA studios. And the lineup that was shown was the greatest single lineup of air personalities in KRLA's history. That album is a special KRLA collectible.

Backing up to last Christmas, Christmas 1964, KRLA had a Dave Hull "Junk Float" in the annual Hollywood Christmas Parade, then called the Santa Claus Lane Parade, where Hull encouraged listeners to send in their "junk" which would be built into a float. Dave Hull, even about this time in 1965, had a record made about him, a two-sided double hit single "Dave Hull The Hullabalooer" backed with "We Love The Hullabalooer". This was one of the first hit records ever to be made about a Los Angeles radio personality. Not even KFNB had that happen, or even KHJ.

KRLA's Tune-Dex Teen-Topper strips were found in record stores all over the Southland with a proud decal with KRLA's Maltese cross in bold red, stating that this store has the KRLA Tune-Dex and that it was one of the stores that reported its sales to KRLA. KRLA's Casey Kasem even made a hit record where he read to the George Martin version of "And I Love Her" a letter written to him from a listener named Elaina who remembered Casey from the Bay Area, where he served before KRLA, and told how she hugged her favorite Beatle, George Harrison, at a Beatle concert. The record "Letter from Elaina" actually made the national charts. (Understandably other stations in Los Angeles did not play this record.) Dave Hull even did a parody of this record called "Letter from Gretchen" about a girl who slugged Ringo in the nose.

And then in August 1965 KRLA presented the Beatles again at the Hollywood Bowl for the second year in a row. At the Hollywood Bowl there actually was a "KRLA Anthem" played, similar to the Pledge of Allegiance, where listeners and audience members would actually stand up from their seats and "pledge allegiance" at the concert for KRLA with its big letters KRLA on the backdrop to the Beatles at the Bowl. Tickets KRLA promotions for the August 1965 concert, just like in 1964 the year before. It was clear that KRLA was at its peak.

It was at this time in the Fall of 1965 that a young 15-year-old from Foothills Junior High School in Arcadia decided to, as a freelance student reporter for the Plaid Post, the FJH school newspaper, decided to score a coup. He would interview Dave Hull, the most popular disc jockey in Los Angeles, for his school paper, on the front page. This teenager had seen Dave Hull and his family in church on Sundays and knew Hull lived in Arcadia at the time and might be receptive to an interview.

So on a Saturday afternoon in late 1965 before Hull's Saturday afternoon show, this teenager went to the KRLA studios where Dave Hull gave a generous interview for this freelance student of Foothills Junior High School. The interview was so good, it was put on the front page of the Plaid Post with a big photo of Hull's handsome face. The interview was the hit of the paper! Students who usually just threw the school paper away or made paper airplanes out of it kept this issue because it had Dave Hull right on the front! However, because the teenager that interviewed Hull was not a member of the Journalism class and because he lived "South of Foothill" (only the North of Foothill kids were really in the in-crowd at Foothills Junior High), the teenager's name was left off the interview. But he knew, and most important, Hull knew who gave the interview. The boy's name? Bill Earl.

Also during the Fall of 1965, Dick Clark produced a show on television called "Shebang" which was broadcast out of Bakersfield. The man Clark wanted to do the show was Dave Hull. Hull, due to family commitments, turned it down. But the KRLA "Eleven-Ten Man" who got it as a second choice was Casey Kasem, who has gone on to become one of the most recognizable voiceovers on TV and visible in his American Top Ten Show in the '80's. The "Shebang" show originally was shown from 5 to 6 p.m. every evening on Channel 5, but seemed to lose its momentum when it was moved to early evenings at 7:30 in early 1966. The show was cancelled shortly after that move. Again, the time a show (or deejay) is on is very important, and if programmed wrong can have major consequences.

In the winter of 1965 KRLA got an exclusive of the new Beatles album, "Rubber Soul" and played all the tracks including a controversial one clearly about a love affair Beatle John Lennon had, "Norwegian Wood." KRLA played this cut extensively with the disclaimer by Dick Moreland before the record,

"Time magazine says this song has a hidden meaning and questionable lyrics. Decide for yourself here on KRLA." and then played the record. That was really the first controversial move during their Number One era made by KRLA, but for a station that was riding higher than ever, it could afford to take some chances.

The year 1965 was truly the biggest year in the history of KRLA. All of its "Eleven-Ten Men" were stars in their own right! Even Charlie O'Donnell had a dance show for a short time in late 1965, "Hollywood Discotheque", and even Johnny Hayes was seen hosting a dance show on a one-time program. The Station of the Stars was truly KRLA. The Beatles were hotter than ever, and their latest movie "Help!" even had KRLA's Dave Hull on the set of the movie in the Bahamas interviewing the Beatles exclusively for KRLA. There was no doubt that KRLA was by far the major radio station, not just in Los Angeles but in the entire country!

The end of 1965 had Dick Biondi doing his first New Year's Eve countdown show featuring the biggest records of 1965, 100 to 1 in order. And then at the stroke of midnight an old KRLA jingle from 1961 was heard, the old countdown after the news, that lead into 11:59 p.m.

"It's 1966!"

was announced proudly over the KRLA mikes. The biggest year ever on KRLA, 1965, had changed over into 1966. KRLA from its 6 big towers in the Valley of The Jolly Lean Giant in its South El Monte pasture was riding atop all the others in the entire United States. The staff of Hudson, O'Donnell, Kasem, Hull, Eubanks, Biondi, Slater, Hayes and Moreland were truly stars. Most were known all over the U.S. KRLA had truly linked its station image with that of the Beatles, "clean" personalities and an excellent sound.

However, so much of KRLA's rise to the top depended on the Beatles. KRLA did not really catch on until it did get on the Beatles bandwagon. Remember Hudson, Hull, Eubanks, Biondi and Kasem were all at KRLA when it was still a distant Number Two in 1963. It took the Beatles and KRLA's all-out campaign behind the Beatles to catapult it to the top. But when a station does that, its fortunes pretty much rested squarely on the Beatles. And when the Beatles' popularity began to fade in 1966 due to factors that will be discussed in the next chapter, and with the new 93/KHJ going into its second year, the mighty "giant" KRLA with its strong towers pulsating out of the Valley of The Jolly Lean Giant in its horse pasture in South El Monte, would suddenly develop "cracks" just like what could happen at the Whittier Narrows Dam nearby the transmitter site.

Besides that, the world was rapidly changing. The Birth Control Pill was now available, and recreational drugs and "new" music were being experimented in San Francisco. Even if you listen closely to "Rubber Soul" you can hear that the Beatles were changing too. The influence of Dylan and marijuana was starting to show. They weren't "mop tops" anymore with such songs as "Girl" (tit, tit, tit, tit, tit) and "Norwegian Wood". On the surface it was business as usual at KRLA, but the forces that would change KRLA were already starting to develop. The KRLA lineup was strong, but just how long could this lineup stay in place? And if it didn't, what would KRLA do to mend the cracks?

KRLA was about to enter 1966, which would be up to that point the most progressive year in recent history. KRLA would enter 1966 with a sense of security, but that security was about to change, like rattled windows and shaken walls. 1966 would be a year of many changes, including many changes at KRLA, and the year KRLA would start to show some age.

KRLA had been soaring into the sky like a beautiful balloon, high in the clouds of Princess Blue Sky over the Valley of the Jolly Lean Giant in South El Monte. But even the most beautiful balloon can be as fragile where just a small rose bush thorn could send it down to the ground. KRLA was the Beautiful Balloon. Unfortunately this "beautiful balloon" in 1966 and finally in 1967 sadly burst. The next "room" of the Dream-House is about to open.





*John Hill*



REBEL FOSTER

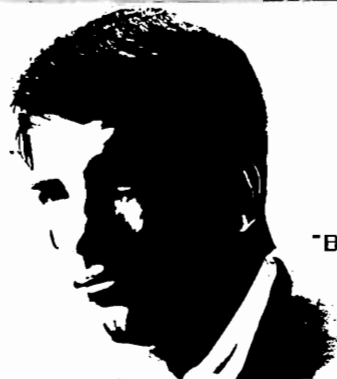


BILL SLATER



BOE EUBANKS

9 - NOON



BOB DAYTON

## CHAPTER 4

### "BURSTING OF THE BEAUTIFUL BALLOON"



1966 was one of the most important years of the 1960's. It was in 1966 that so much in the world started to change. The year before, women had "the pill." This year one of the most radical movies on the screen, "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?"; would hit the theaters and shock audiences into realizing the world was growing up fast.

A group of musicians in San Francisco in the Haight-Ashbury district would be experimenting with new sounds never heard before. And LSD and marijuana would further make its way into mainstream youths in America and the whole culture that went with it. Truly the greatest influence on young people were The Beatles. As we've said before, with so much already written on the Beatles, we don't intend to tell their whole story here. But because the Beatles evolved and changed so much in 1966 and because KRLA was so linked in the audience's minds with Beatles and was still "Beatle Radio," the popularity of KRLA was directly linked to the Beatles as KRLA was for the last two years squarely on the Beatles bandwagon. But three events in 1966 would contribute to KRLA suddenly becoming vulnerable and suddenly, possibly, losing some of its luster from its highest peak in late 1965 and early 1966.

KRLA entered 1966 with one of its highest popularity levels ever. In February 1966 KRLA had sponsored another one of its famous annual "Valentine's Contest" where listeners were encouraged to send in elaborate amateur art work. The KRLA Beat in early 1966 was at its strongest level, with the biggest issues and the highest readership. The KRLA lineup was its very strongest ever in the history of KRLA. Emperor Hudson 6 to 9, Charlie O'Donnell 9 to Noon, Casey Kasem Noon to 3, Dave Hull 3 to 6, Bob Eubanks 6 to 9, Dick Biondi 9 to Midnight, Bill Slater Midnight to 6, and

Johnny Hayes and Dick Moreland on the weekends and relief. This was the excellence of KRLA at its personified best. Even the Beatles were at their peak with "Rubber Soul"; even though some KRLA listeners didn't quite understand some of the new lyrics or strange influences that had shown their influence over the Fab Four.

In fact, the Spring of 1966 was the highest peak of KRLA in its entire history, as KFMB was dying its slow death and Boss Radio at KHJ had yet to really catch on strong, as it soon would. When a radio station is at its peak and as high up as it can go, the only direction is down, and unfortunately because of a changing world, changing Beatles, and major changes in the KRLA lineup, the year of 1966 would show the first hairline cracks in the great station that up to now for the past two years was virtually unstoppable.

KRLA up to this time had always played the hits from the Tune-Dex. The top records in sales in Southern California. However, some of the brightest and most popular moments on KRLA were when KRLA took requests directly from the listeners. Many rock-'n'-roll acts would make a pilgrimage to the station's studios in Pasadena and special banks of phones were installed for these stars to answer the KRLA request lines. This was one very important way that KRLA remained close to its listeners, by listening to their needs and by bringing the various performers right into the station to talk to the listeners. Bill Slater's all-night request show always had a backlog of requested songs to play. Dick Biondi also during the 9 to midnight show featured heavy requests which further increased the station's popularity. KRLA was truly a station very much in touch with its listeners.

At this time in KRLA's history it was decided to have more of their best feature. KRLA would go "All-Request Radio" where every record played on KRLA would be by request. Toll-free request lines would be set up all over Southern California, with the promos made by the voice of Johnny Hayes announcing the request phone numbers from South Gate to El Monte and all points between.

Dick Moreland would be ordering new jingles for this "all-request-radio" format. The jingles up to now that KRLA had introduced last September were very slick and based on the theme "That's Where It's At" by the T-Bones. This "That's Where It's At" package had been the first new KRLA "vocal" jingles since the "Radio Eleven-Ten" package of 1961. It was told to us that Dick Moreland drove out to San Bernardino to have these new "All-Request Radio" jingles recorded. This new set of "All-Request Radio" jingles would commonly be referred to in the business as the "Ash Can" package, as it sounds like the drums at the end of the jingles were actually percussion on ash cans. These "All-Request-Radio" jingles were truly the best of the KRLA jingles up to that time. One notable jingle of this package that never made it on the air was that that was sung to the tune of "K-R-L-A-Pre-View!" Instead of that, this one last jingle stuck at the end of the package as an inside joke went "K-R-L-A-F\*\*K YOU!" A rare master never used on the airwaves of Eleven-Ten.

The KRLA Tune-Dex that had been a listing of the top selling records would now be replaced by the "KRLA Most Requested Tune-Dex" that would now be featured in the Studio City survey of hits. At the end of every hour, the new jingle "KRLA's Number One most requested song," and the most requested song that hour, would be played. It was absolutely fun to listen to KRLA at 5 minutes before each hour to hear what the most requested song would be. This was excellent programming and again made KRLA closer to its audience. The "All-Request-Radio" concept even though expensive in having all those phone lines, still was a high point at KRLA and was our favorite period of KRLA's history. However, several things would happen in the summer of 1966 that would change KRLA's momentum and for a short time cause KRLA great concern whether or not it should be on the Beatles' bandwagon where it proudly had been for the past several years.

The first major event to affect KRLA was the release of the Beatles album "Yesterday and Today." We worked in a record store in San Gabriel during the summer of 1966 and remember all too well all the outcry at this highly controversial album. Instead of the usual record album cover that the Beatles had put out up to this point with the smiling mop top faces, this one would be something totally different. And shocking. We believe it is a great work of art and a masterpiece in record art album cover history.

The Beatles were pictured with strange smiles on their faces seated on a bench, wearing white butcher jackets, holding broken toy dolls with decapitated heads and slabs of raw meat and bones were draped across the Beatles' chests. One of the Beatles was holding up the decapitated head of one of the dolls. Shocking? This was in 1966!

When people saw this cover they immediately were shocked. Capitol Records immediately recalled the records before too many got sold and pasted another cover over this fabulous picture. We were lucky enough to get one of the early ones with the real cover hidden under the new one and can remember our mother steaming off the new cover over

the stove in 1966. The world was shocked. These were not the lovable mop tops anymore. What statement could the Beatles be making? Infanticide? Cannibalism?

Actually Beatle John Lennon did reveal that this cover was a reaction to the album itself, as this record was a collection of Beatle songs that had been "butchered" (left off) the American Beatle albums. It was a common practice at that time for the American releases to have fewer songs than the original English versions. This was John Lennon's statement on how he didn't appreciate the American record company putting out a collection of songs taken out of their original albums, musical works of art, and "butchered" onto a leftover album. But the public outcry was shocking. It was true that the Beatles were certainly "growing up." The whole idea of mop tops, as in looking back, can tell us, was all an illusion anyway.

But this time in the Land of Eleven-Ten listeners were concerned about the Beatles. Parents were concerned also. And so was KRLA. Did KRLA still want to be "Beatle Radio" with the Beatles going overboard? However, the KRLA Beat tried to meet this crisis head on by running pictures of the controversial album cover and asking reader reaction. KRLA had done this quite successfully in 1965 with "Norwegian Wood," when the controversial lyrics brought concerns to KRLA listeners.

So KRLA was still "Beatle Radio," Bob Eubanks was about to sponsor another concert in Los Angeles, but this time in a bigger venue, "Dodger Stadium," which would be renamed "Beatle Stadium" for this big event. But was the image of the Beatles the same? KRLA decided to keep being the biggest Beatle booster. However, shortly after the controversial album, a second problem with the Beatles developed.

It was reported that John Lennon had been quoted as saying the Beatles were more popular than Jesus Christ now. This totally turned off Dave Hull, a very religious Christian man, who privately was offended by that statement. KRLA which had wrapped itself so successfully with the Beatles, which gave KRLA the identity it needed, was now starting to wonder may how to down-play its Beatle connection, at least soften it a bit. With the Beatles becoming more radical, just what was KRLA on the bandwagon of?

Besides the problems with the Beatles, the strong KRLA "Station of the Stars" lineup was about to suffer its first casualty. And it would be a sad one, because the first change in the great KRLA lineup would take place in July 1966 with the loss of the highly popular morning man, Emperor Hudson.

The story goes that Hudson had made a novelty cover-version record of the highly popular song about the mentally ill, Napoleon XIV's "They're Coming to Take Me Away Ha-Haaa!" Hudson's novelty cover was called "I'm Normal" where Hudson would parody the number one song on KRLA.

According to sources, John Barrett, the general manager, warned Hudson not to play it. When Hudson did, Barrett took that as insubordination, violating a direct command of management, and Hudson was immediately taken off the air and fired. Barrett apparently had felt Hudson had grown too independent and egotistical and was no longer able to be controlled by management.

It was a classic power play. Dick Moreland, we were told, was afraid to break the news to Hudson, in that, "Hudson might pick John Barrett up and throw him against the wall." Moreland, as the messenger was afraid if that would happen to him also. But Hudson had gone too far and now was involuntarily terminated from the "Eleven-Ten Men." Hudson, the very next day or so was signed by KBLA, Glendale in the same 6 to 9 a.m. morning show. But because of the station's weak signal, Hudson at KBLA was never the major force as he was at KRLA.

This was a major blow to KRLA. The loss of its highly popular morning man who many say "built the station" into Number One. And with the 6 to 9 morning show the most important time slot in the whole station, it was critical that KRLA try to pick up the pieces and do something right now, not to lose any momentum. Without a strong morning man KRLA could be devastated, especially with the growing popularity of Robert W. Morgan as the long-time morning man on 93/KHJ.

KRLA was in a real problem. Hudson was out. Barrett had to show that he was boss and would not tolerate any challenge to management's authority. Barrett needed a strong morning man. Especially now with KRLA's identification with the Beatles now under fire. The strongest man at the station after Bob Hudson was Dave Hull. Would Dave Hull move into the morning show?

Hull told us in October 1969 that Barrett offered him the morning show. Hull turned it down. Hull felt that the firing of Hudson shouldn't have happened, and that maybe just a suspension would be more in order. Hull told us that Barrett looked at him and said,



"Dave, I can't."

Barrett could not back down and bring back Bob Hudson. Barrett knew that the loss of Hudson would be crucial, but KRLA did have a strong lineup of "Station of the Stars." Maybe with some creative scheduling, the audience may accept the new lineup.

The only weekend man besides management-involved Dick Moreland was Johnny Hayes. This would be Johnny Hayes' opportunity to be a full-fledged "Eleven-Ten Man" in the starting lineup. Unfortunately it was a bittersweet one for Hayes. For it was Bob Hudson who worked with Hayes at KYA, San Francisco, who called Hayes at KGB San Diego where Hayes was 4 to 8 p.m. and told Hayes to come to KRLA.

Hayes had just quit KGB, in 1965, over management pressure involving Hayes "housekeeping" of the disc jockey booth and the threats of moving Hayes back to the all-night shift where Hayes had started at KGB. Little known to Hayes at that time if he had not quit KGB, Bill Drake would have signed Hayes to the midnight to 6 spot at 93/KHJ in the original lineup. But Hayes instead had taken Hudson's advice to come to KRLA.

So now with Hudson's exit from KRLA, the lineup would be changed to move Hayes on to the starting lineup. Because Hayes was not a strong morning-man type and because he was still the "newest kid on the block" it was not even thought of to move Hayes into the morning show. Others would have to be moved to make room for Hayes.

Here's how the decision was made in July 1966.

Bob Eubanks had been very successful with his new game show on television he had just been hosting "The Newlywed Game." That show taped in the evenings, and so for the past few months Eubanks had been only doing his Teen Topper show just two or three days a week, with Johnny Hayes as a permanent substitute on the days Eubanks could not make the nighttime show due to the ABC-TV taping of the game show.

It was thought that since Eubanks wanted to move to another shift, to let Johnny Hayes take over the 6 to 9 p.m. show every night as Bob Eubanks replacement, and to continue the Teen Topper show. Johnny Hayes was "tall, dark and handsome," like Eubanks, and so management thought that Hayes would be a natural to take over this show without making too drastic a change for the listeners. Again, KRLA wanted to keep as much intact as possible.

With Eubanks out in the 6 to 9 p.m. show, it was decided to leave Hull, Kasem, Biondi and Slater where they were in their highly successful show times. Eubanks did not want to go back to the 6 to 9 a.m. show, and management also had remembered how Eubanks was unsuccessful in that drive time shift a few years before, in fact right before Hudson took over the mornings and made KRLA number one and never looked back.

So it was decided that Charlie O'Donnell would move into Hudson's show time, and the 9 to Noon spot would be filled by Bob Eubanks. O'Donnell was older than the others, like Hudson, and also had that "maturity" that Hudson had. O'Donnell did not use any humor, but it was thought by emphasizing more music on the Charlie O show it would make up for it. Hudson recently told us that he advised O'Donnell not to take the morning show as O'Donnell would have to compete with so many legendary morning men on the other channels, but O'Donnell took the challenge and moved into the morning show. O'Donnell, for being a very straight morning man, did a very good job, but without the humor in the morning with Emperor Hudson the morning show did suffer.

However Bob Eubanks 9 to Noon was highly successful. Eubanks wanted to move away from his "teen idol" image and was afraid that his association with too much of a teenage audience like the Teen-Topper show might interfere with his image as a television game show host. Nine to Noon was Eubanks' best performances as an air personality and reflected a growing maturity as a radio performer, and Eubanks did an excellent job talking to housewives during the mid-morning hours.

So KRLA had a new lineup, the first change in the starting lineup in over a year. Charlie O'Donnell 6 to 9 a.m., Bob Eubanks 9 to Noon, Casey Kasem, Noon to 3, Dave Hull 3 to 6, Johnny Hayes 6 to 9, Dick Biondi 9 to Midnight and Bill Slater midnight to 6. Dick Moreland could still be heard on the weekends. KRLA was still Number One, but with O'Donnell as the morning man KRLA had a much weaker start to the day, and Robert W. Morgan at KHJ was closing in very fast.

During this time in 1966, the campy Batman television show with Adam West was highly popular, and so to cash in on the latest fad, KRLA in early to mid-1966 issued two sets of KRLA Bat Stickers which Dave Hull affectionately called "sticky type bat deals." The second series was even better and more colorful than the first, and more rare also. We can recall being 15 years old and talking to Dick Moreland in management at KRLA in early 1966 about airing a Batman spoof we wrote, "Fatman and Slobin". Even though Moreland declined to use the spoof, he did give us a Jan

and Dean "Batman" record album which we still have today. Moreland did hear our tape and gave us a good audience on our creative endeavor. KRLA did get behind the Batman craze with its stickers which were highly popular. Some schools actually banned them from school, because of their popularity they would be glued on almost anywhere. It was a very successful TV show, and the Bat stickers were a very clever promotion.

KRLA had calculated with its "All-Request-Radio" format into the summer of 1966 and was able to keep the audience interest with both its "All-Request-Radio" format and also the third annual Beatles concert that Bob Eubanks (9 to Noon) would be sponsoring. Even though the Beatles' popularity had slipped dramatically in 1966, because the Beatles would be coming to KRLA in a Bob Eubanks sponsored concert, KRLA wanted to keep on the Beatles bandwagon, even though it had been slightly derailed by the Beatles' outrageous album cover and controversial statements about Christ.

However, the winds of change would once again blow from Princess Blue Sky above KRLA, and this time another member of the "Station of the Stars" would be leaving the starting lineup. Bill Slater had been moving in the direction of KRLA production and in doing so decided to give up his all-night show. Even though his all-night show was still number one, Slater wanted to work in KRLA production during the daytime hours, and after all, the all-night show can be a hard thing to live with for a long time. Since Johnny Hayes had now moved into the regular KRLA lineup, there was a vacancy in the weekend shifts, and so Slater decided that it would be weekends and production for himself for now.

To replace Slater on the midnight to 6 shift, KRLA turned to another alumnus from KACY Oxnard who had worked with Dick Moreland, Bob Eubanks, Bill Kefferly and Jim Steck. For midnight to 6 KRLA welcomed Pat Moore to the Land of Eleven-Ten. Moore was one of the best midnight-to-6 personalities in the history of KRLA. Moore had joined KRLA from KDEQ Santee, where Moore was heavily promoted as "San Diego's New Nightly."

Moore had been in the early evening spot at KDEQ, and when Moreland had informed Moore of a rare opening at KRLA "The Station of the Stars," it was an opportunity that Moore couldn't pass up. After all, KRLA had been the number one radio station overall in Southern California. Pat Moore was an excellent personality and also had the valuable first-class license from Don Martin School in Hollywood, so Moore was valuable to KRLA on both sides of the glass. So with Moore joining KRLA in July, the KRLA lineup was Charlie O'Donnell 6 to 9, Bob Eubanks 9 to Noon, Casey Kasem Noon to 3, Dave Hull 3 to 6, Johnny Hayes 6 to 9, Dick Biondi 9 to midnight and Pat Moore midnight to 6. On the weekends and for relief purposes were Bill Slater and Dick Moreland.

So the successful "All-Request Radio" format was heading full speed ahead into the summer. The summer of 1966 also saw the best Beatle concert of them all at Dodger Stadium, in which for the third year in a row the Beatles were brought to Los Angeles by KRLA. However, the Beatles were getting pretty radical in their music. Their classic album "Revolver" had just been released and it was clear that the Beatles were no longer the mop tops that KRLA had rallied behind just two short years ago. Because of the Christ statement and the "Butcher Cover," plus there were strong rumors that the Beatles were experimenting with marijuana and LSD, the luster on the Beatles had lost its shine somewhat throughout America. But KRLA continued to be Beatle Radio and acted as if it was still 1964.

That was part of the problem. KRLA was being swept along with such major changes in the world around them. Without Hudson in the morning and a weaker morning man with Charlie O'Donnell, plus the sagging popularity of the Beatles coupled by the growing popularity of 93/KHJ Boss Radio, it was clear that the once great rock mountain of KRLA could possibly start to crumble. However, toward the end of 1966 KRLA came up with some of its greatest creative promotions ever in the history of the station. Three of the biggest took place in late 1966 where KRLA would have some of its greatest moments before being swept under in the flow of radical events of 1967 that not even the forerunner and pacesetter KRLA could be predicted.

The first of its fabulous promotions was a fantasy gasoline station idea. KRLA would run what sounded like commercials for "Valhalla Thunderbolt Gasoline." These were so terrifically realistic it took some listeners a few times to catch on that it was all a fantasy. But what a fantasy! The gas stations were called "Valhalla" and each one would feature a huge sign of a "prancing Norseman." The gasoline was free. You paid only for the hundreds of additives in the gasoline.

KRLA offered to send to listeners who sent in a SASE, an actual Valhalla Cost-Plus Credit Card. The "commercials" were read by a character, Remington Noble, who encouraged listeners to send in for the credit cards and don't worry about paying, "the friendly Vikings" at Valhalla would come to your home and sit around drinking mead

until it was convenient for you to pay. This was, as Stan Freberg has called radio, "the big screen." Some people actually went looking for "the sign of the prancing Norseman." It was one of the greatest promotions ever created by a radio station. Valhalla, Gasoline of the Gods, was a tremendous success. Thousands of KRLA listeners sent away for their credit cards.

An interesting story about Valhalla got back to KRLA and was told by Dick Moreland. Moreland said that a listener from the Land of Eleven-Ten was driving through the desert and came across a gas station that had a big sign, "We Take All Gas Credit Cards!" (That was a common practice in those days before OPEC and gas shortages.) This listener, it was told, drove into the gas station, filled up the gas tank with this station's gasoline and when finished, handed the attendant on duty the Valhalla Gasoline of the Gods credit card. Guess what? They took it! The power of radio and KRLA in particular at this stage of the station's history was absolutely fantastic.

Another fabulous promotion that KRLA featured around this time in late 1966 and early 1967 was "commercials" for Jack Armstrong Packard dealership in Palmdale, where there would be this huge 8-story sign for "Jack Armstrong Packards" surrounded by acres and acres of "road hungry Packards." The credit manager at Jack Armstrong Packard was named "Boola", and as she spoke (the voice of Sie Holiday) about how she'd "love to give you instant credit," a chorus of male voices would sing the college chant "Boola Boola, Boola Boola." This was radio and KRLA at its finest. However the funniest line of the Jack Armstrong spots was how they advertised that Jack Armstrong Packards was "Freeway close" to all of Southern California. Isn't that a typical California expression, "Freeway Close"? How true, how true. With that line KRLA was really ahead of itself.

The third fabulous promotion of KRLA came in late 1966 when KRLA hired the great advertising "genius" Stan Freberg to do a series of promotional spots for KRLA in December 1966. Freberg is the master of radio. Freberg believed that radio is the big screen, in that the imagination that can be stirred up by radio fantasy is greater than any other medium. The radio screen is limitless.

For one of the greatest and most memorable productions at KRLA was the series that Freberg developed of a KRLA executive named Mr. Hardrock who had a Sonny Bono "Prince Valiant-style" wig placed over the roof of the KRLA building at the Huntington Hotel in Pasadena. The wig would hang down the sides of the building where it would interfere with the Huntington Hotel gardeners cutting the lawns. This was all fantasy of course, but with Freberg's genius so utterly believable! Nobody was greater than Stan Freberg when it came to radio imagination.

In the next vignette, Mr. Hardrock had the Sonny Bono wig "backcombed" into a Brillo Pad style Bob Dylan "fright wig." And to hold it in place, a crop duster plane with tanks of hair spray would fly over the KRLA building and "spray" the wig. The hairspray would also, however, get all over the rich neighborhood of Pasadena and San Marino that KRLA was located in and cause the neighbors problems with dogs and mink coats all being hairsprayed.

Freberg was an absolute genius with these spots. We had the privilege of meeting Stan Freberg at a book signing event at a bookstore in Pasadena where we gave Freberg a cassette dub of these spots from Research Archives. Again KRLA had scored a big triumph. These spots were so believable that some people actually thought a giant wig had been fitted over the roof of KRLA. This again was KRLA at its best and radio at its best. Nothing in Los Angeles radio came close to these three great promotions of 1966 and 1967, Valhalla, Jack Armstrong, and the wig on the roof of KRLA. It was radio as it should be. Where is radio like this today?

KRLA also in late 1966 and early 1967 would release the first of a series of record albums, compilations of KRLA hits called "21 Solid Rocks" and "Son of 21 Solid Rocks" with "KRLA" carved in the side of a mountain on the cover featuring the King Kong-like KRLA mascot, the KRL-Ape. KRLA had a tremendous end of the year with the most creativity and innovations ever in KRLA's history.

KRLA, also in 1966, tried to catch on to the bandwagon of what appeared to be maybe the "next Beatles" since the Beatles were getting heavier and heavier, and that is jumping on the bandwagon of the Monkees. The Monkees TV show had started in late August and early September of 1966, and KRLA was there offering Monkee Fan Club cards and kits including a "Monkee stocking cap for your head." However, the Monkees were no Beatles, and even though the Monkee connection was highly popular, it was certainly not anything like Beatlemania.

Toward the end of 1966, one of the greatest in KRLA's history, Casey Kasem developed a new feature on his Sunday afternoon show. Kasem called this "The Sweetheart Tree" where Kasem would read letters from listeners dedicating songs to their sweethearts where in the background instrumental music of the Beatles and Monkees ballads would be heard. Very reminiscent of "Letter from Elaine." Kasem always was one of the greatest at KRLA with his

utmost sincerity and honesty on the air. "The Sweetheart Tree" was very touching programming and was another reason that Casey Kasem had such a loyal and devoted following at KRLA's history.

Also toward the end of 1966 KRLA had a contest where listeners could win their choice of any make and model of any new car from the 1967 lineup of new automobiles. KRLA was truly riding a wave of excellence. KRLA closed the year 1966 with another Dick Biondi New Year's Eve Show where Biondi would count down the biggest records of 1966 leading right up to New Year's Midnight and 1967. So 1966 was about to come to an end. It was too bad that Bob Hudson didn't survive the year, as the future of KRLA in 1967 just might have changed if Hudson had remained in the morning. But KRLA did have a magic and a chemistry that really shined over the air with O'Donnell, Eubanks, Kasem, Hull, Hayes, Biondi, Moore, Slater and Moreland.

However 1967 would be another story in KRLA's history. In 1967, the world had changed so far with the Beatles evolving into Sgt. Pepper and the dawn of Monterey. And suddenly KRLA would no longer seem that hip anymore. But that won't be for another few months. Right now in January 1967, KRLA was still on top and the greatest radio station in the world. KRLA entered January 1967 with its very entertaining Red Baron contest inspired by the year-end song "Snoopy versus the Red Baron," where listeners would pretend they were in a World War I plane trying to shoot down the Red Baron and if they did, they would win a prize. This was fun radio and much more "fun" contests than the ultra-slick "Formula" 93/KHJ Boss Radio ones that always seemed to lack some sincerity.

1967 was getting into full bloom in the spring of 1967 where KRLA again would feature its Annual Valentine's Contest. This contest was really more of an art festival where listeners sent in some very creative Valentine's. One even had live doves flying around inside the "valentine" and another was a huge concrete "heart" that was dropped outside the KRLA studios at the foot of the steps leading up to the front door.

However the winner of that 1967 Valentine's contest was a young listener, an aspiring artist and poet named Drew Struzan. Research Archives put out a tremendous search through phone directories to try to track down this person, but to no avail. Drew Struzan's painting was one of the most beautiful paintings painted which depicts the KRLA "Eleven-Ten Men" of January 1967 in almost like the Dutch Master cigar poses.

The poem that is at the bottom of this painting allegedly written by Struzan is featured in our "FOREWORD" and that's where we chose our title Dream-House. Through our research and sources we were able to track down the former KRLA employee who owns the painting now. The employee has asked to remain nameless, but has given us full permission as the owner of the art work to use it here.

This was the greatest of all the KRLA Valentine's contest entrees. It had disappeared for many, many years until finally resurfacing in 1982. This would be really the end of an era on KRLA, and this picture symbolizes that end perfectly. Never again in KRLA's history would the personalities ever be "the heroes" that this painting so richly depicts.

The disc jockeys in this picture are one of the greatest lineups in the station's history. (It's only too bad Bob Hudson couldn't have been shown.) The disc jockeys pictured left to right are Bob Eubanks, Dick Biondi, Casey Kasem, Johnny Hayes, Pat Moore, Dave Hull, Charlie O'Donnell and Bill Slater. The painting of Pat Moore looks similar to Dave Hull as no picture of Moore was available at that time for Struzan. This painting in a way is almost a tombstone, and the poem an epitaph of a station that will never ever again equal the greatness of that era. Those were heroes to so many. They are legendary. And the painting reflects that greatness.

The following year KRLA would have its final Valentine's Contest, but now named "KRLA Art Festival Contest." The reason it would be discontinued after February 1968 is because of all the anti-war sentiments, one of the "Valentines" given to KRLA in 1968 was that of a bathtub filled with bloody dolls and red paint. This was the anti-war era and that obviously was a strong statement so different than the painting from February 1967. At that time KRLA realized that the dream was over and the dream-house was not like it had been anymore.

Before we move any closer into 1967, we need to backtrack about the first Super Bowl in January 1967 and how it was "blacked out" in Los Angeles but broadcast over TV in San Diego. Some of the engineers at the KRLA transmitter site in South El Monte designed an antenna for TV's out of an old broomstick that was found in the kitchen of the transmitter building and some old coat hangers from the lockers in the kitchen. The engineer rigged this up to the television that they used to watch in their kitchen-lounge in the South El Monte transmitter building and sure enough it worked, and San Diego television stations were suddenly clear as a bell. The engineers informed the Pasadena

studios about this, and the brilliant idea came to give these plans over the air where listeners could send for instructions on how to rig up a broomstick and coat hanger to watch the Super Bowl.

It was a tremendous hit, and all over Los Angeles in the Land of Eleven-Ten, KRLA listeners were now able to watch the Super Bowl football game through the San Diego TV station now crystal clear due to this antenna. KRLA had scored another first.

Also, KRLA would feature in early 1967 an hourly feature called "Question of the Hour" where a thought-provoking question usually dealing with social consciousness was asked over the air (by the voice of Sie Holiday) and really got KRLA listeners to think.

As we stated before, the beautiful Valentine painting that graces the cover of this book was really the swan song to the old KRLA. Because shortly after that painting was presented to KRLA, an old friend would return to the KRLA airways.

KFWB had been sold to Westinghouse in 1966 and when it changed over to Westinghouse one of the KFWB "good guys" not picked up by Westinghouse was Rebel Foster, who KRLA welcomed back to the lineup in February 1967. By this time in early 1967, Bob Eubanks had been very successful with his ABC-TV hosting of the Newlywed Game and so asked to leave his highly popular 9 to Noon show so that he could just do Sunday afternoons on KRLA. He still wanted to keep his foot in the door of the station that he loved.

When Eubanks left 9 to Noon, that created a home for Rebel Foster who returned to KRLA in February 1967 in the 9 to Noon show. But unfortunately for us listeners, no more "Maude Skidmore." So the KRLA lineup in February 1967 was now Charlie O'Donnell 6 to 9, Rebel Foster 9 to Noon, Casey Kasem Noon to 3, Dave Hull 3 to 6, Johnny Hayes 6 to 9, Dick Biondi 9 to midnight, Pat Moore midnight to 6, and Eubanks, Moreland, and Slater on the weekends.

Foster would have preferred his old 3 to 6 p.m. show, but by that time Dave Hull was so hugely popular in the 3 to 6 p.m., much more so than Foster ever had been in that time slot, so Foster was given what was available 9 to Noon. Foster was quite good in the 9 to Noon hours and had toned down considerably from when he had been 3 to 6 p.m.

Two other contests of merit were heard on KRLA during the early part of 1967. Both the KRLA "Connection" contest and the KRLA "C.I.A." contest were quite popular during early 1967 and continued the long tradition of KRLA having fun activities to involve its audience.

The KRLA "Connection" contest was where the listener was to guess a current song from the KRLA Tune-Dex based on a clue about the song that had been mentioned earlier in the show. The KRLA "C.I.A." contest was where listeners could call up a special recorded phone number, and if your voice was played over the air from the "answering-machine" style tape, you could win the contest if you called in. Both were reminiscent of the early KRLA "Fun Tests" from 1961 and were quite good.

KRLA also during this Spring of 1967, still continued its "All-Request-Radio" format but also called its music mix "KRLA's Spring Festival of Hits," and on the weekend "KRLA's Weekend Festival of Hits." KRLA in Spring of 1967 had a fresh sound, and the "All-Request Radio" format was continuing very strong showings and made KRLA at this time unique among Los Angeles radio stations.

However, one event in the history of KRLA will always stand out as one of the most memorable. And when we tell you the story of what happened, keep in mind that something like that could probably never happen again. But it did happen in KRLA's history and is one important event that will always stand out in radio history.

As we have said many times, the greatest disc jockey in the history of KRLA, in reviewing all the 30-year history, had to be Dave Hull. At that time in the Spring of 1967, Dave Hull was also the highest rated personality ever at KRLA, and now that Emperor Hudson was no longer in the morning and O'Donnell was a rather weaker morning man, still good, but certainly not as strong as Hudson, Dave Hull in the afternoon drive was truly KRLA's superstar.

As we have talked about earlier in this book, Dave Hull always had the reputation for playing the Beatles records first. Even though Hull had previously expressed deep concern about the lifestyles and radical behavior of the Beatles, their statements, and last year's controversial album cover, Hull still continued to play the Beatles records first. Hull and the Beatles were still a KRLA exclusive.

In the Spring of 1967, Hull was able to obtain an advance copy of the Beatles' next album tentatively titled "When I'm 64." This album would go on to be the most influential and record-breaking album in the history of popular music, "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band," the album that truly showed that the Beatles were no longer mop tops or loveable kids but serious talented musicians with highly cultural influences on the young adults and teenagers in the United States.

We were told a very interesting story about the album "Sgt. Pepper." The Beatles always like drinking Dr. Pepper before and after their concerts in America. Apparently that beverage was not that accessible in England. The Beatles wanted to call the record "Dr. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band." ("When I'm 64" for an album title was simply a working title.) We were told that it was none other than Dave Hull who told the Beatles they would be in one big lawsuit if they used the name "Dr. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band." At Dave Hull's suggestion it was changed from "Dr. Pepper's" to "Sgt. Pepper's." And the rest is history. We asked Dave Hull if that was true. He said yes.

Because of Hull's closeness with the Beatles, Hull had obtained tapes of the album that he wanted to play on his 3 to 6 p.m. show on KRLA as an exclusive. Apparently there had been an agreement among management that all stations would debut the record at the same time, and that no radio station would have an exclusive on it. That meant Hull could not play the new Beatles album until the other stations (KHJ, KFWB, KBLA) had an official copy of the record that they would be authorized to play by Capitol Records.

Hull did not like this idea. Hull had always been the one to always break the Beatles records first in Los Angeles. The listeners knew this and expected this from Hull. Hull also knew that his Beatles connection helped his career tremendously at KRLA and did not want to let his audience down who had been so loyal.

Hull went into the management offices on Friday afternoon, April 28, 1967 before his 3 to 6 p.m. show and tried to convince the station that he should be allowed to play these advance tapes because the loyal listeners deserved this exclusive from Hull. Management said no. The following day on Saturday, April 29, 1967, Dave Hull did not show up for his weekend show. Instead he went to a party for Twiggy, the fashion model.

The following Monday, May 1, 1967, management announced that Dave Hull was dismissed from the station and the following statement was read over KRLA News,

"KRLA announces with regret the dismissal of Dave Hull."

Dave Hull was fired from KRLA. The most popular disc-jockey in Los Angeles, and at KRLA ever, was fired. He would no longer be on KRLA. The end of an era. Or almost. KRLA quickly reshuffled its program schedule to the following: Charlie O'Donnell would still be 6 to 9 a.m. However 9 to Noon would be from now on Bill Slater. Casey Kasem would remain Noon to 3. Rebel Foster now was given his old show back from management which Foster had wanted 3 to 6 p.m. The rest of the lineup remained the same.

KRLA management announced officially that this was "the new schedule", and because Hull violated station policy and did not show up for his show, his dismissal and termination were justified. Bill Slater was excellent 9 to Noon. Finally Slater had been given a time slot that he really shined in. Even though Slater had been number one Midnight to 6 the past year before Pat Moore took over, many listeners never had the opportunity to hear Slater. One source told us,

"KRLA never really used Bill Slater right. But with Slater 9 to Noon they finally did!"

We agree. Rebel Foster again really cooked in the 3 to 6 p.m. show, like he had back in 1964 and early 1965. But on this Monday, May 1, things were quite different. The listeners were totally outraged. Even the "Eleven-Ten Men" made references on the air about Dave Hull being fired. Foster even tried to smooth the situation out by saying on his new show,

"Dave, you got a lot of friends around here, babe, including me."

But the request phones went crazy. People were not calling in for requests on the toll free lines but to ask the same question, "What happened to Dave" and how they wanted Dave Hull back! For the next day or so, the various "Eleven-Ten Men" made continued references to their support for Dave Hull over the air. Finally, on KRLA News, it was told that management has ordered all air talent to "refrain from mentioning terminated employee Dave Hull's name over the air."

But management never expected or anticipated what would happen next. Hundreds of KRLA's fans and listeners without any encouraging by anyone at the station or Hull, staged a huge massive sit-in on the steps outside of KRLA at the Pasadena studios. Some listeners even staged a protest march in front of the KRLA transmitter on Lexington-Gallatin Road in South El Monte. Police were called as one irate listener threatened to "chop down" one of the six KRLA towers at the transmitter site in South El Monte which would have knocked KRLA off the air (and be quite dangerous to the cows and horses below in the pasture).

But the big demonstration was in Pasadena. KRLA staff members, vendors, salesmen and whoever were unable to get into the station because of all the crowds of KRLA listeners camped out on the porch with huge signs, all protesting Hull's dismissal and that KRLA had better bring Hull back! And this was in 1967, before the days of campus unrest and sit-ins and protests. KRLA management at first tried to hold firm. Police and security guards were assigned to try to keep peace outside the radio station with all the placards and protestors. The Huntington Hotel next door was even concerned, as they had never seen such a massive group of people descending on the radio station since it opened in 1941.

It was amazing. Camera crews for TV stations came out. Newspapers sent their reporters. Even the unthinkable, other radio stations reported it. Nothing like this had ever happened before like this in radio. But Dave Hull was no ordinary disc jockey. Hull was a legend, a hero, and an idol for so many. Dave Hull was the first true superstar in Los Angeles radio. Other disc jockeys had left other radio stations and even KRLA in the past, and listeners usually got over the change in a day or so, and sometimes even liked the new replacement better. But not this time. Dave Hull was different. Dave Hull was KRLA. Some listeners even called up Rebel Foster or followed Foster out to his car and blamed Foster for taking over Hull's show.

This was absolutely amazing. KRLA management tried to be tough, but after several days of this knew it had to do something fast. Research Archives was able to check the attendance records of some of the high schools that first week of May 1967 when Hull was off the air. There actually was an increase in absenteeism in the local schools adjacent to Pasadena and El Monte because these high school kids were not at the beach but sitting in a sit-in on the steps of a radio station.

Management did not want to take Hull back. Hull was too popular, too strong, too independent. KRLA could survive without Hull, or so they thought. Then rumors got around to KHJ offering Hull a time slot 6 to 9 p.m. KHJ was closing in on KRLA fast. If KRLA lost Hull for KHJ, then KRLA was afraid that Hull would take all those massive numbers of listeners with him. Without Hudson in the morning, Hull was the only real strong superstar in the drive time hours. Could KRLA survive a challenge from KHJ with O'Donnell 6 to 9 and Foster 3 to 6 against Robert W. Morgan 6 to 9 and Don Steele 3 to 6 p.m. on KHJ?

With that negative comparison it was clear. Hull had to be brought back. And so by the end of that week, Dave Hull was back on KRLA 3 to 6 p.m. Slater left the 9 to Noon show to go back to weekends, and Rebel Foster who was put in a very awkward position by management when he was put in the 3 to 6 p.m. show in place of Hull, was moved back to 9 to Noon. The sit-in won. The listeners had their Hullaballooer back.

KRLA management never realized just how strong a personality they had in Dave Hull. But the evidence was there all along. Just two years before, a group of kids got together and made a record "Dave Hull the Hullaballooer" on one side and the same song with slightly different lyrics on the other, "Our Favorite DeeJay." No other disc jockey ever had such an honor. It was clear all along that KRLA had a major radio superstar with Dave Hull. He was the favorite for so, so many people. KRLA management never again gave Hull a bad time, at least not in this era of KRLA. Music Power '69 was still two years away. A lot will change in the world in two years. But for now KRLA had its Hullaballooer back home where he belonged. The "Porch People" and the sit-in went home and Hull was back 3 to 6 p.m. Nothing like that has ever happened since in Los Angeles radio history. That's what really happened. And you can't change history.

Until the KRLA front door was remodeled in early 1970, one could still see signs of that protest carved into the front door and spray painted on the steps, references to how listeners wanted Dave Hull back on KRLA. The KRLA door over those years always had a lot of graffiti. But none stood out so greatly as the "We Love Our Hullaballooer."

KRLA survived the Spring of 1967. But one major event in the world in June 1967 would send shock waves all over the world and shook KRLA and its listeners so greatly that the entire culture would almost change overnight. KRLA's listeners would almost overnight grow up. The KRLA listeners would suddenly be seduced by a black man from Seattle, a white blues singer from Texas, and the smell of incense, marijuana and flowers, flowers everywhere. For in June 1967, the impact of Monterey hit KRLA full force.

KRLA, and all the fun and innocence it stood for, was about to hit the mat. For the world in the Summer of 1967 was changing very, very fast. The Vietnam War was in full force; people were seeing war atrocities on television; recreational drugs were coming into fashion. And the Beatles came out with "Sgt. Pepper" and its obvious drug

references to getting high, LSD, and loving to turn you on. June 1967 was the most radical month to date with Sgt. Pepper the first week of June, and then Monterey the first week that school was out.

The Monterey Pop Festival was the first real outdoor "festival" rock concert which featured such awe-inspiring performances by Jimi Hendrix, The Who, and Janis Joplin. When people saw the light show backdrop of the Jefferson Airplane singing about pills making you large or small, and the ultimate sights of Jimi Hendrix burning his guitar on stage. And then what The Who did with their guitars. Nothing like this had ever been seen before.

KRLA had sent several disc-jockey representatives up to the fairgrounds concert in Monterey, Bill Slater, Rebel Foster, Dick Moreland and newsman Jim Steck, and KRLA gave "live" reports back on the festival. But what Monterey did was to show such a strong contrast to the innocence of Dave Hull, the father-figure maturity of Charlie O'Donnell, the kindness of Dick Biondi, and the sincerity of Casey Kasem. For the first time ever, KRLA seemed out of it, seemed "square," seemed out of touch with what was happening in the "real" world. KRLA tried to get a hipper image by calling itself "50,000 Watts of Flower Power" and "50,000 Watt Flower Pot," but what KRLA was with its clean-image disc-jockeys and what people were really getting into, the contrast was overwhelming.

We recall hearing this juxtaposition of the clean, innocent KRLA with the new emerging counterculture after Monterey by recalling one morning listening to Charlie O'Donnell as he was playing the most requested song of the hour, "A Day in the Life" from Sgt. Pepper. Think about that for a moment. Charlie O'Donnell, the Jolly Lean Giant, playing a song about "turning on." Or Dick Biondi playing "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds." Something was happening. Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band were not the mop tops that Dave Hull used to play on a Saturday night long ago in 1964. They grew up. The listeners grew up. KRLA didn't. Things were happening too fast for KRLA.

The same weekend as Monterey, another major change would happen in Los Angeles radio. Radio station KBLA on June 17, 1967 would change format to a country music format from TOP 40. One of the most popular of the KBLA "Super In-tainers" was about to be let go. Fortunately he was able to get a new home with KRLA and would be the first sign that a change was coming to KRLA.

Bob Dayton joined KRLA on Sunday, June 18, 1967 subbing for Dick Moreland from 4 to 8 p.m. while Moreland was in Monterey. Dayton was the first new voice to be heard over the Land of Eleven-Ten since Pat Moore in July 1966. With Dayton joining KRLA, it was clear that Bob Dayton would play a part in what was happening in the Land of Eleven-Ten.

Dayton had known Rebel Foster, and so when KBLA signed off the air to become KBBQ, Foster immediately told Dayton to come to KRLA. During the rest of June 1967 and through July and early August, Dayton would be heard on KRLA filling in while a lot of the regular "Eleven-Ten Men" were off on vacation and in various substitution spots. Finally Dick Moreland gave up his Sunday afternoon show and Bob Dayton took over the Sunday 4 to 8 p.m. shift. Dayton was slick, polished, and had a real, real energy that KRLA had been lacking for a long time. Dayton was the first sign that a major change was going to come to KRLA in the incense-and-marijuana filled "Summer of Love."

During this "Summer of Love" KRLA had one last contest that was probably the last one that symbolized the innocence and excellence and freshness of the old KRLA that was about to come to an end. A very popular song that summer was by the Fifth Dimension "Up, Up and Away" about a hot-air balloon ride that would take you up in the sky in a glorious ride. They say the title came from a disc-jockey in San Bernardino at a small market station there. IFIAFFI was still two years away.

KRLA had one "last hurrah," a terrific contest and promotion in the Summer of Love, 1967. KRLA had its own eight-story "Beautiful Balloon" to coincide with the KRLA contest by the same name that summer. KRLA launched this giant balloon from the parking lot of the world famous Hollywood Bowl as the final phase of the KRLA "Beautiful Balloon" contest, involving the release of thousands of helium balloons containing prizes ranging from one to one thousand dollars each. The pilot, John Caywood, was dressed in a gorilla costume as he was playing the role of the station mascot, the KRL-Ape.

However, when this huge 8-story balloon was launched from the parking lot at the Hollywood Bowl, the giant balloon sailed along at tree-top level before unexpectedly crashing into Lake Hollywood. A half dozen TV stations news and film cameramen and a throng of several thousand KRLA listeners, not to mention the KRLA deejays, looked on in helpless wonder. The pilot, John Caywood, escaped uninjured but had a tough 50-yard swim out of the lake, attired in his gorilla costume.

But this accident of the KRLA balloon going down was more than just an unfortunate accident to a KRLA promotion. It was a symbol. It was a symbolic sign that KRLA, the Station of the Stars, and the Station of the Beautiful



Balloon would in a way, very clearly and suddenly be "crashing" in itself. KRLA was starting to show its age. The world in the Summer of Love was now marching to the beat of Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band like the rats following the Pied Piper. Charlie O'Donnell playing "A Day in the Life" was too hard to comprehend. Past was meeting present head on. The impact of Monterey had hit KRLA with tremendous force. And the young people were realizing that KRLA maybe was a station of their past, their happy days, but the world now is a time to be serious. To tune in, turn on, and drop out.

The Beautiful Balloon crashed into Lake Hollywood. KRLA as the "Beautiful Balloon" and the station of innocence, fun and fantasy was about to crash too. The Beautiful Balloon known as KRLA the once-upon-a-time Station of the Stars, the Home for Heroes, the Dream-House, and its glorious past was also about to break up into the marijuana-filled air and realize it was becoming a relic.

We recall hearing one of Dick Biondi's shows in August of 1967 talking about the Beautiful Balloon and hearing Charlie O'Donnell playing "Within You, Without You" from Sgt. Pepper. "All-Request-Radio" was about to come to an end, too expensive to continue, as KRLA was about to change direction. The jingles "All-Request Radio" was about to be replaced with "KRLA Now!" No mention on the air would be made of the closing down of all the KRLA request lines and Johnny Hayes promos of the toll-free numbers.

KRLA was "the Beautiful Balloon" itself. It soared to the highest reaches of Princess Blue Sky but now would realize that it's a long, long, long way to fall and that it isn't easy finally coming down. KRLA, "The Beautiful Balloon" had burst.



**THE STAFF AT KRLA**

from left, Dave Hull, Dick Biondi, Johnny Hayes, Pat Moore, Charlie O'Donnell

**50,000 Watt Flower Pot**

-56-



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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**DICK BIONDI —**



JIM WOOD



RHETT WALKER



BOB DAYTON



BILL SLATER

## CHAPTER 5

### 'THE NEW SEASON OF EXCITEMENT'



1967 was a year of so many changes in the world and of pop culture. August 1967 was here and the phrase 'The Summer Of Love' drifted through the country like exotic incense. The KRLA that entered August 1967 was clearly showing its age even though it was one of KRLA's best after a minor setback last year with the termination of Emperor Hudson.

However the lineup in August 1967, no matter how good, how professional, and in our opinion so excellent, did in a way seem out of touch with the world in August 1967. After the Monterey Pop Festival, the one major event which forever changed the world, young people, the core of KRLA's audience, suddenly became more 'hip' overnight. Longer hairstyles grew out for males, and even we changed in the Summer of 1967 by having longer hair, over the ears at least, longer sideburns, an attempted moustache and John Lennon glasses found in an antique store in San Bernardino.

August 1967 also was about the time that the first FM underground radio station was developing in the basement of the Pasadena Presbyterian Church, ironically in the same city of the KRLA studios. Teenagers in 1967 were now buying FM radios and components and now were buying albums, whereas instead, just a few months before, 45 RPM singles were the norm. It now was important what was in the grooves, what the music was all about.

After Monterey and Sgt. Pepper, the need for radio to show it was 'hip' was even more important. Anything that seemed like it was out of touch or too straight was suddenly, and instantly, rejected by young people who had embraced it just a few months ago. Because in 1967, the world changed so fast, almost every minute, and what was in vogue in May, after Monterey, Sgt. Pepper and KPPC, was out of it in June. Things moved so fast then.

With the new underground FM station, KPPC, and the defection of KFWB's B. Mitchell Reed to KPPC, young people looked upon KPPC as the norm, and the contrast between B. Mitchell Reed and, say, the innocence of Dick Biondi was so remarkably clear, it was shocking. Not only was KPPC coming on strong on FM, but two days a week on Wednesday and Sunday, KPPC could be heard on AM 1240 from those two big twin towers atop the Pasadena Independent and Star News building. In fact, listeners who had never heard KPPC on FM, could tune in to B. Mitchell Reed or Tom Donahue and the others as they played such radical tracks as "The End" by the Doors or "Revelation" by Love.

The idea of something like this being played by Charlie O'Donnell or Dick Biondi was just too bizarre to comprehend. The raw sexuality of Jimi Hendrix had totally seduced so many of the girls who just a few months ago had sat on the steps of the KRLA studios and cried on the shoulders of Dick Biondi. How could these fellows, Biondi and O'Donnell, for example, relate to what was really happening. Did they really know what was going on? As like the Bob Dylan song about a Mr. Jones knowing something is happening but not really knowing what it was.

An interesting side note on that song was right into our life, because across the street from the house we were living in was indeed a very square gentleman named, of all things, Mr. Jones, who on Halloween used to walk up and down his lawn holding a 2 x 4, fearful of the Pepsi Generation throwing salt on his lawn.

This Mr. Jones did have several sons, and whether or not he knew it, one of his sons was indeed part of the counterculture, and the contrast between overweight, B.O.-smelling Mr. Jones and his ultra-hip son was so much the Bob Dylan song come to life. The song, Mr. Jones, could very well have substituted the names Biondi or O'Donnell because the world was happening so fast, and some of the KRLA staff, as great as they were, and as legendary as they were, at this time of August 1967, really were the "Mr. Jones" of the song.

By August 1967, the venerable solid lineup of KRLA was about to crack with the rush of Summer of Love changes that were blowing in the wind, and KRLA in August of 1967 suddenly realized it was a past great station but it was not hip with today. People hadn't really talked about KRLA in a long time. It was rather straight in a way, in comparison to the radical waves in the world around it.

Rebel Foster, who always seemed to be in the forefront of what was hip, became Program Director of the station again, and it was Foster's goal at this time of KRLA's life to make the station hip again. And most important, get people to talk about the station again. The station was too fat, too content, and in a way too square considering the many radical changes around it.

Foster at this point needed to do something, and the first thing he did was a personal one. Foster always loved his 3 to 6 p.m. show which he had proudly claimed after the departure of Jim Washburne back in 1963. Some of Foster's most happy and successful moments were in occupying the 3 to 6 p.m. drive-time chair where his energy and talent with his character "Maude Skidmore" were such a winning combination in 1964. When Foster left KRLA, in February 1965 to make room for Dick Biondi's return, Foster always knew he wanted to come back to "his station" KRLA and to reclaim what was so rightfully his until being "rudely interrupted" back in February 1965.

So Foster decided that the first change in KRLA's lineup in August of 1967 was to reclaim his old show and to move back into the 3 to 6 p.m. slot. But first there were some other changes that had to be made, and with Foster in the P.D. chair, those changes he would call "The New Season of Excitement."

Fall traditionally in television was always the time when the networks at that time in 1967 always introduced the new television shows, and the networks always highly promoted their "new seasons." TV networks even had "themes" that the new shows revolved around, such as "NBC Week" and other not-so-memorable umbrella titles.

So August 1967 was the time that KRLA decided to do what the networks did, and that is to get people to talk and to listen. And in this time of KRLA's life to rediscover Eleven-Ten and realize that KRLA also could be hip and a hot alternative to the underground of KPPC, the stagnant sounds of KFWB in its last dying days, and of course the formula KHJ which would never change what "hasn't broke." What Foster's "New Season" blueprint was to do was to re-group the KRLA lineup in two parts. The old faithful stalwarts, or the last three remaining, followed by Foster himself in his old shift, Bob Dayton now given a permanent spot, followed by a very hip newcomer with a lot of soul.

The first slot Foster looked at was the morning show. Traditionally the morning man should always be the strongest man on the station, and even though this had been the case with Bob Hudson up to 1966, it really hadn't been under Charlie O'Donnell.

Charlie O'Donnell was probably one of the best in KRLA's history, and in reviewing some Charlie O airchecks from the summer of 1967, O'Donnell had a very good polished fast-paced delivery and actually sounded quite good, considering that O'Donnell is not really a morning man by the traditional sense. As discussed in our last chapter, O'Donnell was put into the morning show because there was really no one else who could do it after Dave Hull declined, in respect for Bob Hudson. But since the philosophy is "put the strongest man in the morning," O'Donnell did not fit that requirement even though he really was good, not comedic, but good.

So the first casualty of "The New Season Of Excitement" was the departure of Charlie O'Donnell from the lineup. Not only was O'Donnell not the typical comedic morning man personality but O'Donnell had been widely seen on TV as the sidekick for Dick Clark on American Bandstand, and in August 1967 Dick Clark and Bandstand were not one that projected an aura of hipness.

An interesting side note is that that same year, 1967, Dick Clark would film that summer probably the best movie that captured the whole flavor of the Summer of Love, "Psych Out," a classic movie and a priceless one in recapturing and preserving the exact flavor of that summer. Most people did not realize that Dick Clark was the man behind that movie and made it possible to happen. Clark underplayed his role in that movie because, after all, the hippies and counterculture certainly didn't look up to Dick Clark the way they did, say Tom Donahue or B. Mitchell Reed. At that time when "hipness" was such an important yardstick, Dick Clark was just not what was happening.

And by close identification, neither was Charlie O'Donnell. Unfortunately, O'Donnell had the image of that of one's father, sort of an Ed McMahon for teenagers and even though O'Donnell was pretty much the same age as the others, he still came across on TV and in person as sort of a father image in conservative suits, smooth, deep voice and certainly not "hip." But in 1967 image was very very important, and so with those liabilities, O'Donnell was the first to fall from KRLA's lineup, truly a loss, as O'Donnell would have been good if he had been moved back to 9 to Noon, his old show. But it's hard to take a demotion or step down, and in being a morning man there is a certain amount of ego and pride involved.

There was no farewell show, no goodbyes, or sentimentality. One day O'Donnell was there. The next day he wasn't. Memories run shallow sometimes. Charlie O'Donnell was a thing of the past. The sad thing about O'Donnell's departure is some listeners didn't even care anymore. After all he wasn't a Dave Hull, and there were no demonstrations outside of KRLA to bring him back.

We recall going over to KRLA inquiring about O'Donnell. All that was said is that he was no longer with the station. Period. Charlie O'Donnell deserved a lot better, and what happened to O'Donnell was quite sad considering where he had been a year before.

"The Jolly Lean Giant" had gone from KRLA. But will live on forever in precious airchecks of a man who was not a morning man but still did a darn good job, and could have been moved elsewhere. But in August 1967 it was clear that O'Donnell leaving mornings was a necessity and really had to be done. It was again the end of an era and the loss of a dear friend to so many morning listeners, including us.

So O'Donnell departed mornings, and the need now was for Foster to put in someone who was strong, a more typical morning-man personality and someone who would be so popular, the rest of the station would prosper by listeners turning on KRLA in the morning and keeping it on the whole day. The choice for morning man came down to two people. Himself or Dave Hull. The other possibilities were eliminated by these factors.

Casey Kasem. By this time Kasem had wanted to branch into TV and movies and had no interest in really continuing his regular Noon to 3 show, and certainly not becoming a morning man. As good as Kasem was, his strong showing was always in the more mature sounding housewife hours, and Kasem was a legend in the Noon to 3 shift and should never have been moved out of those hours. But that will be discussed later in this chapter. So Kasem was not in line for the morning drive and wasn't even considered.

Johnny Hayes. Again Hayes was not a morning man and was a rather unknown quality to the KRLA starting lineup, just getting used to being Bob Eubanks Teen-Topper replacement 6 to 9 p.m. where Hayes was quite good. No, Hayes would not be the morning man. At least not now in this era of KRLA.

Dick Biondi. Biondi would be the second major casualty of the "New Season Of Excitement", and so Biondi very well couldn't be morning man because Biondi was no longer at KRLA. He never did come back from his last "Road Show", and that will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

Bill Slater. Bill Slater was already heavily involved into the production aspects of KRLA, and with personal changes in Slater's life which will be discussed later, Slater was not in line for the mornings and probably wouldn't have taken it if offered.

Pat Moore. Even though Moore had been a successful morning man at KACY Oxnard a few years before, Moore had other ambitions on KRLA that will be discussed later.

Bob Dayton. In our opinion, Dayton would have been the best for that time slot. But Dayton was still unknown to KRLA listeners, and Foster wanted someone more familiar to KRLA audiences.

Dick Moreland. Bob Eubanks. Moreland would remain a KRLA weekender but was involved in KRLA management and a morning show would not fit in with those other duties. Bob Eubanks had already been morning man back in 1962 as Wink Martindale's replacement. Eubanks was not successful as a morning man and besides had already taken himself off the KRLA starting lineup in his excellent 9 to Noon show and remained on weekends, as his "Newlywed Game" was already a full-time job in itself on television.

So the two left for the morning shift were Foster himself and Dave Hull. Foster as already discussed wanted his old show back and was more comfortable in an afternoon drive than as a morning man, even though we feel that Foster and "Maude Skidmore" could have been quite entertaining.

So the one man left was Dave Hull. Hull had already been offered the morning show back in July 1966 when Bob Hudson was terminated from the station, but as discussed earlier in this book, turned it down out of respect to Bob Hudson who Hull felt should have been brought back after a short "suspension."

So at this time in August of 1967, it was clear that the strongest man on KRLA was Dave Hull, and it was now his job to pick up the mantle left by Hudson a year before and make KRLA first in the mornings. It was already clear by the incident in May that Hull was quite extremely popular and even though had an innocence and childlike humor and certainly was not "hip," his past identification with the Beatles and his name as the most popular on KRLA made Hull really the only real choice for 6 to 9 a.m.

So Dave Hull would now be the anchorman of "The New Season Of Excitement" and was moved to 6 to 9 a.m. as he was the "strongest man" at the station. Hull did a very good morning show and had several popular features, the best being morning traffic reports from a character "Sgt. Red Pepper" in his hot-air barrage balloon. KRLA produced at this time an excellent promotion of Sgt. Red Pepper cut-outs complete with a Sgt. Red Pepper character paper doll complete with goggles and a badge reading "Dave Hull Fan Club" on his coat. This promotion was quite creative and a good one!

Also, Dave Hull created two other characters for his morning show. "Crazy Harold," the Los Angeles Times paper boy and "Big Molly." In August 1967, the Los Angeles newspaper, the Herald Examiner was undergoing a major strike where it was never that clear just what the problem was, but it was a very, very long strike which affected the quality of the paper and its readership. The Herald had always been a "blue-collar" paper, usually read by the working class without much education, and to a sophisticate like Dave Hull who lived glamorously in Arcadia, was a paper that really was one to be looked down on.

So Hull creatively made up the character "Crazy Harold" (read "Herald") who delivered the Los Angeles Times on a run-down bicycle chewing a piece of tar and having a playing card in his bike spokes. For those who caught on to Hull's put down of the Herald, it was quite funny, especially to us who were working for the Los Angeles Times sales office during that time in 1967 and appreciated any jokes on the Herald, which at that time was not very respected by middle-class college-prep students.

The other Dave Hull morning character was "Big Molly" who pulled on her girdle, and Hull encouraged all female listeners to pull on their girdles at the same time as Molly did. It was quite funny hearing the girdle "bust out" due to Molly's Rubenesque figure. Hull sometimes said he was "filming" the girdle pull-on and would "play it back" for listeners each hour. This character on Hull's show was quite amusing, and even though by today's standards somewhat chauvinistic, it still was funny.

And it was neat to have KRLA once again have a funny morning man. We strongly feel that a morning man should be funny. And Dave Hull certainly fit the bill. About 11 years later, Hull's humor would turn up on a comedy album he made with Bob Hudson where Dave Hull calling himself "Dave Judson" engaged himself in very classic comedy tracks that

still hold up today. Hull was definitely an asset in the morning and, after Bob Dayton, was our second choice to be morning man under "The New Season Of Excitement." So the morning show went to Hull, and Foster now concentrated on the rest of the day in this major change in KRLA's look.

There's an old saying that goes, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it," and with that philosophy Casey Kasem should have been retained in the Noon to 3 spot where Kasem so excellently ruled since 1963. But Foster's "New Season Of Excitement" was to virtually move everybody around and so put Kasem in the 9 to Noon show. Kasem was good in that spot as he still kept the housewife audience, but Foster's philosophy was to put the two strongest men back-to-back, and Hull followed by Kasem packed a one-two punch that Foster wanted KRLA to go with.

By that reasoning, Hull followed by Kasem was a good idea. However Kasem did not like his new hours and left the starting lineup of KRLA just a few weeks later and just did a weekend show. By that time the magic of KRLA was gone, and Kasem had bigger plans in TV and movies. Kasem's departure will be discussed later in this chapter.

The next shift was Kasem's old Noon to 3 show where Kasem had reigned supremely for the past four years. No one could replace Kasem in that time slot, but Foster tried to make another noticeable change, so Johnny Hayes, being by now a familiar voice to KRLA listeners and also having a following, was moved into the Noon to 3 spot. Again at this stage of Hayes career, we felt that Hayes had been excellent 6 to 9 p.m. as a somewhat carbon-copy of Eubanks, and Hayes being handsome and having a boy-next-door image was probably the best 6 to 9 p.m. personality in KRLA's history.

But Foster wanted to shake things up and have the three most "senior" talents in a 1-2-3 combination, Hull followed by Kasem followed by Hayes. We felt Hayes was miscast in the Noon to 3 show at that time but it would have been hard for anyone to move into "Casey Kasem's Show" time slot, and with Hayes it didn't quite match the excellence and sincerity that Kasem always gave those hours. Trying to make Hayes a "housewife favorite" was miscasting, as Hayes had been so established as a friend to teenagers 6 to 9 p.m. But it fit Foster's idea of the "old KRLA 6 a.m. to 3 p.m." and the "New KRLA from 3 p.m. on."

As said earlier in this chapter, Foster took over his old 3 to 6 p.m. show, but to our surprise, did not resurrect the character "Maude Skidmore" which was such a treat when Foster had done drive times before. There were several reasons why Foster did not resurrect the "Mrs. Skidmore" character.

The first was that he had actually not used the character since he returned to KRLA replacing Bob Eubanks from 9 to Noon in February. The second is that, keep in mind, that this era of KRLA in August 1967 was a very "hip" one and the logic was that a character of a risqué old lady just didn't fit into the image that KRLA wanted. The character was missed, but it was understood why Foster dropped it.

We feel that "Maude Skidmore" would have been an excellent character commenting on hippies and being the "original flower girl" with flowers in her hat, but again KRLA was very self-conscious about appearing "square" and in August 1967, such "characters" done by deejays (with the exception of Dave Hull, it seemed) were not really in fashion. And Foster wanted to project this hip image, especially since he had been one of the KRLA reps at the Monterey Pop Festival which really changed everything. Nothing was the same after the great Monterey Pop. Especially not KRLA.

It was disappointing on Foster's choice in putting Bob Dayton in the 6 to 9 p.m. shift, rather than in a drive time. Dayton had earlier joined KRLA just two days after the demise of KBLA in the Verdugo Mountains, and even though Dayton was a slick personality, anyone who knew Dayton or heard his off-mike jokes that we cannot even quote in this book, knew that Dayton would have been a terrific morning man for KRLA in August 1967 if he had been allowed to break loose and have free reign.

Where Hull was childlike and innocent, Dayton was risqué, sophisticated and very suggestive but in a real unoffending way. Dayton was a one-of-a-kind, a "playboy" type image, and a real-hot-living guy according to his comments. One day Dayton even showed up at KRLA with a black eye. You'd never catch Dave Hull with that. They just weren't the same.

But Dayton at this time was pretty straight TOP-40-oriented and kept the humor to a minimum. For example, he used "The Dayton Players," voices he used for little skits, and whenever Dayton came up with a rather suggestive comment, a "female voice" sounding like a so-called "dirty old lady" would come on with "her" own suggestive innuendos and comments. This type of humor, if kept in check of course on a family radio station, would have been

perfect as a morning man, but at this point Dayton was rather an unknown, and KRLA did not want an unknown to do the important morning show.

But Dayton would have given KRLA a fresh, hip and funny style in the mornings and would end up in almost every other time slot except mornings until May 1973 where he finally was put in the right position. However, because of Dayton's reputation as a night person who liked going to clubs in Hollywood and so on, having Dayton in the mornings probably would interfere with his lifestyle, having to get up at 4 in the morning.

The next change for "The New Season Of Excitement" would be the replacement of Dick Biondi. Dick Biondi, in his over two years of 9 to midnight, was truly a legend in broadcasting at KRLA. Fans known as the "Porch People" used to camp out outside the station on the steps to talk to Biondi and cry on his shoulder, and Biondi truly cared about those kids. Biondi sometimes would arrive for his 9 p.m. show sometimes hours before, just to meet with his tremendous legions of fans camped out on the steps of the KRLA studios.

Dick Biondi also used to stage the "Dick Biondi Road Shows" where Biondi and major-name talent would appear at high school assemblies and charitable events with all the profits going to the school and charities. They didn't make people like Dick Biondi anymore, and he was truly one of the most beloved people ever on KRLA.

But Biondi had an image problem in 1967. He was considered "un-hip" or "square." With his large horn-rimmed glasses and calling himself the "world's ugliest and skinniest disc-jockey ever," he did not fit into the new hip image KRLA had now cultivated. The Summer of Love, marijuana smoking, heavy music just didn't go over with Biondi at the board, and summer 1967 was the wrong time to be Dick Biondi.

Biondi was funny and a bit wacky, but certainly not hip. In fact Biondi's humor was primarily Mid-West humor where Biondi had made his name famous for years before. The Biondi humor was never California style, and especially now in the Summer of Love, Biondi seemed to be a square in a round hole playing the Seeds, the Doors and Jimi Hendrix.

In reviewing Biondi's airchecks from this period, July 1967, his last full month on the air, he still sounded slick and good, but his humor was obviously restrained, and he did his best to play more heavier music without the self-deprecation, and seemed to be OK even though sounding slightly uncomfortable. But in the words of Jim Wood, Biondi's replacement,

"He died on the air."

Biondi, along with Charlie O'Donnell were the two casualties of the "New Season Of Excitement", and it was sad to see such beloved personalities get replaced by lighterweights in KRLA's airforce.

What Foster wanted for 9 to midnight was a complete total change from what KRLA had been offering for the past four years. You see, since July 1963, KRLA had always had a funny jock in the 9 to midnight slot. First Biondi from July 1963 to September 1963, Dave Hull from September 1963 to February 1965, and then Biondi again from February 1965 to August 1967. But as said before, August 1967 was a totally radical departure from any year or month before that.

So what Foster did is put on, from 9 to midnight, the complete opposite of Biondi (and Hull also) and that is a jock known as "The Woodchopper" and "The Vanilla Gorilla," Jim Wood. Wood had gotten his nickname "The Vanilla Gorilla" being one of the only two white disc-jockeys at all-black KGFJ, broadcasting from the Odd Fellows Hall in South Los Angeles with its archaic "flagpole" antennas on the roof.

KGFJ was an R&B black music station serving the black community excellently, and in the days before Civil Rights actually had an integrated lineup with both black and white personalities back to back. That certainly was a better ratio than KRLA, with no black talent, and KFNB with its token Larry McCormick.

Jim Wood was one of those deep-voiced, black-sounding jocks who even though white sounded quite black, and in a way was a "threatening and fascinating" presence to adolescent white girls, as the lure of Jimi Hendrix was. One of the most striking changes to KRLA took place on about maybe the second or third day that Wood was on the air, when we went over to the KRLA studios to meet Jim Wood on his shift and talk with him about how he landed at KRLA and replacing Dick Biondi.

When we arrived at KRLA there still were the usual "Porch People" but much, much fewer than just a week before with Biondi. Some of the "Porch People" commented to me how sad they felt about Biondi and why he wasn't there. You see, Biondi had been out of town, taking his Road Show across the country a la Bob Hope, and everyone had expected Biondi to come back. It was even announced on KRLA that Biondi would return. But he never did, and no mention was made that

Biondi was permanently gone.

When we met Wood it was clear that he was quite different than Biondi and probably did seem a lot more mature than Biondi had been. But it was Wood's on-air style that gave the greatest contrast. Deep-voiced, smooth, snapping his fingers constantly so you can hear them snapping when his mike was on, sultry, cool, Wood was all of those things. Wood was an excellent personality for late-night KRLA and was a drastic change from the harmless, corny Dick Biondi.

KRLA also utilized Wood in doing live remotes from the Cheetah night club in Santa Monica near the old P.O.P. site, now demolished. It was mind-boggling to think that had Biondi not have been severed from KRLA, to picture Dick Biondi hosting a light show and psychedelic music at the Cheetah. There's no question Biondi could have done it, but it just wouldn't have "worked" -- he just wasn't the hip type, and unfortunately in August 1967 being ultra-hip was the standard that AM radio, especially KRLA, tried to be.

So the "new maturity" of the "Vanilla Gorilla," Jim Wood, was entrenched at KRLA in the 9 to midnight show and certainly was a refreshing innovation on KRLA, and showed that KRLA was serious in being a somewhat heavy alternative. A study in contrasts is hearing Jim Wood on an aircheck from January 1968 followed by Dave Hull, the next day. A contrast in night and day without a doubt.

For the midnight-to-6 slot there now was an opening because Pat Moore, being an engineer with a first-class license, had expressed several times previously he could make more money on "the other side of the glass" being an engineer rather than as air talent. So Moore was moved from his midnight-to-6 slot, where he had done an excellent job in our opinion, to the more accessible 6 to Noon Sunday slot where listeners who had not previously heard Moore because of his Midnight to 6 hours.

The new Pat Moore Sunday show was a real treat, as Moore was certainly an air talent that should have been used in a daytime slot at KRLA, perhaps ideally 9 to Noon. But Moore due to his enviable position of being an engineer as well as an air talent, Moore moved into the engineer's chair both at the Pasadena studios and also at the KRLA transmitter site in South El Monte, the real pulse of KRLA where the sound of KRLA actually originated from.

So Moore was now on Sundays only, filling in during the week, for example on one Saturday in early September 1967 in the 9 to Noon Casey Kasem show where Moore proved he certainly had a lot to offer the KRLA daytime audience. But in August of 1967, not too many air talents had that valuable "first phone ticket," and being an engineer was security that being on the air just didn't bring. In Moore's case he could see the security of going for "the other side of the glass," and there he stayed with his Sunday morning show for at least a few weeks until another change occurred.

To take over the reins for the Midnight to 6 show, KRLA brought in Bill Slater who had been up to now weekends, and as mentioned earlier in this book actually was a former midnight to 6 man from his days in 1965 and 1966. But something happened to Bill Slater that summer. We asked Slater, when we met him again back in 1979 at an FM station in Portland, Oregon where he had been doing an "underground"-style show, about how Slater who once had been so clean-cut with a wife and dog living in West Covina, total "Pleasant Valley Sunday" suburbia, just how he suddenly changed into a persona of long shoulder-length black hair and a flowing pre-ZZ Top black beard after looking like a young Ward Cleaver before!

So the new Bill Slater, who was now into a more progressive music after his experiences in Monterey and psychedelia, took over the midnight to 6 show where he did some minor "set" experimentations and gave KRLA the heavy edge it didn't have with more conservative clean-cut Pat Moore.

We mentioned earlier that the two major casualties of "The New Season Of Excitement" were O'Donnell and Biondi. There was one more. Bob Eubanks. Eubanks by now had been very successful with his Newlywed Game TV show, and even though kept his foot in the door with his Sunday afternoon show, by this time Eubanks was entrenched enough on TV to totally leave the "Eleven-Ten Men" lineup.

So in the Fall of 1967, Bob Eubanks, a long stalwart of KRLA and the senior man on the staff having started in 1960, was no more. No farewell show, no announcements. Just one Sunday in the Fall of 1967 and Eubanks was gone.



In radio they can forget very fast. Eubanks had made the graduation to television. And that is where Eubanks had wanted to be all along. Eubanks himself had always said that he wasn't really a super jock like Hudson, Kasem or Hull and saw himself as a pretty adequate "time and temperature man." Eubanks was definitely a star at "The Station of The Stars", and with his departure the star cluster had lost some of its shine.

So this was "The New Season Of Excitement", and it did just what it intended to do. It got people to talk about KRLA then. And the station, which had virtually the same disc-jockeys year after year in virtually the same time slots now, was something new to discover. "The New Season Of Excitement" was a major change in KRLA and one that caused it to develop a certain hipness it didn't have before. But when you take anything that isn't really broke and try to fix it, it just might not be the same, and KRLA certainly wasn't. It was clear why Foster did what he did. But if he had left it alone, it might have had a chance to gain listeners' sentiments. But after only a month it changed again.

Casey Kasem had not liked the 9 to Noon shift. It was unfamiliar and Kasem missed his old hours, where he didn't have to get to work until Noon. But Foster had his reasons for moving Kasem, and Kasem did handle the 9 to Noon show for a few weeks. But it was short lived, for just a few weeks later Kasem asked to be let out of his new show and concentrate on TV and movies. That meant Foster had to find a replacement for Kasem 9 to Noon. Kasem moved into the Sunday morning 6 to Noon shift where Pat Moore had been heard, and Moore at this time stopped being on the air, totally concentrating on engineering.

"The New Season Of Excitement" had a lot of fanfare on KRLA with frequent on the air promos such as "3 to 6 in the afternoon - The New Rebel Foster Show ... 6 to 9 p.m. - the New Bob Dayton Show ... The New Season Of Excitement on KRLA!"

If nothing else, "The New Season Of Excitement" got people to once again take a look at KRLA, and did instill some iron in the KRLA blood that had been running a little tired in early 1967.

One on-the-air programming casualty which occurred at this time was the evening "Teen Topper" survey show which started successfully on the Bob Eubanks Show back in 1963 and continued into the 6 to 9 p.m. teen slot when Johnny Hayes took over the shift back in 1966. But when the "New 6 to 9 p.m. Bob" took over in August (Bob Dayton) all mentions of the Teen Topper show were gone, as again in August 1967 being true to one's school was a little too square for the direction that KRLA was taking now. We feel that it could have been handled in a more sophisticated way with the "new Bob", but unfortunately when Johnny Hayes left the 6 to 9 p.m. show, the Teen Topper fixture came to an end too.

Several promotions of merit occurred on KRLA during the last months of 1967 on KRLA. One was in the fall called the KRLA "Mission: Impossible" contest, where the famous TV show theme music was played over another trendy KRLA contest. KRLA also had come out with the KRLA "Car Car" contest, where listeners could pick up at Thom McAn Shoe Stores excellent looking KRLA round stickers -- very attractively and hiply done, called "Rubber Baby Buggy Bumper Stickers." These stickers were not only very hip looking printed in psychedelic color combinations but were made of durable vinyl. For years after this promotion the round KRLA stickers could still be seen on motor vehicles all over the Southland. Some of the color combinations were hot pink with green logo, orange with blue logo, and yellow with green logo.

KRLA also during the fall of 1967, besides having its remotes from the Cheetah Club with Jim Wood, were the KRLA "Saturday Night Thing" dances and concerts put on by KRLA at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium. The gingerbread-like Pasadena Auditorium, well known for rather stodgy old Pasadena affairs was home to concerts by the Seeds, The Lollipop Shop, the Wizard Light Show, and other Summer of Love carryovers into the fall.

It was said before that Casey Kasem asked to be relieved of his new 9 to Noon show because of his growing success on TV and in the movies. After only a few weeks, Kasem left the KRLA starting lineup and took over Pat Moore's old Sunday 6 to Noon show. Kasem's replacement in the 9 to Noon weekday show was someone unknown to Los Angeles listeners who made his name quite famous in the Seattle area in the mid-sixties. So KRLA welcomed Rhett Walker, known as "Rhett Hamilton Walker I" or "RHWI" to the "Eleven-Ten Men" starting lineup.

Rhett Walker had an extensive musical background, holding several higher education degrees in music, and was quite knowledgeable about music. Not just popular music, but classical, musical instruments, and "music" as an art. Walker had previously been quite successful in the Pacific Northwest, and in a city like Los Angeles which had British

disc jockeys such as Tim Hudson at KFNB and Tommy Vance at KHJ, Walker was the first New Zealand air personality on L.A. radios. However, no "New Zealand Invasion" occurred with music, and so Walker's New Zealand connection was pretty much played down. Rhett Walker started on KRLA 9 to Noon in September 1967 but for unexplained reasons left KRLA just a few months later.

During Rhett Walker's brief run at KRLA, Walker did go into the community to visit high schools and talk about careers in music and broadcasting. In fact, during the fall of 1967, Walker was a special guest speaker in an informal Q and A session in the Arcadia High School music band room where we, being a student at Arcadia high school, were in the audience. Walker seemed quite stiff and rather formal in that meeting, and we recall some student asking Walker how much money he made, getting an "It's none of your business" from RHWI. After that it wasn't clear how many Arcadia Apaches became RHWI loyalists.

So Walker stayed on KRLA until early 1968 when he would cease being an "Eleven-Ten Man." That will be discussed in our next chapter as it was an important event in KRLA's history, that because of how KRLA handled Walker's leaving led to the first real downswing of KRLA's recent history that plunged KRLA into the deep recesses of problems and "blues" it couldn't recover from for the entire year.

One interesting sidenote to the "New Season Of Excitement" was a memorable one for those who happened to be listening at the time. There was somehow a power failure in Pasadena that severed the station's programming where it was unable to be sent over the towers in South El Monte at the transmitter site. When that ever happens, and we believe it only happened twice, at that time right inside the chief engineer's office in the transmitter building, a reel-to-reel tape on the unit that can instantly be put over the air for emergency programs was used again. (See Chapter 2). During this time in November 1967 the music was quite recognizable and suddenly in the middle of the programming during the Rebel Foster show before 6 p.m., a voice came on saying "Please stand by, KRLA is undergoing transmission problems," etc. and then broke into 1962 era music! This was a quite a time treat -- a blast to an earlier KRLA past. What made this even more eerie is that the voice heard between the 1962 music was that of former KRLA Program Director and air talent Jim Washburne who had died in a motorcycle accident just the year before.

Those tapes were not updated very often and because this situation does not happen very frequently, the tapes or date of when those emergency tapes were made were quite easily forgotten, especially by the non-programming-oriented engineering staff at the El Monte transmitter. As mentioned before in Chapter 2, this tape did go on once in about 1965 or 1966, but we distinctly remember this last occurrence in November 1967 on a cool fall afternoon, and we were fortunate to have heard this 1962-era tape with Jim Washburne's voice for approximately 45 minutes until the problem was corrected. It was rather surreal and was a moment that never happened again.

One other event in the Fall of 1967 bears noting, and that is what took place during the Labor Day weekend in September. Foster knowing that "The New Season" of KRLA was quite a shock to long time listeners who fondly remembered KRLA as the original Beatle station back in 1964 in KRLA's halcyon days, KRLA had the "1964 Re-happening" where the entire weekend KRLA went back in time to play the top hits from the KRLA 1964 Tune-Dexes. The "1964 Re-happening" did capture the excitement of 1964 where KRLA was truly in its heyday and was an exciting programming feature as the music of 1964 were some of the rock era's best.

However, something happened in December 1967 that for the first time in KRLA's history was the first real crack in the KRLA we knew and loved. Traditionally radio stations had certain recognizable time slots, i.e. 6 to 9, 9 to Noon, Noon to 3, 3 to 6, 6 to 9, 9 to midnight and midnight to 6. These slots were comfortable for the listener and made listening a long time pleasure, free from the boredom of hearing the same voice for hours at a time.

In December 1967, Bill Slater left KRLA and instead of replacing Slater with a new jock, KRLA instead tried to fix what wasn't broke, by for the first time since 1959, decided to alter the time slots and expand two deejay shows from 3 to 4 hours and experiment with automation. As we will discuss in the next chapter, what makes radio exciting is the fact that radio can be live, and when you're listening to the radio you know that personality is there right with you. There's an exciting spontaneity to live radio that makes radio so special.

What KRLA did in December 1967 was increase Bob Dayton's show to 6 to 10 p.m., move Jim Wood to 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. and then from 2 a.m. to 6 a.m. was KRLA's first experiment with automation. In order to capture the rather avant-garde flavor that Slater had been doing from midnight to 6 in September, KRLA instead of bringing in a live announcer to do the 2 a.m. to 6 a.m. shift instead had the control room engineer ("the other side of the glass") play records back-to-back without any disc-jockey interruption. This program was called "Collage."

Collage was a very radical departure from the rest of the KRLA programming in that many of the records played on Collage were, for that period, long LP cuts, such as "When The Music's Over" by the Doors or "Revelation" by Love. Having 20-minute records played without interruption on such an AM station as KRLA was really a treat. We can recall our father being sick and having to go to the hospital about 2:30 in the morning. That was our first experience in hearing Collage, and it was very similar to the programming on KPCC, the first Los Angeles underground station.

As a technicality, there was another reason for no disc-jockey announcer, because, according to union rules, the control room engineers could not talk on the radio, and so even though possible to turn on a mike from the control room, it was illegal, so the engineer in the control room sat on the other side of the glass playing these "underground" records that were not heard the rest of the day.

However the bad effect of Collage, which by the way just used pre-recorded ID announcements every half hour, was that KRLA "discovered" that taped pre-recorded shows could be profitable in not having to hire a disc-jockey and could be done just with an engineer rather than a disc jockey playing records, an engineer "on the other side of the glass" and a transmitter engineer "sitting transmitter" in South El Monte.

When the brass of KRLA could see that this "automated" programming was better for the bottom line, KRLA in 1968 decided to take this format even further and in doing so almost destroying a radio station in the process. This will be discussed in complete detail in our next chapter "Those Filbert E. Yarborough Blues." But for now, the taped shows were just limited to the four hours from 2 to 6 a.m. of Collage.

What started as an engineer "playing records" evolved into the same engineer simply monitoring a four-hour tape. It's also interesting to note that one of the board engineers who played those back-to-back discs from the control room on Collage was one Bob Sala, who would go on to work at KPCC AM and FM from the basement of the Pasadena Presbyterian Church and be an air personality there along with former KRLA talent Bill Slater.

Before we leave this chapter, we need to mention that Bill Slater at that time had undergone some pretty radical changes in his personal life and appearance and would next turn up after leaving his Midnight to 6 show on KRLA as a "New" Bill Slater complete with long flowing hair and beard, almost Christ-like in appearance, where Slater would be a personality at KPCC in 1969.

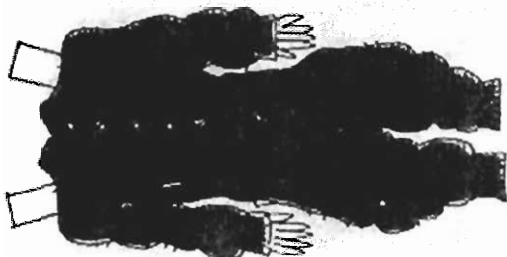
We had the privilege of sitting in on one of Bill Slater's shows in the summer of 1969 from KPCC and what impressed us about Slater was not only his obvious talent as an air personality, but in the huge notebooks that his ladyfriend and himself had brought into the station, creatively having page after page of record tracks in "groups" or sets according to theme, for example, a color set would be the Rolling Stones "She Comes in Colors" followed by "Colors" by Donovan or "My Love She Comes In Colors" by Love and so on.

These blocks of related music tracks were quite a refreshing innovation to underground radio, and Slater actually had put together some outstanding research and probably was one of the first air personalities to actually do something like this. Even though there are stations that use this type of programming today, in the late '60's it was considered innovative and certainly was, having a disc jockey use his talent toward musical sets and grouping rather than just the time and temperature. As stated before, 1967 was when disc-jockeys first started to get to really "know" the music, not just play it, and Slater's knowledge of music was quite impressive.

So with this last note "The New Season Of Excitement" came to an end as KRLA entered January 1968. With Hull 6 to 9, Walker 9 to Noon, Hayes Noon to 3, Foster 3 to 6, Dayton 6 to 10, Wood 10 to 2, and "Collage" 2 to 6, KRLA entered 1968 in a whole new look than where it had been a year before.

It was also the end of the KRLA that we knew and loved, as KRLA took an experimental thing like automation and nearly destroyed the radio station for almost a year until being rescued almost a year later by a hero from San Diego getting over his own "blues." There were a lot of "blues" for KRLA in 1968, and "Those Filbert E. Yarborough Blues" to be discussed in the next chapter were just part of them.

The next "room" of the dream-house is about to open.



**Bob  
Dayton**



JIM WOOD



WILLIAM F. WILLIAMS



JOHNNIE DARIN



## CHAPTER 6

### "THOSE FILBERT E. YARBOROUGH BLUES"



Between August 1959 and September 1967, KRLA had been growing, polishing itself, and through its early start to its days of Beatle Radio right up to "The New Season of Excitement" there was always something exciting to KRLA to recharge itself and try to stay current. KRLA had been number one, but the times "were a changin'" and so to freshen KRLA's sound, new blood was added to Eleven-Ten in the Fall of 1967.

If this format had been left alone, KRLA would have kept up its momentum. But KRLA decided to fix what wasn't broken and play around with a winning formula. 1968 would be the year that KRLA would experiment with a deadly substance. There would be a lot of blues for KRLA this year as it experimented with automation, nearly crippling the station in the process.

And it would take a hero from San Diego who was getting over a different kind of blues, "those Filbert E. Yarborough blues" to get KRLA on the right track at the end of the year. This room of our dream-house, KRLA, Chapter 6, will take us from experimentation with automation, almost defeat, and then to a December redemption with a hero named Darin. We now turn to KRLA in January 1968 and a station that had just launched a new season of excitement, but was unable to keep up its momentum.

KRLA entered the year 1968 with the "New Season" lineup still intact, except that a four-hour automated show had replaced Bill Slater, and the Bob Dayton and Jim Wood shows were expanded from their traditional time slots in which they started. KRLA discovered, with its four-hour Collage show from 2 to 6 a.m., that automation could be used more

heavily without sacrificing the listeners who may not be able to know the difference. When Rhett Walker suddenly left KRLA just three months after he joined the "Eleven-Ten Men" around the first January 1968, instead of replacing him with another personality as had always been the case of Eleven-Ten, since its start in 1959, KRLA decided to expand its automation further, play around with the time slots, and hope the listeners wouldn't notice.

The listeners did. Instead of bringing in another Eleven-Ten Man to replace Rhett Walker or move Casey Kasem back into the spot, or even Dick Moreland into the 9 to Noon show, KRLA decided to play with the schedule again. The traditional three-hour shifts were broken as whole new time slots were created expanding KRLA's automation in the process and its dependency in 1968 toward using automation to try to solve KRLA's problems with the ever changing world of 1968.

First it was determined that Casey Kasem did not want to go back into the 9 to Noon spot. When he gave it up in September, his reasons were clear. He loved KRLA, but it was time to move on and go into television and acting and maybe that TOP 40 "countdown" show he had an interest in developing. Dick Moreland was too involved behind the scenes.

So instead of bringing in a new replacement for Walker, what KRLA did is to expand the shifts as follows. The first lineup in January 1968 was Dave Hull 6 to 10, Johnny Hayes 10 to 2, Rebel Foster 2 to 6, Bob Dayton 6 to 10, Jim Wood 10 to 2, and Collage 2 to 6 a.m. This lineup would last not too far into the year and was replaced with the following. Dave Hull would still be 6 to 10 a.m. Dave Hull once told us back in 1969 that an a.m. morning drive show should not go past 9:00 a.m. Anything after that runs into a different audience, namely the traditional, at that time in 1968, housewife audience.

However Hull's show was now 6 to 10, and so it went. From 10 a.m. to 12 Noon was Johnny Hayes, now down to two hours, for at this time Hayes was involved in the KRLA Music Department and so his air shift would be reduced. Bob Dayton would be moved to Noon to 4. Rebel Foster did the afternoon drive show from 4 to 8 p.m., and Jim Wood would be from 8 to midnight. All the above programming would be live, but from midnight to 6 would be the recorded Collage show but with a difference.

When Collage first started in the 2 to 6 a.m. shift in late 1967, the actual records were played on the turntables in the control room on "the other side of the glass" by the engineer on duty. The engineer would cue them up and actually play the discs. Then a tape was played, replacing the records, which was the first use of "automation." By this time though, KRLA had installed on its east wall of the control room, large floor-to-ceiling "Shaefer" brand automated units to automate programming on a radio station. Everything would be put on special reels and operated by computer. The Shaefer machines would be in operation for the entire Collage show from midnight to 6.

So Collage was now fully on the Shaefer units. The station felt that this was more economical and less likely to have mistakes. It was to work perfectly. And it seemed to. This further caused the management of KRLA to continue its belief in automated programming instead of live shows.

The next casualty of early 1968 would be Jim Wood. Jim Wood had a tough job when he started 9 to midnight in August 1967 replacing Dick Biondi. He had a completely different style from Biondi and unfortunately the Biondi "Porch People" and hard-core Biondi audience simply turned off the station. Jim Wood was unable to keep Biondi's audience and had difficulty attaining one of his own. Jim Wood deserved a much longer run, but Wood would leave KRLA in the early part of the year, approximately in March.

So two members of the "New Season" dropped off the lineup, first Walker who never did catch on in spite of heavy station promotion, and Jim Wood whose soulful style just didn't go over after the audience had been so used to Dick Biondi. However, Wood will probably be most remembered at KRLA from his live broadcasts from the Cheeta in Santa Monica, which were legendary performances in early psychedelia.

It also needs to be reported at this time that KRLA, beginning with "The New Season Of Excitement" last August and continuing right up to early 1968, did away with the KRLA "Big" time clock and instead the disc jockeys were required to say,

"It's 27 after 8 o'clock, Dave Hull Showtime" or

"It's 11 o'clock on the Non-Stop Pat Moore Show"

Again this <sup>was</sup> used to give KRLA a new sound, and the "non-stop" portion was to emphasize the increased amount of music to compete with 93/KHJ, who by early 1968 was now the new Number One in Los Angeles.

Also moving into 1968, KRLA continued its contests based on fads. This time the most popular movie in the country was "Bonnie and Clyde," so naturally at this time KRLA would have a Bonnie and Clyde contest where you would hear skits involving Bonnie and Clyde, and if the listener heard the right cue, then if you called in, you would win.

Dave Hull told us recently, that in late 1967 and early 1968, one of the most popular features on his show was the "Barrage Balloon Traffic Reports from Sgt. Red Pepper." This was classic "big screen" radio where the fantasy was that Sgt. Red Pepper (played by the voice of Bob Dayton) would be up in a barrage balloon and floating all over Southern California freeways reporting on traffic.

Hull pointed out to us that this was long before aerial traffic reports were even done and was so successful that some listeners actually thought a big observation balloon was floating over the freeways. And what was funny about this was sometimes the balloon couldn't be controlled very well, and the winds would blow it way out to Cucamonga or points unknown.

In our last chapter we mentioned the souvenir Sgt. Red Pepper cut-outs that would be included with this promotion that listeners could send away for. This was probably one of the best features of the Dave Hull show in the mornings and again showed how great KRLA could be when it tried.

KRLA also in early 1968 continued its KRLA Teen Set magazines, and in one notable issue in late 1967 and early 1968 featured a "New Season Scrapbook" of the new lineup of "Eleven-Ten Men." However, as like the KRLA Beat now, this was a syndicated magazine where KRLA only put its name on the cover and maybe a page or two in the back if any. Teen Set had contracts with various stations to "localize" the magazine, and those issues of the KRLA Teen Set are quite rare and impressive.

Speaking of the KRLA Beat, this too would sadly fall from the KRLA lineup in April of 1968. The KRLA Beat had destroyed itself by becoming too big, and finally in April of 1968 it no longer was called the KRLA Beat but just The Beat as it had no more localized information on KRLA. Considering how influential it was back in October 1964, it truly died a slow death with one day it just didn't exist anymore.

Had the KRLA Beat just stayed a local promotional "house organ" on KRLA, it would have probably lasted longer and been more representative of news "about KRLA" which was its main purpose in the beginning. The KRLA Beats of 1968 did not have much on KRLA itself if any, and seemed cold and distant compared to the friendly first copies of late 1964 when the focus of the KRLA Beat was station involvement, not the entire national music world.

As we mentioned earlier in this chapter, we told about how Jim Wood left the KRLA lineup. Shortly before Wood departed, the first five minutes of his show was a Bill Cosby comedy show where Cosby as "The Brown Hornet" did various comedy routines. This was sponsored by Coca-Cola and was exclusive to KRLA in the Los Angeles area. Cosby's popularity at that time was not as strong as obviously it has been 20 years later, but it was an interesting side trip in KRLA's 30-year history.

After Jim Wood left KRLA, the only "new" KRLA personality from 1967 was Bob Dayton, as both Walker and Wood were not heard anymore, both departed by the Spring. What KRLA did instead of replacing Wood was to instead rely even more heavily on automation and the big Schaefer units in the control room.

The new lineup would be Dave Hull, live from 6 to 10. Now Johnny Hayes 10 to Noon show would be automated using the Schaefer units with just voice tracks by Hayes. Bob Dayton would remain live Noon to 4. Rebel Foster would be live 4 to 8, and Johnny Hayes would be back 8 to midnight, replacing Wood with a live show. Collage would follow with total automation, no voice tracks, from midnight to 6.

Now one-third of the KRLA broadcast day was automated. And it gave the listeners who weren't supposed to know about automation that here was a KRLA personality working a "split shift" from 10 to Noon, then home, and then back from 8 to midnight again. Then home at midnight, sleeping for 8 hours, and then back at 10:00 a.m.!!

Hayes being a rather low-key adaptable type of personality, was perfectly suited for automation, and it was difficult to tell sometimes when he was live and when he was automated. (The clue was in how the time was announced usually, and also the fresh spontaneity that only live radio can offer.)

Also in early 1968 and late 1967 KRLA presented two more of their classic record albums. "KRLA 42 Solid Rocks" was actually a re-release of the first two KRLA albums of that series and is distinguished by the graphics inside the double fold-out featuring the names of Rhett Hamilton Walker I and Jim Wood and the other "New Season" KRLA personalities. Also in early 1968 KRLA would produce the last album of the series "Son of KRLA 21 Solid Rocks

Strikes Back Volume 3." These were terrific albums and are distinguished by the enclosure of "New York's A Lonely Town" by the Trade Winds with the special KRLA voiceovers added,

"And there's no KRLA," and

"Sure do miss KRLA!"

There were four records in this series including the double album (counted as one). Again, this brought KRLA into homes and record stores via the turntable.

We need now to talk about the general atmosphere on KRLA with its programming in 1968. KRLA was moving closer and closer to total automation and did not replace its airstaff when talent departed. Because of this, KRLA appeared to be a station that was in trouble, of trying to "economize" and this general philosophy was recognized by the listeners. Listeners also preferred to hear the regular shifts instead of hearing the same talent for 5 or 6 hours in a row.

By increasing KRLA's shift hours in Spring 1968, it appeared the listeners were in a way being short-changed, compared to say Number One KHU's three-hour shift programming. Unfortunately KRLA was getting very comfortable with automation in early 1968.

As we mentioned before, the "split shifts" of Johnny Hayes from 10 to Noon recorded, and 8 to midnight live was to be a temporary thing as in late Spring 1968, KRLA decided to carry its automation and the Shaefer machine dominance even greater. As of now only 8 hours would be automated, 10 to Noon and Midnight to 6. The automation was like a drug to KRLA. It kept increasing.

KRLA decided to make a radical step in the Spring of 1968. KRLA would automate every shift except for drive times (6-10, 3-7) Monday through Saturday and except for 3 to 7 p.m. on Sunday. Everything else would be pre-recorded total automation. So now we have Dave Hull 6 to 10 "live," Johnny Hayes 10 to 3 "taped," Bob Dayton 3 to 7 p.m. "live" (A good time slot for this excellent personality), and Rebel Foster 7 to midnight "taped." Collage would continue its midnight to 6 all-automated format.

It was determined that Foster was better suited to automation than the funny Dayton, and so Foster did the taped 5-hour shift while Dayton did a live 3 to 7 p.m. The live 3 to 7 p.m. Sunday show would be done by Casey Kasem "live" and now be called "Sunday Punch" and be a specially themed show around one artist or theme. However Johnny Hayes would be on every day, 7 days a week, 10 to 3 Monday through Saturday and 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sundays. KRLA apparently didn't worry that the audience would wonder why Johnny Hayes didn't get one day off a week.

At this time Dick Moreland would no longer have any regular shows (he hadn't since August) but simply "fill-in" whenever the shift was vacant. One night in June 1968, right after the Robert Kennedy assassination, Dick Moreland did a live 7 to midnight show in place of the automated Rebel Foster, and the evening hours hadn't sounded this good in months.

One side note on this automation. In the disc jockey booth during this time when automation would be 16 hours of the broadcast day, doubling up from 8, there was a handmade sign up on the wall of the disc jockey booth. The sign? "And then there was three!" Meaning that now there were only three "live" voices to the KRLA programming: 6 to 10 a.m. Monday through Saturday with Dave Hull. Bob Dayton "live" Monday through Saturday, and Casey Kasem "live" 3 to 7 p.m. on Sundays.

"And then there was three." That's a big, big change from just one year ago. But automation had moved fully into KRLA's programming, and this automation dragged the station into the gutters. It was clear to careful listeners that the station was mostly automated, simply by hearing the same introduction before certain songs.

However, 1968 on KRLA did have one particular bright note. On late Sunday nights, KRLA, with voice tracks by Johnny Hayes, had a pre-recorded show called "Collector's Corner" where record albums would be played in full, Side 1 and then Side 2 without interruption. This was an innovative idea at the time, but pressure from record companies concerned about home taping caused this show to not have as long a run as it should. KRTH-FM tried this same idea years later in 1979 on late nights and met with the same resistance by record companies.

The next change to KRLA would come in July when Johnny Hayes would leave KRLA in July and be replaced by one of the early "Eleven-Ten Men," Roy Elwell, in a fully automated show 10 to 3 Monday through Saturday and 9:30 to 3 on Sundays. Hayes, we've researched, was burned out by automation and needed a break.



WINGS

So Roy Elwell replaced the now-departed Johnny Hayes in July 1968. However, the Roy Elwell in July 1968 appeared radically different from the Roy Elwell in 1962. Over the past few years, Elwell was involved in talk radio, most noticeably on KLAC in the important 4 to 7 p.m. afternoon spot, where Elwell was a liberal voice to balance the conservative sounds of say, Marv Gray or Ray Briem.

So when Elwell re-joined KRLA in July 1968, on Elwell's taped show there were personal spots from Elwell for New Left causes such as "Greenpeace" to the Free Clinic, and other liberal organizations were frequently talked about by Elwell. If it was embraced by the counterculture or had a certain "social-consciousness", it would be mentioned on the pre-recorded Roy Elwell show. Very few mentions of "Ridin' with Roy" or the famous coined-Elwell word "Angelenos" would turn up on his 1968 shows.

With the exception of Dave Hull's 6 to 10 show or Bob Dayton or Casey Kasem's 3 to 7, the rest of the day 16 hours was all pre-recorded on the Shaefer units. Because of the strong influence of the counterculture, the radical counterculture was very influential to KRLA at this time. FM radio with "Underground Sunshine" KMET was on the rise, and so was KPCC, all-recovered from its big strike, but still pulling in listeners all along.

During the summer of 1968, KRLA tried to be a "hip" alternative to KHJ, its biggest competitor, but sounded sterile and lacked the excellence and spontaneity that only live radio can bring.

So now it was time for KRLA to enter the Fall of 1968. It seemed like the "New Season of Excitement" left long, long ago, faded away into another past memory. KRLA was now automated for 16 hours out of its 24-hour day.

In September 1968, Dave Hull took a several-weeks vacation from his morning show. Instead of automating the morning show, as they did want to keep this block live, KRLA instead brought in a New York-style comedian, Murray Roman to take over for Hull's 6 to 10 a.m. show.

Murray Roman had a very New York-style sense of humor and a very, very "down" morning style. It was interesting at this time in "California KRLA's" history to have two New York voices in its important drive-time shows, Roman 6 to 10 and Dayton, also with a New York philosophical-cynicism sense of humor from 3 to 7 p.m.

But KRLA during the year 1968 stopped being a major force in L.A. radio, and because of its heavy dependence on automation, KRLA sunk to its lowest depths in the 9-year history of the station. Dave Hull returned to KRLA that October, and Murray Roman left the KRLA drive-time lineup. The most interesting closing comment on Murray Roman is that for a professional comedian, Roman wasn't very funny. He had a down, cynical style compared to the highly excitable Dave Hull and never was more of a footnote in KRLA's history. Roman never was really one of the "Eleven-Ten Men." More like a "special guest disc jockey" which really doesn't count. But he still did an airshift, and that's why his inclusion in our book.

Also in KRLA's history this Fall, KRLA continually tried to be on top of the "latest", and a new ID with Dick Moreland was cut with the words "Do your own thing today, KRLA, Pasadena." This was 1968, a radical time in the world. And KRLA tried to be hip.

It was also in 1968 that KRLA started its revolutionary "news" concept, "The Credibility Gap", featuring Lou Irwin, Richard Beebe, John Land and Tom Beck and various others such as Harry Shearer and David L. Lander over the next year or two, including KRLA's resident song-writer musician, Len Chandler. Chandler would actually write a song based on the news of the day. And the Credibility Gap did various skits such as "Just Plain Sam" satirizing Mayor Sam Yorty of Los Angeles, in 1968, and others like Nixon.

The Credibility Gap was a revolutionary attempt at something different in news, and the only real criticism of the Credibility Gap at that time was that it usually reflected the more "anti-establishment" viewpoint and was somewhat slightly biased in that regard. But at that time in 1968 being "liberal" was very much in vogue, and KRLA trying to stay "with it" encouraged the Credibility Gap to have an anti-establishment direction.



So KRLA as it moved into the Fall of 1968 was a sterile, automated, former great radio station. The station was now automated all day except for just eight hours. The lineup was Hull 6 to 10, Elwell 10 to 3 (taped), Dayton 3 to 7, Foster 7 to midnight (taped) and Collage midnight to 6 (taped). Casey Kasem's "Sunday Punch" was live on Sundays from 3 to 7, the only bright spot on Sunday. Only four hours of KRLA's music programming was "live" on Sundays.

Before we close the year, there was one memorable programming milestone that needs to be mentioned at this time. It was in November 1968 that KRLA would have its "last hurrah" with Beatlemania.

KRLA had a program that would feature Dave Hull interviewing Beatle George Harrison in a song-by-song debut of the Beatles "White Album." Hull interviewed Harrison about each song, and Harrison made comments cut-by-cut. At the end of the show was a priceless classic salute to KRLA Beatle Radio.

Since Hull used to give away on the air the addresses of the Beatles, Harrison decided to "give away" Dave Hull's Arcadia home address at 2039 Elkins Place, Arcadia on the air! Even though Hull was discouraged by the Beatles' drug use and the Christ statement of 1966, this was really the last Dave Hull Beatle Special on KRLA. The show was featured late one afternoon on the Bob Dayton show and was really a symbol for the end of KRLA's Beatlemania, as the following year, just two months away, would be Music Power '69 and its many changes, including a sad one for a living legend.

So in December 1968, it was clear that KRLA was no longer the force it once was. The station was sterile, no spontaneity and was a weak imitation of the great radio station with such potential with "The New Season of Excitement" just over a year ago. KRLA was truly feeling the "blues."

However, KRLA was not the only "one" feeling "blues." In San Diego someone else also was feeling "blues." But where KRLA was suffering the blues from a deserting base of listeners to low ratings due to bad programming with such heavy stagnant automation, someone else was feeling "blues."

The blues this bright, articulate, intelligent and very excellent radio personality was feeling was from a building that looked like a tract home at the corner of 52nd and Kalmia in San Diego. The same building where the sound of Johnny Hayes came from back in 1965. For the personality at KGB San Diego was facing a different kind of blues. He was down with a bad case of "Those Filbert E. Yarbrough Blues."

The road to the "big time" ahead of aspiring California radio personalities sometimes and usually takes many turns. One day in 1961, before he was even in broadcasting, a young man with super good looks and a beautiful resonant voice visited the lobby of KRLA at the Huntington Hotel. That's where he wanted to be someday, looking into the booth watching the "Eleven-Ten Men" at work.

The young man, John Miller, had come all the way from Ventura County to visit the lobby of KRLA and that big glass window. Miller returned to Ventura County where he started working at a small station in Oxnard, KACY. Miller already knew that KRLA alumni Bob Eubanks, Dick Moreland, newsman Jim Steck, Bill Keffer y and Pat Moore had all made KACY a stopping point in their journey to the Land of Eleven Ten, from KACY's three towers on Pleasant Valley Road in Oxnard.

Miller's full name was John Christian Miller, so to make the name shorter he became "Johnny Christian." Johnny Christian became one of the most popular of the KACY air force and so to move into a bigger market, Christian moved to KMEN San Bernardino where such heavyweights as William F. Williams and Mark Denis were behind the KMEN mike.

However, when Christian joined KMEN, there was one problem. Already on KMEN was Chuck Christensen later to be known to Los Angeles listeners on KGBS-FM, Flint Peak, as "Chris Charles" in 1969 and 1970. Christensen, already established at KMEN, thought that the name "Johnny Christian" was too confusing, so John Christian Miller would have to change his name before going on the air.

In the KMEN studio on Baseline was a flyer poster advertising a James Darren concert that KMEN was hosting at the Swing Auditorium at the Orange Show grounds in San Bernardino. It was quickly decided that "Johnny Christian" would become "Johnnie Darin." Miller preferred the spelling "Darin" over "Darren" and "Johnnie" over "Johnny" and so the Johnnie Darin show was born.

Johnnie Darin would not only become highly popular at KMEN with his movie-star good looks, like a matinee idol, and beautiful voice, but would also become the music director of KMEN also. However, to all KMEN personalities, the Bill Drake chain of Boss Radio stations was the place to really want to be at. To someday join Johnny Mitchell and Don Steele at Number One KHJ, on Venice at Fairfax in Southwest Los Angeles, was a goal of all suburban personalities.

Darin thought he had that chance when he moved from KMEN to KGB San Diego, the home of such Drake Boss Jocks in the past as Johnny Hayes, Steve Jay, Mark Denis, and Dick Sainte. From KGB San Diego, Darin knew the next stop would be either KFRC San Francisco, another Drake powerhouse, or maybe the big time at Number One KHJ!

However when Darin was at KGB, due to various politics, it was clear that he didn't see that Drake would ever move him to KHJ, his ultimate goal. Darin had the opportunity to go to KFRC San Francisco which may be a dead-end in the Bay Area with no hope of going to KHJ, or move to Los Angeles from KGB to join a struggling, mostly automated station, which used to be the biggest station in the country and the one he had visited years before, KRLA.

The decision for Darin was pretty easy. He wanted to stay in Southern California and knew that KFRC wouldn't produce a ticket to KHJ. So Darin, upon hearing that his friend, Doug Cox, was about to take over the programming at KRLA, Darin was offered a proposition by Cox. Would Darin come to KRLA in December of 1968 to just behind-the-scenes production. No on the air work -- maybe sometime in the future though. Maybe if Cox as P.D. was able to adjust the schedule, then maybe Darin could be on the air, but no guarantees for now.

Darin, feeling discouraged that he would not be able to go on to Bill Drake's <sup>KHS</sup> thought that this was the end of the line for him as part of the Drake organization. So Darin said "yes" to Cox and joined KRLA as a production man as Doug Cox came aboard KRLA to try to salvage the almost fully-by-now-automated KRLA, once a great station, now an automated sleeping giant.

Darin started on KRLA doing production, no voice heard on KRLA. However for a talent as good as Darin's, the absence of being on the air was quite hard, and Darin frankly missed being behind the mike. The idea of Cox and Darin's was to maybe do a voice character on Dave Hull's 6 to 10 a.m. show, as Hull's show was starting to show its age. This character would maybe help Hull with news, or traffic, or maybe even comedy bits.

However, to aid the free-form of it all, and because Darin wanted to keep a low profile in case the whole thing didn't work out, Darin would have to call himself something else. Darin, who still felt bad about not being in line in the future to go to KHJ under Bill Drake, had a brainstorm.

Bill Drake, the founder of Boss Radio KHJ, never used his real name, Phil Yarborough. He was always "Bill Drake"; as Yarborough wanted a name to rhyme with "WAKE" radio in Georgia where he had launched his career. Very few people, as far as listeners, knew who "Phil Yarborough" was. Everyone knew Yarborough as "Bill Drake."

Here was Darin's brainstorm. Since he was pretty much burned out being a Drake Boss Joke from KGB, Darin would call this sad, pathetic character for Hull's show, "Filbert E. Yarborough," a play-off on Drake's real name. It was a classic inside joke. So on the Dave Hull show, this sad, young character would come on and talk to Hull calling himself "Filbert E. Yarborough."

It was a great two-man show. Hull and Filbert E. Yarborough. The Dave Hull show, which had gotten rather stale since its great sendoff in August 1967, needed this new blood on his show. Hull was excellent as he traded lines with this sad, pathetic "Filbert E. Yarborough." No one really knew who this "Yarborough" was, except that throughout the day now, you could hear "Yarborough's" voice doing promos and some commercials, all of course without an identifying name.

However at KRLA in a station that had had no new voices since Rhett Walker over a year before, it was a treat to listeners hearing a fresh new sound on KRLA. Whoever this "Yarborough" was, he was good. This went on for several weeks until one day, Bob Dayton called in sick. Doug Cox, the new program director, had to have someone go on live -- fast! The only one at the station who Cox could use, since Moreland was unavailable and Kasem was involved in other business, was Johnnie Darin. But instead of going on the air as Filbert E. Yarborough, this would be Darin's time to finally debut on KRLA as Johnnie Darin.

So one afternoon in December 1968 on the 3 to 7 p.m. Bob Dayton show "live" was Johnnie Darin. Darin introduced himself to Los Angeles audiences and said it's a pleasure to be on KRLA and to be finally getting over "those Filbert E. Yarborough blues." Darin on this 3 to 7 p.m. show sounded great. It was truly refreshing to hear something new on KRLA. KRLA which promoted itself with "The New Season" the year before had sunk into low depths with a skeleton crew of personalities and plenty of sterile automation.

Now Doug Cox was about to try to make KRLA important again. There still was hope. Because KRLA virtually kept its TOP 40 format, the listeners wouldn't desert KRLA as they would three years down the road in 1971 with the forbidding "shadow over the pasture." Johnnie Darin sounded great, but in December it was just fill ins. Once Darin had the substitution for Bob Dayton, the Filbert E. Yarborough character was dropped from Dave Hull's show.

Also right around the end of the year, KRLA in jest of recent earthquake predictions for early 1969 where California was supposed to drop in the ocean, KRLA produced a series of skits featuring a fast talking salesman named "Sam Andreas" (like in "San Andreas Fault") who would advertise for people to buy soon-to-be beach front property in the desert in anticipation of the rest of California dropping into the ocean, and where the hot new beachfront property would be in Blythe or points east in the desert. This was a very clever promotion and one that is memorable to this day with much earthquake activity in California the past few years from the time of this writing in 1989. (How about bringing Sam Andreas to KRLA now?)

Also a very memorable photograph was taken at KRLA. It shows all the KRLA disc jockeys in December 1968 standing on the lobby stairs at the hotel studios without their shirts on and standing in such a way that they look like all the "Eleven-Ten Men" were naked. It was quite a sight to see the bald, hairy chested Elwell next to the clean-cut Johnnie Darin -- two eras of KRLA's history brought together for one surreal moment.

So Doug Cox in late December of 1968 continued to try to make his impression on KRLA. Cox had some definite plans for KRLA's future in 1969 to try to get the station back on top. However, one of the current "Eleven-Ten Men" would be leaving the lineup. And that is Roy Elwell. Elwell, who had just returned in July, had his primary interest in television and Channel 9 "Tempo" shows, so Elwell would not be continuing into 1969. Also Cox wanted a younger, brighter sound and felt that Elwell did not have the "youthful freshness" that Cox would want for the coming year with its hopeful more live shows.

Cox did not like automation, but the Shaefer machines had cost a lot of money and for now Cox was stuck with them. So Cox would be bringing in someone else to take Elwell's place 10 to 3, as Johnnie Darin did not want those hours for a taped show and wanted to continue in production at least for now.

Johnnie Darin would turn out to be one of the best in KRLA's history as the next few years will show. Darin had two distinguishable trademarks. First, Darin never said "The Johnnie Darin Show," it was always "KRLA with Johnnie Darin." Darin felt that after all the rigid Drake format where you had to say certain things, Darin liked the freedom at KRLA to be more cerebral.

Also Darin had another trademark on his shows. Darin would play "cover versions," very nicely segued together. In radio where there usually was talking between every record, it was nice to hear two versions of the same song blended together uninterrupted. It was one of Darin's best features.

But back to December. Cox had the 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. shift to fill with a new "Eleven-Ten Man." He would have this new personality do it pre-recorded on the Shaefer units until maybe something else might develop with live radio, but it was clear that the 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. show would have to remain taped for now. And his first 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. show would not be until New Year's Day 1969. Roy Elwell would stay on right through December 31st.

The man who Cox selected as his new mid-day "Eleven-Ten Man" was best known to Los Angeles listeners from KBLA in the Verdugo Mountains, in the 6 to 9 p.m. shift right up to the very last day of that station in June 1967. But before KBLA, this next radio superstar had a very interesting path before he got back to Los Angeles and KRLA. It would be truly up, up and away for William F. Williams.

William F. Williams first started in Southern California after he had been out of the service in 1962 at KMEN San Bernardino when that station changed over to a TOP 40 format from what it was before as KITO. Williams was the original midnight to 6 a.m. man and had a style reminiscent of Ted Quillin. Williams was highly popular in the Midnight to 6 a.m. spot, but when Dean Webber, the original Noon to 3 at KMEN left, Williams was immediately put into that 12 Noon to 3 p.m. time slot where Williams became quite popular with the housewife audience.

Williams wanted to break into Los Angeles radio, so when KBLA, high atop the Verdugo Mountains, wanted to go to an all-live disc jockey format, Williams was signed by KBLA in the 8 to Midnight show before later moving into the 9 to Noon shift. However, KMEN in 1966 needed Williams back to do morning drive in San Bernardino, so Williams went back to KMEN for the 6 to 9 a.m. show in 1966, the same time that Johnnie Darin was there.

An interesting side note to William F. Williams at KMEN. The station had a cartoon mascot called "Bernie" who was a little blond-haired strongman type of character who was featured in all the station logos. The character would be standing in striped trunks and no shirt and holding a "discus" type weight and flexing his muscle.

KMEN also at that time put out a record list survey folder each week with pictures of all the air talent, usually in a head-and-shoulder coat-and-tie picture, very traditional for that era. Except for Williams, whose picture showed him standing like "Bernie" with no shirt on and with a big smile! Williams had a great ego and was a pretty macho guy as well.

Williams came back to KBLA in the Spring of 1967, replacing Bobby St. Thomas in the 6 to 9 p.m. shift, and stayed on KBLA right up to its last day in June 1967 when the station switched to a country format and new call letters, KBBQ. At that time Williams called himself "Bill Williams" as William F. Williams was too Top 40 sounding for a country station, and stayed at KBBQ for a very short time before moving to the 3 to 7 p.m. shift at KCBQ, Santee. So Williams was certainly a box-office name that Doug Cox was glad to have as part of the Eleven-Ten lineup and the pre-recorded 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. show.

However Williams may be more famous for another story. While in the service, Williams was said to be involved with hot-air balloons for military purposes. So when KMEN in 1966 decided to have a hot-air balloon promotion, where the station had a huge hot-air balloon on Orange Show Road directly across the freeway from the little white building in the golf course and triple towers of KFXM its rival station, Williams was selected to be the KMEN personality to go up in the balloon with the listeners on short, 10-minute flights to promote KMEN. No other station had used hot-air balloons before this time. It was because Williams knew how to pilot a hot-air balloon and so was a natural for this promotion.

KMEN then invited listeners all over the inland area to take these free balloon rides with William F. Williams, "The Prophet", as they called him because of his philosophical views on life. One of the listeners who heard about this hot-air balloon was a young college student named Jim, from one of the local community colleges who liked to write songs. Jim thought that a song about a hot-air balloon would be a great idea, but he wanted to experience the sensation of hot-air ballooning for himself.

Jim waited in line on Orange Show Road for his turn to go up in the wicker basket with Williams. Apparently Jim liked the experience, because when he got down he went back to his room at the college and wrote a song all about William F. Williams and the KMEN "Magnificent Flying Machine", as the balloon was called by Williams.

Jim went back to the balloon site a few days later where Williams was still taking the listeners up in the balloon. He told Williams about the song, but it needed a title and some additional lyrics and hooks.

Williams gave Jim the title.

"How about calling it 'Up, Up and Away!'" said Williams to the young songwriter.

The young songwriter put Williams' words in the song and as the title. And the record "Up, Up and Away" written about William F. Williams "Magnificent Flying Machine" balloon became a million seller for the Fifth Dimension.

And Jim? He was Jimmy Webb, one of the most popular and prolific songwriters of the late 1960's. It was no surprise that when we met William F. Williams back in 1984 at Williams' Lake Arrowhead cabin that there would be pictures of hot-air balloons all along Williams' staircase.

So William F. Williams was to start on KRLA from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. everyday beginning January 1st. However, because of the Pasadena Rose Parade, Cox wanted to have KRLA "live" from 3 p.m. on December 31st all the way up to 10 in the morning on New Year's day, so the parade-goers on the parade route could listen to KRLA and get up-to-the-minute traffic reports and pre-parade information in Pasadena where the KRLA studios were at the Huntington Hotel. So as a "sneak preview" to Williams' January 1st, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. pre-recorded show, Cox asked Williams to do Rebel Foster's 7 to midnight show "live" for the pre-parade festivities.

On December 31, 1968 we had a brainstorm. We would stow away in a church building on Colorado Boulevard and then at midnight, we would go across the roof to the building's roof next door, a former restaurant called "The Headliner" and watch the parade from a great bird's eye vantage point.

While we were stowing away in a church lounge in the Sunday School building after everyone had left, we had with us our little G.E. transistor radio to our ear so we wouldn't get bored. When we turned on the radio, we heard KRLA programming "live" with William F. Williams instead of Rebel Foster which was always taped. We immediately knew that something was up on KRLA. First, it was Johnnie Darin joining KRLA in December. Now William F. Williams. Something was happening at KRLA.

As the night set in, we looked out the window and saw the Pasadena City Hall with its multi-colored "light show" on its tower. The lounge was dark. We were the only ones in the building. We lay quietly on the couch with William F. Williams on KRLA next to our ear.

We fell asleep, listening to the dream-house about to enter a New Year.

L TO R: BILL WOOD, DAVE HULL, REBEL FOSTER, DICK MORELAND, ROY ELWELL, DOUG COX, JOHNNIE DARIN, BOB DAYTON, CASEY KASEM

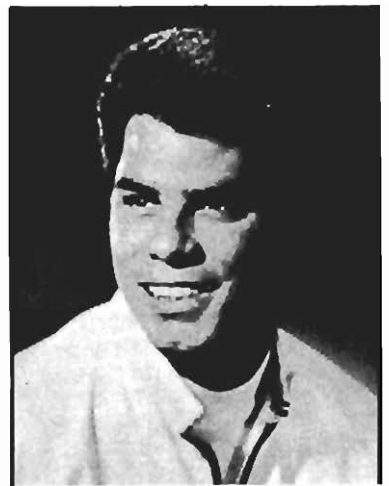


# KRLA PRESENTS

**JOHNNIE  
DARIN**



**KRLA-1110  
NOON-3 PM**



LEE DUNCAN

Mike Ambrose



RED FOSTER

KRLA

## CHAPTER 7

### "IFIAFFI"



The clock struck midnight. The little room in the church building, where we spent most of the night stowed away, was now dark. The radio was turned on. William F. Williams had just concluded his very first show, and now Dick Moreland was hosting the "Collage" show, but for the first time the "Collage" show was "live." The show sounded so much better. Why hadn't it have been "live" all along?

As we walked out to the roof of the old "Headliner" coffee shop on Colorado Boulevard to wait for the parade the next morning, the Dick Moreland "Collage" show filled the night-time air. "Going Home" by the Rolling Stones. A long cut. That's totally wild. Dick Moreland playing a heavy Rolling Stones song! The giant twin towers of KPPC-AM towered over our head, the red lights and "Independent" and "Star News" neon signs in the middle of each one, giving a glow to the midnight sky. They looked so huge, so powerful from where we were. 1240 seemed mighty even if it was only 100 watts.

The following morning after the parade, as we were walking home, KRLA again was coming out of the transistor.

"This is William F. Williams, the new kid on the block, bringing you love and peace everyday from 10 to 3." So that's what Williams would be doing. What happened to Roy Elwell?

And so 1969 is here and KRLA enters another year in its history. Doug Cox, as we stated in the last chapter, had signed on as KRLA program director to take KRLA into a new direction away from the "blues" of automation. Johnnie Darin was brought in to do the productions, and new jingles had been ordered for KRLA for the first time since 1966.

The lineup that Cox inherited was Dave Hull 6 to 10 a.m. "live," William F. Williams now replacing Roy Elwell 10 to 3 "taped," Bob Dayton "live" from 3 to 7, and Rebel Foster 7 to Midnight "taped." This schedule was unacceptable to Cox, as Cox wanted to move away from taped shows everyday, but this was ok at least for now.

Dick Moreland and Casey Kasem were still on the weekends, with Casey Kasem's "Sunday Punch" program where each Sunday 3 to 7 had a particular theme. Moreland didn't have a regular shift anymore, but was there if the station needed him on the air. The "Collage" taped show was all night, but Cox again was unhappy with KRLA's automation. He knew it had to go. And 1969 would be the year it would.

There was one problem that Cox faced in January 1969, and that was Dave Hull. Dave Hull had been morning man since August 1967 but clearly was a relic of the past eras of KRLA, of Beatle radio, and junk floats. Since Cox knew that Hull's contract was up this January 1st, Cox decided that the "Hullaballooer" was not in his plans for KRLA "Music Power '69", as Cox called his new plans.

So at the end of Hull's show at 10 a.m., right after the first of the year, at 10 a.m., Hull was summoned into Cox's office where Doug Cox paid Hull everything owed to him and became the man who fired Dave Hull. This was January 1969. It wasn't 1967 anymore when scores of fans would go down to the station and have a demonstration on the porch to bring back their Hullaballooer.

Cox felt that Dave Hull was too square and too un-hip to be part of KRLA's new direction. Hull had been a legend, and in our opinion the best of all the "Eleven-Ten Men" overall, but with Hull's conservative views and family values, this was not where Cox wanted KRLA to be.

We recall visiting Hull at his Arcadia home at 2039 Elkins Place where Hull in his bathrobe took us out by his pool, remembering us from November 1965 and the junior high interview we did, and told us what had happened. Hull would be soon going to M.O.R. KFI in La Mirada. But it was truly the end of an era, as Dave Hull was no longer part of the "Eleven-Ten Men."

Hull, however, would do some of his best moments in radio during this time away from KRLA, when he joined KGBS, Lynwood, in 1971, where Hull along with two friends of his who would call his show and have some of the funniest moments ever in Silver Age radio with Dave Hull's "Dial-A-Date." One of the most priceless moments had to be when a girl called Dave Hull up in 1973 for Hull to find her a date, and Hull asked her if she could dance. When she said "yes," Hull then asked,

"Can you do the tango?"

When again she said yes, Hull then gave one of his funniest lines in radio,

"All right! Last tango in Paris! Wow!" It is still funny to this very day for those of us in the know about that classic movie.

KRLA without Dave Hull would certainly be different. That's what Cox wanted. But Dave Hull even though perceived square by some of his colleagues, is truly one of the most decent men in radio, and besides being a devoted family man and good Catholic, Hull has always been nice to us. Even when others weren't at KRLA, both past and present, Hull always was. It was sad to see Hull leave KRLA. It was the end of an era. But Cox wanted a new sound for Eleven-Ten, and having Hull stay on the air was not in the plans.

So Cox had to rebuild the KRLA schedule at this point, and to do so required putting in a new morning man to replace Dave Hull and to have a schedule of mostly live programming to get KRLA to where he and Darin in production wanted to take it, and that is back to Number One. It was clear in early 1969 that KRLA did experience a rebirth.

First, it had new jingles for the first time in 3 years. Next, Cox had white with red "KRLA Music Power '69" button pins that would be used to spread the word that KRLA had truly changed from its low point in 1968. Music Power '69 was the slogan and Cox's philosophy was to emphasize that KRLA would be a great blend of not only the TOP 45's but because FM was becoming so popular with KPCC and KMET, to play the best tracks off of hit albums. These "Long Play Weekends" would be featured every weekend where every other song was a non-45 album track. It was brilliant programming as far as the music. However, by firing Dave Hull, the whole Music Power '69 image was missing something special it could have had.

So with the music now adjusted with a tremendous amount of LP tracks next to the KRLA hit singles, Cox then worked on the schedule. The first order of business would be a new morning man. The most natural choice would have been to move the already popular afternoon drive Bob Dayton into the morning drive, but Cox decided to keep Dayton where he was.

We felt having Dayton in the mornings and Johnnie Darin in the 3 to 7 afternoon show, where he had done such a superb job subbing for Bob Dayton last December, would have been a much better choice than what Cox decided on. By this time Bob Dayton had been an established personality, and his double entendres and one-liners were a good fixture for his show and would have been appreciated in the morning to this more sophisticated audience.

But what Cox did was to put William F. Williams into the morning show "live" from 6 to 9 a.m. Williams already had been a morning man at KHEN, as we discussed in the last chapter, and having had a following already, Cox gave Williams Hull's old morning show. This was quite a shock to most listeners who were so used to Hull in the mornings and so to hear someone else in that time slot was quite a jolt.

Williams decided, as a gesture to Dave Hull's old audience, to keep something similar to what Hull did with having a "panty hose" pull-on as opposed to Dave Hull's girdle pull-on. Williams did this for a few days in January but dropped it after a very short time. Where Hull was silly and adolescent in the girdle pull-on, Williams was sophisticated and somewhat suggestive when he told his female audience members to slip on their panty hose.

Williams had a style that was in a way reminiscent of Ted Quillin, and where Dave Hull could be silly at times, Williams always had a sophistication and a cocky coolness. Unfortunately, Williams had big shoes to step in, and it would be difficult to keep Hull's audience, but Williams went ahead with style and grace.

Following Williams from 9 to Noon "live," Cox put in Rebel Foster. As you may recall from an earlier chapter, Foster already had those hours back in 1967, replacing Bob Eubanks 9 to Noon at that time, and moving Foster to those hours again now seemed unusual except that Foster was getting older, and as one of the senior men at the station, Foster was used to try to get the housewife audience and did so with his usual energetic style. However by this time, the Maude Skidmore "character" had been totally eliminated and probably would not have gone over to 1969 housewives with their everyday dreams.

As Cox had promised Johnnie Darin that he would be moving into a regular shift as soon as possible, the sooner came now when Johnnie Darin took over the Noon to 3 hours "live" and brought a smooth style, good looks, great voice, and his Darin-styled cover versions that we talked about in the last chapter.

Bob Dayton was kept 3 to 7 p.m. Cox wanted to have some kind of continuity with the old KRLA from last year and since Dayton was already quite successful in that time slot, not to move him. Cox still needed at least two or three more personalities, but they would come later during Music Power '69's formulation.

To program the 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. hours at this time, Cox split them up into two. Collage would remain automated until he could get a personality for those all-night hours, but for the meantime, Collage was set midnight to 6. What Cox did for 7 to Midnight, until he could fill that with someone he had in mind who was not yet available, Cox created an automated back-to-back album cut show called "Odyssey," where using the voice of Dick Moreland for some song introductions and promos, it would be a carbon copy of Collage but featuring shorter cuts than the long versions that Collage featured.

This would be Dick Moreland's swan song at KRLA. Moreland had been a fixture at KRLA the longest, since 1961, and for those listeners who remember Odyssey, that was the last time that Moreland's voice was heard on KRLA. For so much of the glory years of "Eleven-Ten," Moreland's voice was heard on promo after promo after promo, and in so many time slots. But Music Power '69 did not have a place for Moreland, and so Moreland exited KRLA around February 1969 after the Odyssey program came to an end. There was no farewell show for Moreland, as he just faded away. Moreland deserved a much better "finale," and it was sad to hear KRLA without Moreland's deep voice and friendly, familiar sound.

So this was the lineup for Music Power '69 in January. It was the first real major change at KRLA in almost a year and the most important thing so far is that the automation was on its way out. This would be the most important accomplishment of the Doug Cox era, and that is to finally get rid of the automation totally.

The man that Cox brought in to do the 7 to Midnight show at KRLA, replacing the interim Odyssey in February of 1969, first was heard to Southern California listeners at KCBQ Santee where he hosted a sort of underground-on-AM show. Dale Payne, or using his "stage name" Jimmy Rabbit, was truly a new breed of AM disc jockey and was an influential part of what Cox wanted for KRLA.

Rabbit, with shoulder length hair and ever present sunglasses was certainly an original. He preferred to play the heavier, underground type records, that were becoming more and more popular at that time, and did so in a style that fit in to AM radio, and it did work!



KRLA had a major promotion for 'The Rabbit' with printed graphic ads showing the graphic photo-drawing of Rabbit as a head on a radio with carrots reflected in his glasses. "Turn on Jimmy Rabbit" was the slogan, and having Rabbit on Eleven-Ten, it did attract the "heavier" music listeners who had been turning off AM radio for the more progressive sounds of FM.

Rabbit certainly attracted attention, and because he was so original a personality, he took KRLA in a direction that was successful and Rabbit became one of the more "hot" personalities at KRLA during Music Power '69. The night-time lineup remained pretty much this way in February 1969 with Rabbit 7 to midnight "live" and Collage still "taped" midnight to 6.

The person that Cox brought in to do the midnight to 6 show was an old familiar voice to KRLA listeners, but this time he was not the same guy he was when he left KRLA in July of 1968. The world was changing so fast during that time and the influences of the music and the whole pop culture had taken over an old friend who Cox would bring back to do the Midnight to 6 show "live." And that's the return to KRLA of Johnny Hayes.

Hayes had left KRLA in July 1968 pretty much burnt out by the automation of KRLA that summer, and because of the ever changing world that was happening so fast at that time, we were told that Hayes "dropped out" during those eight months for some time off. The Johnny Hayes who returned to KRLA in February 1969 was not the same "boy next door or son away at college" that Hayes personified back in May 1965.

Hayes had let his hair grow freely, now rather wavy and long and now was more totally into the new music of the progressive underground sounds that had now started to affect so many. We recall sitting in on the Johnny Hayes show one spring morning on his all-night show for the entire six hours, where Hayes would turn the lights off in the booth and put up large vigil style candles, reminiscent of the kind they have in churches in front of statues of saints and where Hayes would do his show with those big candles burning all night.

Hayes' style had really mellowed quite a bit, and he probably had undergone one of the biggest changes from the others during those months he was away from KRLA. Hayes, who once had the popular "Teen Topper Show" from Bob Eubanks, now was playing long album cuts and esoteric music. Some of this music, it appeared to us, sitting in the booth with him, that he had brought this music from home.

This was a new Johnny Hayes. We remember how good Hayes was in his 6 to 9 p.m. show back in 1966, which seemed a lifetime ago at this stage of radio, could see these changes, and realize that KRLA and the times had changed too. So the evening block of KRLA programming was now set. Cox had an all-live lineup for the first time at KRLA in a year and Music Power '69 was certainly a new KRLA.

Even the KRLA disc jockey booth, up to now painted a soft pastel green, was suddenly painted soft pastel yellow, and shortly after that, yellow foam rubber "tiles" were glued onto the glass which separated the engineer from the disc jockey to soften the sound of KRLA. The yellow paint was certainly an improvement, but those egg-carton type yellow tiles looked tacky and did not look good to those of us in the lobby watching our favorite "Eleven-Ten Man" through the glass.

The music format of KRLA, at this time in February 1969, was adjusted according to the time of day. From 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. KRLA played mainstream TOP 40 with a few long-play tracks mixed in. But from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. it was basically a semi-free-form radio where Rabbit and Hayes played longer tracks and even brought some records from their own collections at home.

So the lineup was complete with Williams 6 to 9, Foster 9 to Noon, Darin Noon to 3, Dayton 3 to 7, Rabbit 7 to midnight, Hayes Midnight to 6 and Casey Kasem, looking more and more like a relic of a different era on the weekends. This was an all-live lineup now and certainly was a big improvement from the days of almost all automation the year before.

Unfortunately, the first casualty at KRLA in 1969 from the main lineup, was for a man who should have been given a longer run considering the hard job he had in trying to fill the shoes of Dave Hull. William F. Williams, as said before, was not immediately accepted by the listeners, and it's too bad considering that William F. had a style and talent that deserved a much longer run.

However, as what happens to so many great "individualists" who become radio personalities, Williams ran into trouble with management. It seemed that management at the time had objected to different things on the William F. show, maybe a blue line here or there or whatever, and so wrote Williams numerous memos on what to do and what not to do on his show. Williams, being a strong professional who knew what he was doing, resented this flood of memos, and so

as a joke, and because it really was funny, Williams decided to read these memos on the air, sharing with the audience what management had wanted him to do on the radio and so on.

There never really was any real problem with Williams' show, it's just that he was in the unfortunate position of being the leading player as the morning man, and because of that visibility the KRLA management decided to try to get him to do this show more "their way." This was a mistake. Williams is about as strong an individualist as one would ever find on the radio, and Williams was not the type of air personality who would patiently read the memos and then alter his show.

Instead Williams said to the listeners, that hey, this is what management is saying today! It actually was quite funny, as no problem really existed and the memos were quite harmless.

However, management did not see the humor and so sent Williams another memo, but this one saying not to read memos over the air, or else. Guess what Williams did. He read it. Management heard it, and Williams was next on the "axed" list.

However Williams was allowed to do something that isn't really done much anymore, even at that time, and that is to do a farewell show. Williams, during this farewell, did two things of interest that we will discuss here.

First, it was decided to have a strange contest where Williams would "audition" listeners to call up on his show and "audition" to be the new morning man, as Williams announced he is leaving. Williams announced that one of the "callers" he would select to be his replacement and that he would "give his show away" to the one he selected. This obviously was simply a put-on because it was already decided who would take Williams' place a few days before. But instead of just having Williams leave and his replacement come on the next day, it was decided to try to make this more fun by "giving away" the show to a caller.

On that morning, caller after caller called, "auditioning." Finally, a deep-voiced mellow sounding voice came on calling himself "Russ" and after this "audition," Williams then announced that this "Russ O'Hara" had won the show and would start the next day as the morning man. However this did not fool us because we recognized who Russ O'Hara was from remembering listening to him out in San Bernardino where we accompanied our father on business trips out there.

Russ O'Hara had been the Noon to 3 personality at KMEN out on Baseline, the same station where both Darin and Williams had worked at years before, and most recently O'Hara had been heard at KGJF from the Oddfellows Hall in South Los Angeles playing soul R and B. But to listeners it actually seemed that maybe this "Russ" was strictly an unknown who "won" the show. KRLA never explained this. O'Hara's big moments at KMEN was when he did the noon to 3 show and had a reputation of trying to say "Press On" as many times as possible between records. However, O'Hara with his soulful voice was not a traditional comedic morning man and had very little "morning-style" personality. But that will be discussed later.

So now Williams announces that this "Russ" would take over the morning show and that Williams was going to say good-bye. During the last part of Williams' show on his last morning, Williams kept repeating a mysterious word over and over and that this word would explain everything that was happening to KRLA and Williams at this time, and the reason why he's leaving.

Williams kept saying the word "IFIAFFI" and "Remember IFIAFFI," almost like "Remember the Alamo" or "Remember the Maine," in United States history. He did not explain what this meant, but as his last song Williams said maybe this song would explain it.

Williams played "My Way" by Frank Sinatra, and it was clear that Paul Anka's words had fit the William F. personality to the fullest. Both before and after the song, Williams said "IFIAFFI." At 9 o'clock the song ended, and William F. Williams was now part of KRLA's history.

But what did "IFIAFFI" mean? A short time after that, we visited the studios of KRLA in Pasadena, talking to Johnnie Darin in the booth, and while we were there, we noticed right above the "board" on a yellow wooden back-holder that was used to support the commercial notebook and spot books the air talents would read from, we noticed carved into the yellow painted wood with a blue ball-point pen the words,

"IFIAFFI - Wm. F. '69"

This was almost like an epitaph on a tombstone. Again, the word "IFIAFFI" came back to us. We asked Darin just what did it mean. Did he know? After all, William F. Williams was quite a hero for us at KRLA at this time. Our initials are "William F." also (William F. Earl).

We asked Darin about "IFIAFFI." Darin told us what it meant. And we could see that "IFIAFFI" fit Williams' personality to a tee and also fit the philosophy of us at that time, sort of a maverick to Mr. Conover at Arcadia High School, being a senior at that time counting the days to graduation. What does "IFIAFFI" mean?

Darin told us it was made up by Williams, and each letter stands for a word. The words?

"I" = if  
"F" = fun,  
"A" = ain't  
"I" = it

The William F. philosophy of life. Who could say it better! We were so impressed by "IFIAFFI" that on a car in our family bears the California personal license plates "IFIAFFI." When people have asked us what it meant, we just say it's a "philosophical word from a prophet."

And it was. "IFIAFFI" and the song "My Way" by Frank Sinatra was the swan song of William F. Williams. It's too bad that Williams joined KRLA when he did, as had he joined KRLA in another time or era, maybe it would have been different. But in trying to take over for Dave Hull, it was an impossible task. And to top it off, that as we leave William F. Williams at KRLA, when the ratings for December 1968 came out, Dave Hull had the highest ratings on the station in December 1968! It was next to impossible for Williams to take KRLA any higher than that.

But William F. Williams was an original and had a style and an attitude that was most important. And it was this attitude of "IFIAFFI" that will make William F. Williams a legend in the history of KRLA.

So William F. Williams left KRLA in March of 1969, just two months after he started, and was replaced by Russ O'Hara. O'Hara was not a comedic or traditional morning man and certainly not the strongest man at the station that is supposed to always be in the morning show.

O'Hara's style was "down" and ultra mellow. O'Hara sounded similar to Jim Wood whose style also wouldn't be best for the mornings. With O'Hara in the mornings, this would begin a two-year period on KRLA where the morning show would be manned by not the strongest personality in the lineup.

O'Hara used to call himself "Russ O'Hungry" and quite often said on his morning show that he was "always hungry."

And almost every few minutes O'Hara during his morning show would ask the audience

"How's your head?"

So KRLA at the end of March 1969 had O'Hara 6 to 9 a.m., followed by Foster 9 to Noon, Johnnie Darin Noon to 3, Bob Dayton, who by now should have been dragged into the morning show to save it, followed by the progressive sounds of Jimmy Rabbit and Johnny Hayes.

KRLA also at this time had purchased new, bright jingles, replacing the ones from January, with the "L" of KRLA emphasized ("K-R-L-A!") from Pam's in Texas. Each personality had their own jingle ("Bob Dayton-K-R-L-A!"), and these new jingles certainly brightened up the sound of Eleven-Ten. In fact, the station felt so excited about these jingles that a contest was created around the jingles where, if the disc jockey played the wrong one, that is, someone else's on their show (Bob Dayton playing "Johnny Hayes" jingle for example), if the listener called in to catch it, that is to report it, that listener would win a prize. This was a neat promotion in that it got people to listen to KRLA and to become familiar with its new Music Power '69 lineup.

However another legend for KRLA would leave the Land of Eleven-Ten at this time. And that is Casey Kasem. Kasem had seemed like coming from another era when he worked his last few 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday morning shows. It seemed like ages ago that "The Station of the Stars" was first heard on KRLA.

But at this time in 1969 it was time for "The Caser" to move on to bigger things. Kasem would turn up the following year in the Fall of 1970 with his new "American Top Forty" syndicated pre-recorded show that he would be developing at this time upon leaving KRLA, but at this time in 1969, Casey Kasem's "live" shows would come to an end. Kasem simply outgrew KRLA, and in a way the station stepped on the gas and left Kasem behind too.

The station was moving in a young, hip, direction. With Kasem and Moreland now both gone in early 1969, the only ones that remained from the old glory years were Rebel Foster and Johnny Hayes, both who had left KRLA once and

came back. It was sad to see veterans leave the lineup. But time marched on in 1969, and the winds of change were in the air during Music Power '69.

Something else was in the air at KRLA in the early months of 1969. You've heard us refer to a legendary spirit, "Princess Blue Sky." Here's where it came from, and why the spirit of such floats through this book.

In early 1969, KRLA had a promotion on the air where listeners could send in to KRLA and receive a piece of "blue sky," actually the words "KRLA Blue Sky" printed with blue ink on a small square of blue paper. This came from a production that KRLA was featuring, featuring the voice of Sie Holiday as she talked about a legendary mythical Indian princess, "Princess Blue Sky," who was concerned with all the pollution in the air over the Land of Eleven-Ten and to forget about going to the Moon that coming summer and think about our own land and atmosphere here on earth.

In the background was the Shondell's song "Crystal Blue Persuasion." Today, we cannot hear the song "Crystal Blue Persuasion" without thinking of that song. We recall the first time we heard that promotion.

We had just gotten a driver's license, and one of the first places we used to drive to was down Santa Anita Avenue to Legg Lake right next to the KRLA transmitter site with its magnificent towers stretching high into the clouds. The day we drove down was a very windy day in early 1969, and usually the air quality in South El Monte was not that good. That day the sky was as blue as can be with clouds floating like giant white pillows.

The red-and-white towers soared to a blue sky as we were sitting on the grass at Legg Lake, and, upon looking up toward the direction of the towers, we heard on our G.E. transistor radio (a new one this year) the story of Princess Blue Sky and how her spirit wished for all the air above the Land of Eleven Ten to be clear and the sky a "crystal blue."

That day it really was. Maybe Princess Blue Sky really did exist. We still have the photographs taken of the KRLA towers from a windy day in South El Monte when Princess Blue Sky was high above. It really, really was beautiful.

Two other programming highlights on KRLA at this time should now be discussed at this time in KRLA's history. KRLA newsman John Land, now calling himself "John Gilliland," had spent the past several years working on a documentary series called "The Pop Chronicles" which would trace the history of popular music from the 50's up to 1969.

This program, narrated by Sie Holiday and Tom Beck along with Gilliland himself, was the best of any of the histories of rock and roll that have been produced, and KRLA had scheduled this show to run for one year from Spring 1969 to Spring 1970. It would be heard every Sunday night from 6 to 7 p.m. and would be sponsored for the entire year by Sears Roebuck, which would give away blue program schedules of the Pop Chronicles in the various Sears Roebuck stores.

Following this show in the Spring of 1969 would be the Credibility Gap Special from 7 to 8 p.m., which would feature the best skits of the news parody group that was born at KRLA the previous year in 1968. One of the best has to be heard to be believed. It was the story of the Vatican buying radio stations all over the world and what the Credibility Gap did with that story was classic satire featuring "The Real Cardinal Heel" and radio "KPAX" programmed like a Drake Boss Radio station. It was one of the best.

These two hours on KRLA, during this Spring of 1969 on Sunday nights, were an example of excellent radio that KRLA at this time in its history, was exceptionally good at. The Pop Chronicles and The Credibility Gap were both strong entrees out of the gate at KRLA during this rebirth of KRLA in 1969.

At this part of our story we now switch back to the KRLA schedule which, since Kasem left, was lacking a weekender. The man brought in to handle the Sunday night 7 to Midnight shift after the Pop Chronicles (the Credibility Gap special was only on one Sunday as an anniversary show) was a personality, first known to Los Angeles listeners from 1965 at KFNB, Mike Ambrose.

We first heard Mike Ambrose when he was a major star at KDEO Santee in 1964. The following year, Ambrose went to KFNB to work part time, waiting in the wings for a regular spot on the lineup. When Don Mackinnon died in 1965 at KFNB in the Noon to 3 show, it was rumored that Ambrose might be moved into those hours. When instead Larry McCormick took over that shift, Ambrose left KFNB. Ambrose had strong ties to the San Diego area, where Ambrose was residing during the week, while he was doing the 7 to midnight Sunday night show at KRLA. They say Ambrose actually drove up from San Diego Sunday afternoon to do the show and then at midnight drove back.

Because of Ambrose's ties to the San Diego area, and wanting also to break into television in the San Diego area at that time, Ambrose did not stay long at KRLA and was recently doing weather on San Diego television as "Captain Mike" Ambrose. But, for at least several months, Ambrose would be the lone weekender at KRLA and did a good show. Ambrose had a deep, resonant voice, and would certainly have been a good addition to the KRLA lineup had he been given the opportunity and wanted to stay in Los Angeles.

The next major change at KRLA would occur as Cox would finally finish what he had set out to do in February, and that is to return KRLA to the traditional three-hour shows, 6 to 9, 9 to Noon, etc. To do this, Doug Cox would trim the afternoon show from 3 to 7 p.m. to 3 to 6 p.m., and shorten the 7 to midnight shift to 9 to midnight, creating a new time slot from 6 to 9 p.m. To fill this time slot, Cox moved Russ O'Hara out of the morning show, where he was not a strong morning man, and move O'Hara into the newly creating 6 to 9 p.m. show. This would give O'Hara an opportunity, it was said at the time, to get into some heavier music, and O'Hara's style was much better suited to an evening audience.

With O'Hara out as morning man, Cox decided to make a change in the morning show. Instead of someone with a heavier, down personality, he would get someone with a brighter, more upbeat tone. Still the best one for this time would have been Bob Dayton, but Dayton would now be in the trimmed 3 to 6 p.m. show (the same time he was featured at KBLA in June 1967 right before joining KRLA), and besides Cox wanted a younger sound in that time spot rather than move in a veteran voice to Los Angeles listeners, such as Dayton or Foster.

Instead, Cox brought in from San Francisco's KFRC, RKO's "BIG 610," a personality who was tired of the Bill Drake scene from spending five years under Drake's rule, Jay Stevens. The story of Jay Stevens before coming to KRLA is an interesting one which we'll discuss in this part of our story.

Steve Janovick was a native of Orange County, graduating from Anaheim Union High School and first surfacing in Southern California at KFXX in San Bernardino under the name "Steve Jay," as using his real name Janovick was too ethnic sounding to be accepted at this time in radio circles. When Bill Drake took over the programming at KGB San Diego from the corner of 52nd at Kalmia, with that one big tower soaring highly above the residential neighborhood, Jay became the original afternoon drive-time personality at KGB where he did an excellent job from 4 to 8 p.m. before being switched with soon-to-be "Eleven-Ten Man" Johnny Hayes who had been midnight to 6 under Drake's leadership.

Jay was a big star in San Diego, and "The Steve Jay Show" was one of KGB's best. However San Diego was still a small market for Jay, and besides, Bill Drake had other plans for this "Polish kid from Anaheim." Bill Drake transferred Steve Jay up to KFRC in San Francisco where he would assume the 3 to 6 p.m. afternoon shift from the Bay Area leader, as KFRC was number one in San Francisco at that time in the Fall of 1966.

However there was one problem with bringing Steve Jay to KFRC. It was his name. You see, there already was a Steve O'Shea on KFRC from 6 to 9 p.m. Drake thought that having a "Steve Jay" on from 3 to 6 right before a "Steve O'Shea" would be too confusing for the listeners. The decision was made and Steve Janovick, now known as Steve Jay, would have to give up his name for something else.

What they decided to do at KFRC is to simply switch the name around. Instead of "Steve Jay," Janovick would now be called "Jay Stevens." This was hard for Jay because he had already developed a following under the name "Steve Jay," and besides, "Steve Jay" was closer to his own name. Everyone knew him as "Steve."

But at KFRC Janovick became "Jay Stevens," and when Jay left San Francisco to join KRLA as the new morning man, the name "Jay Stevens" would stay with him as he had tired of changing his name and thought that "Jay Stevens" had more longevity and a lasting quality to it and less "TOP 40" sounding as "Steve Jay" did. Stevens (we will now refer to him under that name) did his first show on KRLA in June 1969 as a relief personality for Rebel Foster 9 to Noon for a day or so, but when Foster returned, Jay Stevens was made the new morning man at KRLA, and the lineup was complete and back to its traditional three-hour shifts and the 6-hour all-nighter.

Stevens was a "warm, friendly voice," as Mike Wagner, 1989 KRLA P.D. described him, and was pleasant and bright sounding but wasn't a comedic or "strong" morning individualist along the lines of Hudson, Hull or Williams. Again the strong man at the station was Bob Dayton, and Stevens would have been a good afternoon drive. But Stevens was given the morning drive show where he lasted for almost two years, and at this time in KRLA's history, Stevens had the modified "boss jock" sound that Cox wanted. The only humor that Stevens used was a Harvey-like imaginary animal companion he called "Moby Duck."

One more personality would be added now to KRLA to make this completed Doug Cox lineup, the three-hour shifts all restored complete, and that is a new weekend to take the place of Mike Ambrose who by now had left KRLA. For this weekend shift, KRLA brought in Gary Marshall, who had a very pleasant, sincere personality. Marshall's talents lay more in production than as a strong air personality, even though Marshall was popular as the morning man at KFXM San Bernardino in the mid-sixties as "the Morning Marshall" at the Inland station.

Marshall would be signed to do weekends, relief, and some production work. However, one memorable occurrence occurred at KRLA in the Summer of 1969 shortly after Marshall joined. KRLA had a show on the Sunday lineup called "Heaven Is In Your Mind," named after the hit record by Three Dog Night, a group incidentally run by KRLA's Rebel Foster.

This program, "Heaven Is In Your Mind," would feature pop music, but between the records there would be rather hip-spiritual comments or poems read by Marshall that would give the show a sort of hip-Christian edge without becoming too dogmatic. In an era of underground music and the counterculture, it was refreshing to hear "Heaven Is In Your Mind," a show with a bright positive outlook. This was Marshall's brightest on-the-air moment at KRLA, and Marshall should be commended for handling this show real well that summer.

So KRLA had its full lineup in place this Summer of 1969 with Stevens 6 to 9, Foster 9 to Noon, Darin Noon to 3, Dayton 3 to 6, O'Hara 6 to 9, Rabbit 9 to midnight, Hayes midnight to 6 and Marshall on the weekends. Two other events in KRLA's history in 1969 need to be discussed at this time in our story.

As said many times before in this book, one of the best ways that KRLA kept in touch with its listeners was through printed weekly record surveys. These had been discontinued when the KRLA Beat included them in 1965, but when the last Beat rolled off the presses in 1968, and when Studio City Advertising stopped the KRLA "most requested" list in its folders in 1967, the last KRLA survey did too.

But under the new Music Power format of KRLA, KRLA once again brought back weekly survey folders. The first one was on pink paper with red ink and had the "star" of Music Power '69, Jimmy Rabbit, on the cover in a graphic drawing-cartoon, and subsequent weeks featured O'Hara, Foster and Darin in that order.

The next issue featured Bob Dayton. The Bob Dayton issue is the big collector's item, as there was only one week with Dayton's face on it. Dayton did not like his picture, even though it was a very good likeness of him. So after one week with Dayton's picture on it, there was never another Dayton issue.

The folders were called Music Power Playlists, and the covers featured rotating KRLA "Eleven-Ten Men", where on the back an advertisement was usually placed. The first surveys on the inside were just typed out with a standard typewriter, but as the weeks developed better, graphics were used on the inside. KRLA did not really equally use all the "Eleven-Ten Men" on the cover but it seemed the same faces were used over and over. There might have been close to a dozen Russ O'Hara's, yet the three strongest men at the station, Foster and Hayes, were used very rarely and, as said before, Dayton only once.

Casey Kasem never was featured, except we were told a picture of him was made, but Kasem had left before it ever came out. So there was never a Kasem issue. Gary Marshall, or Mike Ambrose before, never were pictured either.

So the finished Doug Cox lineup was in place by the Summer of 1969, but by September the winds of change from Princess Blue Sky had blown down again over the six big towers alongside the Pomona Freeway. As summer turned to fall, Doug Cox made one last program move before he would exit the station as program director before the end of the year.

As said before, KRLA had offered an excellent mix of current hits, some past hits ("KRLA Golden Touch") and album tracks ("KRLA Long Plays"). However, by the end of the summer, that format was abandoned to straight TOP 40, not only on the 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. shows, but now both Jimmy Rabbit and Johnny Hayes had now been forced to give up their blend of longer album cuts and underground selections in favor of mainstream TOP 40, playing such popular selections at the time as Dionne Warwick's "Odds and Ends."

Not only did KRLA go straight TOP 40 at this time, but a programming change would be made by Doug Cox in September that resulted in moving the strongest personality at the station into a low visibility shift, out of drive time. In September 1969, the senior man at KRLA, Rebel Foster, left the lineup. Foster already had been heavily involved with producing Three Dog Night and Steppenwolf, and so at this time Foster left the 9 to Noon shift.

After Foster left that shift where Cox had placed Foster last January, Cox moved Bob Dayton, certainly the best personality in the entire lineup, out of his afternoon drive time show, where he had been since Summer 1968, and moved

Dayton into the 9 to Noon shift. As we have said before, Dayton was clearly the strongest man in the lineup and should have been the morning man from 6 to 9 a.m., based on all logic, but Cox felt that Dayton being the "oldest" on the lineup (he was 36), would be better suited in a housewife slot. As soon as Dayton was moved into those hours, Dayton severely cut back the humor, no longer closed his show with his trademark,

"I --- gotta go now! Good-bye world" to just

"Have a nice day!"

It was very obvious that Bob Dayton was unhappy in those hours and you could see Dayton was now doing the show with the brakes on, clearly something that shouldn't happen. If anything, Dayton should have been allowed "free reign." Dayton sounded uncomfortable for the first time at Eleven-Ten.

Replacing Dayton in the afternoon 3 to 6 p.m. was Lee Duncan. Lee Duncan, according to Johnnie Darin, had some good production skills, but as an air talent Duncan was not very strong. His style was that of a low key, pseudo-hip ultra cool demeanor that might have been ok on, say, an all night shift or even on FM at a real underground station. KRLA tried to promote Duncan by having ads in the Los Angeles Times "Duncan cooks with Music," but Duncan was not a strong air talent and the main reason besides being strong in production, that Cox signed Duncan into those particular hours, is he had been doing afternoon drive previously at KDAY. Duncan used no humor, had the ultra cool-hip style and was not strong in those important drive-time hours.

During the Fall of 1969, during Doug Cox's final days as P.D., an interesting experiment was programmed on Eleven-Ten where on Sunday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., all the "Eleven-Ten Men" would be heard (with the exception of Johnny Hayes) in 90-minute blocks (9:00-10:30, 10:30-12:00, 12:00-1:30, 1:30-3:00, 3:00-4:30 and 4:30 to 6:00) right before the "Pop Chronicles" show and "Heaven Is In Your Mind."

This was a neat idea if it had been live, but to get a personality to come down on a Sunday for an hour and a half wouldn't be practical, even though it would sound better, so for that reason this programming was recorded. But the neat thing about this is that you could hear all of the "Eleven-Ten Men" in hours that were different from their regular shifts, and this actually "worked" as some of them actually sounded better in unfamiliar parts of the day. Hearing Jimmy Rabbit, for example, on a bright Sunday afternoon while taking a paddle boat out on Legg Lake was quite a treat! (Or Jay Stevens in the afternoon, too!)

However, this experiment did not last too long, but it was really the only time in the then-recent history of KRLA where automation actually sounded not bad for the reasons given above. It was an experiment, but because it sounded good, we've saluted it here.

Shortly after Duncan was signed as 3 to 6 p.m. afternoon personality, it was announced that Doug Cox had been replaced as program director by Johnnie Darin, and that "the Darinization of Eleven-Ten" was about to take place. However, Darin could see that KRLA had a big problem in the afternoon shift. Bob Dayton was quite popular in those hours before, but due to the fact that Cox wanted KRLA to have a younger, hip image, Dayton was exiled to mid-mornings and the ratings for the afternoon drive plummeted. Duncan was not a strong voice in those hours.

So as Johnnie Darin assumed the program director chair, several important decisions had to be made. What to do about the afternoon shift and how else to fine-tune the station. Almost immediately after Darin took over the P.D.'s chair, the KRLA answering machine (681-TAPE), where listeners could become "The Communication Generation" and "get it said" to state their views on a wide array of hot topics such as the 18 year vote or the draft, Darin instead emphasized the number by having it all digital from 681-TAPE to 681-8273. That seemed highly detailed but Darin had a good ear and eye for detail and wanted to make KRLA even better than the Cox era.

But the biggest problem confronting Darin was the afternoon drive. Darin knew that even though Duncan was good in production, he would have to be replaced by someone. Move Bob Dayton back? No, KRLA did need maybe a fresher sound in those hours. After all, 1970 was almost here, a new decade. Take Johnny Hayes out of the all-night and move him to afternoon drive? No.

Darin knew that the biggest competition for KRLA in those 3 to 6 p.m. hours was Don Steele at KHJ. He was the biggest voice in town and virtually ruled the 3 to 6 p.m. hours. Dayton was good against Steele, but Steele was Number 1 by far and had been for the past three years. Even when Steele left KHJ in a contract dispute that summer and replaced briefly by "Humble Harv" 2 to 6 p.m. on KHJ, Steele was quickly brought back and continued his Number One style and fast paced energy.

That was it. Steele had energy! He was always "up" and a real screamer! KRLA needed to meet fire with fire and have someone to go toe to toe with Steele and maybe even beat Steele in the popularity ratings. Darin felt it could be done. Darin knew who could do it.

Darin looked up to Princess Blue Sky high above the mighty towers in South El Monte, and knew at this time only intervention by a saint could be the answer to KRLA's afternoon worries. And sometimes a prayer to the right saint can have a happy answer.

The next "room" of the dream-house is about to open.



MAGIC MORNING MOUTH. JAY STEVENS—6:00 TO 9:00 AM ON KRLA



**Bob  
Dayton**



**Johnnie  
Darin**





- 1A Russ O'Hara 6-9 p.m.  
1B Bob Dayton 9-12 Mid.  
2A Don Burns Noon-3:00 p.m.  
2B Dick Sainte 3-6 p.m.  
3A Jay Stevens 6-9 a.m.  
3B Johnnie Darin 9-12 noon  
4A Johnny Hayes Midnight-6 a.m.  
4B Gary Marshall Sunday 6:30-8:30 a.m. 9-12 noon



**KRLA PRESENTS**

**DICK  
SAINTE**



**KRLA-1110  
3 to 6 PM**

**CHAPTER 8**

**DICK SAINTE**  
Afternoons 3:00 till 6:00 on KRLA

**"WHEN THE SAINTE COMES MARCHING IN"**



**JIMMY  
RABBIT**

The Darinization of Eleven-Ten took place immediately when Johnnie Darin took over the program director chair from Doug Cox in late 1969. Darin, being a former "Filbert E. Yarborough" Boss Jock, was comfortable with the mainstream TOP 40 format and decided to keep that rather than move back into more LP cut sounds as Cox had leaned toward. However, as we stated in the last chapter, Darin was faced with a weak afternoon man and needed to do something to build up that important time slot.

Jay Stevens, being a friend of Darin's, was retained in the important drive time, even though Stevens was not a comedic or "strong" morning man in the traditional sense, but as 1989 KRLA P.D. Mike Wagner has said, "a warm, friendly voice." To do afternoons, Johnnie Darin knew he had to have someone with all the energy and vitality that Don Steele had over at KHJ. It was rumored that Steele himself was asked to come to KRLA but declined, of course, KHJ being still the leader in Los Angeles. Johnnie Darin had someone in mind. A Sainte.

In December 1969, Johnnie Darin brought down from KFRC in San Francisco, Dick Sainte, who Darin had worked with at KGB San Diego in 1968, and knew that if Sainte wasn't snatched by KRLA, that Sainte could probably end up at KHJ. This was an excellent decision on the part of Johnnie Darin. Where Lee Duncan was Sominex, Dick Sainte was Jolt Cola. Dick Sainte sounded very much like Don Steele. At times it was hard to tell them apart.

Besides that, Dick Sainte had an energy, a vitality, and an exciting personality and totally woke up those hours that had pretty much fallen asleep during the days of Duncan. So the Sainte marched into KRLA in December 1969 and

the 3 to 6 p.m. show instantly zoomed up to the top. In fact, each month Sainte's popularity got so high and helped the station so much in those hours, that by next Spring KRLA would get within reach of Number 1 again for the first time since 1967.

So KRLA and the Darinization of Eleven-Ten was complete to close the year, and the decade, of 1969 and the '60's, with Jay Stevens 6 to 9, Bob Dayton 9 to Noon, Johnnie Darin Noon to 3, Dick Sainte 3 to 6, Russ O'Hara 6 to 9, Jimmy Rabbit (showing signs of frustration playing just TOP 40), Johnny Hayes midnight to 6, and Gary Marshall on the weekends.

However, the year was not over with. At least not yet. Johnnie Darin in late 1969 decided to do even more to make the Darinization of Eleven-Ten sound even better. During December 1969, major construction took place in the KRLA soundbooths. Construction began during the time between Christmas and New Years to totally remodel the disc jockey booth at KRLA, with dark cork boards for soundproofing and shutters onto the glass window replacing the royal blue curtain, where the jock could close the shutters if they didn't want the fish-bowl effect.

The venerable, trustworthy old KRLA disc jockey board was also replaced after at least 10 years or more of good service. The red buttons (remember Bobby Dale's comment) would be a thing of the past, and so were turntables, as the station would in 1970 totally play "carts" from the control room via engineer and turntables were only on the side as backup, never used. Also the control room was being remodeled "on the other side of the glass," making a new booth between the control room and disc jockey booth that could be used for production or newscasts. So the booth of KRLA was going to be in 1970 under the Darinization of Eleven-Ten totally redone, the control room would be remodeled with cart racks along the back wall for hundreds of "songs," and that new booth would be added in 1970 half way between the two.

Besides all the remodeling inside the station, above the new door to the KRLA lobby was a rectangle KRLA lighted sign that would resemble a stained glass window. The psychedelic design of KRLA on this sign was quite impressive. However, when the station decided to "lease out" some of its offices in a cost-cutting move to other businesses, unfortunately the sign was removed. We were unable to locate the whereabouts of this great sign, but it was quite memorable and looked extremely impressive.

Even the lobby of KRLA in Pasadena would be remodeled during this time to where a giant "sun" face was built into the KRLA lobby floor, where this same "sun" face ("man in the sun") would be used on KRLA letterheads and promotional materials in the coming year ahead. But one of the biggest changes, as just discussed, would be for KRLA to no longer play records. No more "disc-jockeys" after the first of 1970.

In fact the disc-jockeys wouldn't even be playing the records, now on "carts," as this would all be done from the "other side of the glass." Construction began on this major remodeling during the last few days of 1969 and during the programming you could actually hear the hammers of the workman over the air as the shows had to go on and so did the construction.

But besides the physical changes that took place between Christmas and New Years, KRLA and Johnnie Darin, along with his friend Jay Stevens at the station, would give the listeners a real treat for the end of 1969, and for that matter, the decade. Darin's idea, which took place the day after Christmas on December 26, was to turn the station back to the first four years of the decade and salute the years 1960, 1961, 1962 and 1963 by playing all the top songs from those years along with special "old sounding" KRLA jingles that would be recorded just for this special programming. Even some of the 1961 era KRLA jingles would be dusted off and played during this time.

Each of the "Eleven-Ten Men" would be taking on an early '60's persona such as "The Big R" for Jimmy Rabbit, "The Wild Irishman" for Russ O'Hara, "The Daring Johnnie Darin" for Darin, and "The Jaybird" for Jay Stevens among the others. The listeners would be invited to call in and reminisce about the early 1960's and vote for the most "Rotten Record of the Decade."

In preparing the research for this book, we are pleased to say that Johnnie Darin returned our call, and we talked with him about this memorable programming that Darin initiated. Darin told us that he remembered the winner of that contest to be "She Can't Find Her Keys" by Paul Peterson.

But besides playing the early '60's hits, it was virtually pleasant to hear the "Eleven-Ten Men" talk about their own youth during that period, for example, Stevens reminiscing about Anaheim Union High School and Johnnie Darin making references to his "wild youth" and early loves. This humanized the disc jockeys in a way we hadn't

heard before, as it was clear that they truly enjoyed this programming a lot. Jay Stevens even described over the air some of the old KRLA surveys that were printed in 1960 and described some of the "Eleven-Ten Men" on the covers.

But the greatest moments of this week from December 26 to December 31 took place on New Year's eve. Let us set the stage. We, as the year before, were on the parade route to see the Rose Parade the next morning in Pasadena. As always, the little transistor was there. This year no stowing away in church lounges but camped out right on Orange Grove with a good friend and two girls.

Right before midnight at about 11:50 p.m., the last few moments of the decade of the '60's, the slow, soft, sentimental sounds of "Auld Lang Syne" were heard on KRLA. And then an announcer's voice was heard saying farewell to the 60's and to salute all the voices of the immortal "Eleven-Ten Men" who ever served on KRLA. They counted them down in order. One by one. Alphabetically.

Perry Allen. Mike Ambrose. Dick Biondi. Roger Christian. Bob Cole. One by one until they got to the final names. Rhett Walker. Jim Washburne. William F. Williams and then the final name, Jim Wood.

This almost brought a tear to our eye as the memories of so much growing up from 10 years old to a teenager camped out on Orange Grove with two girls, now grown up at 19, and how those names were such a soundtrack to our life, and so many of us baby boomers in the Land of Eleven-Ten, under Princess Blue Sky and those powerful six towers from South El Monte. With the last name of Jim Wood, the decade of the Sixties was over, and KRLA was now into 1970.

KRLA did not know what the 1970's would look like. If KRLA only knew that by September 1971 KRLA would be virtually finished in Los Angeles radio as a major influential force, the celebration now might be less joyous. But we are not allowed to see into the future for just that reason. If we knew the future ahead of time, we wouldn't be able to build for that future and have those great expectations. So KRLA entered 1970 with a salute to all the "Eleven-Ten Men" over the years 1960 to 1969, and the Sixties were over. But the spirit of the '60's and KRLA would never die.

1970 and the new decade on KRLA began with the return of a familiar voice to KRLA over the years, and that was Rebel Foster. Foster returned to KRLA very briefly in January 1970 to do some weekend shifts, but this was very short-lived, as Foster would not return to KRLA until the Summer of 1971 during a very interim period when the "shadow over the pasture" began to fall and prevent the sunrays from Princess Blue Sky to fall down below to the grassy pastures of KRLA in South El Monte.

However, in early February 1970, Johnnie Darin would slightly fine-tune the program schedule in order to give him more time to carry out his P.D. chores. Most program directors at that time and even today prefer the mid-morning time slot, usually 9 to Noon. This gives them the entire rest of the afternoon to do their other duties after lunch.

Johnnie Darin had been very successful in his Noon to 3 show but decided at that time to swap time slots with Bob Dayton, moving Dayton to Noon to 3 and Darin 9 to Noon. Dayton, who absolutely hated to get up so early to do a 9 to noon show, immediately agreed, even though Dayton did not like having to be "exiled" still to the daytime hours when he already had been in the second most important shift 3 to 6 p.m. the two years before. But KRLA already had a very strong 3 to 6 p.m. man with Dick Sainte, and again Dayton being almost 37 and one of the "oldest" in the lineup was thought to attract the older housewife listeners who remembered him from way, way, way back in June 1967. That's ancient history in TOP 40 radio. Three years is forever.

So the switch was made, and KRLA now featured Jay Stevens 6 to 9, Johnnie Darin 9 to Noon, Bob Dayton Noon to 3, Dick Sainte 3 to 6, Russ O'Hara 6 to 9, Jimmy Rabbit 9 to Midnight, Johnny Hayes Midnight to 6, and Gary Marshall on the weekends.

However, later that month on Friday, February 27, this would be the last show from Jimmy Rabbit on KRLA. That date was approximately one year from the time Rabbit joined KRLA in February 1969 as a major draw to Music Power '69, but Rabbit had grown very disillusioned with being a TOP 40 disc jockey playing just the hits, when Rabbit felt he could offer so much more to radio. Even though he did deviate from the format at times, he still was very restricted and no longer enjoyed what he was doing.

So Jimmy Rabbit, who was truly a new breed of disc-jockey and was a good blending of AM and FM and some country thrown in, exited KRLA in February 1970. The direction that Johnnie Darin was taking KRLA into during early 1970 was that of a slick, more polished version of what it had been last year in 1969 without the "long plays" (LP cuts) and was pretty much mainstream TOP 40. The jingles that Cox had brought in in March 1969 were replaced by both "fast" and "slow" KRLA jingles where the "L" was no longer emphasized, and more instrumental background to them.

The station was continuing to put out its Music Power playlists in early 1970, but toward the end of their run, the same three or four faces kept repeating over and over. There was never a graphic cut made for Rabbit's 9 to midnight replacement, who we will meet shortly; Bob Dayton's hadn't been used in almost a year. There had never been a graphic cut made of Dick Sainte or even his predecessor, Lee Duncan, and the weekender Gary Marshall, who by now was heard on Sunday mornings from 6:30-8:30 and then back from 9 to noon after religious programming, never had his face on the survey folders either.

So with Rabbit's departure, it was now time to look for a replacement, and the direction that Darin reached to was to a popular North-Western air talent who was quite popular in that region, especially Seattle and Portland, but unknown to Los Angeles listeners, Don Burns. So Don Burns was signed to be the new 9 to midnight personality and started his night-time show approximately March 1st. However, after over a year of "progressive" type sounds in the 9 to midnight shift since Odyssey a year before, and because it was clear that Burns was an up and comer, it was decided very soon into Burns 9 to midnight show that Burns would have been better suited in a different shift.

What Darin did next was to increase KRLA's daytime audience by creating a strong daytime block of two mature sounding housewife-type talents and making KRLA a hair away from Number 1 in the ratings during the daytime hours for the first time since 1967. What Darin did was to adjust the KRLA schedule to make better use of Burns' potential, since Burns did not seem that comfortable in the 9 to Midnight show, and had the "MAGIC," good looks, deep, resonant voice that would be a natural to attract 1970 "everyday housewives" with their own dreams.

What Darin did is as follows, and the reasons behind it. Bob Dayton didn't like being exiled to the daytime hours after having been afternoon drive for many months and very successful in those hours. Dayton had a legendary personal night-life reputation that would cause him to not like getting up early enough to do a Noon to 3 show.

Second, when Dayton was in this Noon to 3 show, his humor especially in a time slot geared to housewives had to be restrained because of possibly offending a sharp, liberated housewife who might take offense to Dayton's somewhat chauvinistic and suggestive double entendres.

One of Dayton's best lines was when he read a commercial for a store opening where they would give out prizes, whereas Dayton said,

"And they'll be prizes galore! (he paused) Prizes Galore! I knew her sister!"

Fans of the James Bond "Goldfinger" movie were sure to understand. It was delightful to be old enough and mature enough to be able to understand Big Bad Bob Dayton's double entendres.

So at the request of Bob Dayton to be moved out of the Noon to 3 show, Johnnie Darin moved Don Burns into the Noon to 3 shift, and Bob Dayton who had worked virtually every shift over the past 2-1/2 years was put into the 9 to midnight show where surprisingly his show didn't get as risqué as we thought it would. By Dayton's standards it was pretty tame.

During the time Bob Dayton had the 9 to midnight show, Russ O'Hara who had been heard from 6 to 9 preceding Dayton gave Bob Dayton the nickname "Big Bad Bob Dayton", which truly fit the Dayton persona. Dayton seemed more loose and comfortable in the late evening hours, and when he got off at midnight there was still several hours left for night-time adventure Dayton-style. So the Spring of 1970 KRLA had solidified its lineup, was able to replace Rabbit with a more homogeneous lineup, and had a good, smooth sound.

Two side notes need to be mentioned at this time. First, KRLA for the past year had been moving into the area of co-sponsoring concerts. Russ O'Hara was usually used as the KRLA MC at a lot of these concerts, and we recall at several Three Dog Night concerts, a group incidentally managed by Rebel Foster, O'Hara would open the shows, putting a big plug for KRLA which frequently advertised these concerts quite heavily on Eleven-Ten. O'Hara opening for Three Dog Night, has been preserved in vinyl on the now out-of-print Three Dog Night "Live At The Forum" album, where his comments open Side 1, Track 1.

But it was the next event in the Spring of 1970 that once again made KRLA a major force and that is the revival of a KRLA newspaper. As mentioned in Chapter 6 "Those Filbert E. Yarborough Blues," KRLA had not had a weekly newspaper since the KRLA Beat, and actually the KRLA Beat had not really been a "KRLA" paper since its early copies back in 1964, before it expanded and became syndicated.

This Spring of 1970, KRLA decided to discontinue the Music Power playlists with its two or three DJ rotation and instead replaced the survey with a newsprint, folded paper called Gathers No Moss which obviously took its name from

the Rolling Stone. This seemed almost full circle because it was the KRLA Beat that was the original rock newspaper ever, appearing three years before the Rolling Stone in October 1964.

These Gathers No Moss newspapers were quite well done and unfortunately were not widely distributed and therefore not too many listeners were familiar with them. The first issue had a full-page fold-out in the middle, of all things, a fetus!

And some of the other ones that were memorable were psychedelic drawings of Bob Dayton, Don Burns, Dick Sainte, and some other copies had "parts" or jigsaw-type pieces of facial photographs of Johnnie Darin, Jay Stevens and Russ O'Hara. There was even a psychedelic drawing of Johnny Hayes in a full fold-out, and again these were a delight. In fact they were quite artistic, certainly creative and had a certain progressive look to them, certainly better than the KHJ Boss 30's. On the back of these papers was, of course, the KRLA survey.

An interesting side note about Gathers No Moss and that is the photo used of Bob Dayton was actually the one taken from the Fall of 1967 in the upstairs production booth of KRLA, almost three years old, as the latest Dayton one had been 86'ed by Dayton himself as he felt it just didn't look like him. Darin, too, was shown for the first time without his pompadour, and clean shaven, sans goatee and moustache. Darin was always a very handsome guy and the new pictures were quite complimentary.

So Gathers No Moss was available weekly all summer, but only for a few months, before it suddenly stopped and KRLA again had a period of no weekly printed record surveys or weekly giveaways. The Gathers No Moss issues were certainly one of the best KRLA promotions in many years and deserved a much longer run.

Some of the more notable "center-folds" of the Gathers No Moss issues were the psychedelic drawing of a giant mouth with an excellent photo of Jay Stevens in the center of the "mouth" with the heading "Magic Morning Mouth Jay Stevens." The one of Darin was equally good with "Mother's Little Helper Johnnie Darin." One of the better issues of Gathers No Moss showed small square pictures of all the KRLA disc-jockeys, very good head and shoulders shots, and for the first time Don Burns, Gary Marshall, and Dick Sainte were shown.

This certainly was an improvement over the Music Power playlists which did not have any new talent shown. The picture of Dick Sainte was the one taken for KFRC San Francisco, where Sainte had been right before going to KRLA. KFRC was another Drake RKO radio formatted station where Sainte had left, feeling those Filbert E. Yarborough blues too. So the Summer of 1970 had a solid lineup and the station had sounded tight, bright and excellent.

The next major change that occurred to KRLA in 1970 was the sad exit of Bob Dayton, truly one of KRLA's best. As stated before, Dayton had been virtually bounced all over the KRLA schedule since he joined the station way back on June 18, 1967 in a different era of Eleven-Ten. One Dayton aircheck from this period actually referred to Bob as "Bouncin' Bob Dayton," as he had been in at least five different shifts by this time.

But in the late Summer of 1970, Bob Dayton would be the next casualty on KRLA because of three main reasons. First, Dayton was chronologically the "oldest" jock at the station even though in 1970 he was only 37. But in a station that had always gone for relatively youthful personalities, Dayton was the senior man and did not have that youthful image that, say, a Don Burns or a Russ O'Hara would have. An image of a station is quite important and the image of, say, a Bob Dayton emceeding a KRLA rock concert at the Forum in 1970 would not have been as appropriate a choice as, say, O'Hara or Burns.

Secondly, Dayton had been moved so much around the KRLA lineup that by late Summer of 1970 it was difficult to retain the same audience used to hearing the same person at the same time, which worked so well for Morgan and Steele at KHJ in the early days of Boss Radio. This problem still affects programming today, especially television shows that never have a chance to find an audience because of being bounced all over the program schedule.

And third, Dayton was a New Yorker, a Long Islander, and his heart was always in New York. As stated in an earlier chapter, Bob Dayton had always wanted to be the next Dan Ingram, a major New York radio star, and when he left New York radio after a one-liner about Hiroshima, Dayton's momentum to be a major New York radio star got detoured.

So Dayton left KRLA in the Fall of 1970 for destination New York. Dayton never really was used to his full potential at KRLA at this time in its history, especially as a would-be strong morning man, and had this been done when the opportunity first occurred in August 1967, the story of KRLA might have had different twists.

What Johnnie Darin decided to do at KRLA upon Dayton's departure was to move evening jock Russ O'Hara from 6 to 9 p.m. to 9 to midnight, and bring in for 6 to 9 a youthful KHJ part-timer Terry Ingstad who had the Bartell-

originated air name "Shadoe," Shadoe Stevens. The name "Shadoe" itself has an interesting history that will be explored at this point.

Lee Bartell was the father of a chain of very successful McFadden-Bartell stations such as KCBQ, Santee, KYA San Francisco, KRUX Phoenix, and WAKE, in Georgia. Bartell had the habit of "owning names," where he would have a "Johnny Holiday" at several of his stations, and a "Scotty Day" at maybe two or three also. In fact at one time in the late 1950's there was a Scotty Day in San Francisco at KYA and just miles south down the coast in San Diego's Santee was Scotty Day at KCBQ. Two different men but the same name "owned" by Bartell.

The name "Shadoe" first appeared at Bartell's KCBQ from Mission Gorge Road in Santee, where Jerry Swearingen has given the name "Shadoe Jackson" in the late 1950's. The interesting thing about Jackson is that when he left the station in a major shakeup in early 1965, we were told that the audience still had a "Shadoe Jackson" because another similar sounding voice was brought in to do his shift and since it was a Bartell name, it could be "transferred."

So the name "Shadoe" originated with Bartell and by 1970 had floated down to other talents in non-Bartell stations. By that time the "Shadoe" name was always a successful handle for jocks in afternoon drive and evening/night hours.

Terry Ingstad had been known as Shadoe Stevens on 93/KHJ but did not join the starting lineup there, as he had been designated to just weekends and relief. So when the opportunity arose from the exiting Bob Dayton, Darin, impressed by Stevens, signed Shadoe Stevens to the 6 to 9 p.m. shift.

The next change that occurred at KRLA in late 1970 was the exit of weekender Gary Marshall. Marshall had been involved in Orange County radio and also during the '70's was involved in college instruction in O.C. and so Marshall exited KRLA in the Fall of 1970. Marshall had never really been "promoted" to the listeners at KRLA and except for the one issue in Summer 1970 of Gathers No Moss, Marshall was quite invisible to the KRLA audience.

The replacement for Gary Marshall was a personality who was really a big frog in a little pond, as probably the best air talent at KEZY, Placentia, and that was Jim Meeker. Meeker joined KRLA in the Fall of 1970 and worked extensively in station productions, but it wasn't until Spring 1971 that Meeker had his picture proudly displayed on the KRLA Music In Los Angeles folders that we will discuss later in this chapter.

Meeker had been the afternoon drive at KEZY, and it was clear that Meeker was headed for bigger days on KRLA after he joined. Meeker's Sunday night show was from 5-10 p.m., and the energetic, high dynamic sound of Meeker was quite a change from the softer sound of Gary Marshall. It looked like it was just a question of time before Meeker would join the starting lineup in KRLA's future. Everything seemed that way in Fall 1970 as KRLA was a strong, and getting stronger, TOP 40 force in Los Angeles.

In November 1970 KRLA initiated new graphics in its newspaper publicity for the first time in years, and that is the brilliant, excellent designed photo-drawings of the KRLA Eleven-Ten Men head shots surrounded by comic book pop-art style stars and graphics. "KRLA Presents (name of DJ)" with stars coming from the "KRLA Presents" and the disc jockeys' name in Warhol/Max Pop-Art style.

These new graphic promos had an exciting look, and we can recall back in 1970 evenings rushing out to buy the "Preview" edition (now discontinued) of the Los Angeles Times each evening just to get the picture of the rotating disc jockey each day or so. They certainly were a neat way to make recognizable KRLA's personality lineup to the public and were some of KRLA's most exciting graphics in its 30-year history. These ran through November and early December 1970, and the only real disappointment was using a three-year old picture of Johnny Hayes for Hayes' midnight to 6 graphic block rather than a more recent one. Hayes' appearance had changed since 1967 and especially in those years of "late '60's/early '70's" where everything moved faster than normal.

The child of these graphics became the return of KRLA weekly playlists where they were printed with bright-colored paper, hot pink, hot orange, fluorescent yellow, and so on and featured the same graphic photo-drawing of the KRLA "Eleven-Ten Men" in rotation each week. However, when these started in January 1971, the only "graphic" not to make it on the survey cover was Johnny Hayes, who was fired from KRLA in February 1971, which we will discuss coming up in this chapter as we enter that year. So there never was a "Hayes issue." These were a definite improvement over the old Music Power playlists and were a delight to see in the stores every week. These were called "The Music In Los Angeles" folders.

The only disappointing thing to mention about these survey folders was when new talent joined KRLA the following year in 1971, instead of using new graphic photo-drawings, it simply used mug shot style photos, and these did not

look nearly as good as the earlier ones using the November 1970 graphic photo-drawings of the "Eleven-Ten Men" from the newspaper artwork.

However seeing the actual photograph for the first time, that the graphic photo-drawing was based on, was truly a delight, especially those of such heavyweights as Johnnie Darin, Don Burns and Russ O'Hara and are certainly KRLA collectibles today. One such survey was truly a collectible in that it pictured the handsome face of Johnnie Darin but featuring the name and time of Don Burns! So these weekly surveys would later feature "photos" of the jocks and the ones that used a real professional head and shoulders shot looked good, but the later "candid camera" type mug shots were not as slick and lost their quality.

These survey folders would be issued every week until July 1971 when they were dropped entirely due to the soon to fall "shadow over the pasture." But that's getting ahead of our story.

Also at this time in 1970 "The Credibility Gap" irreverent news satires were now called "The Communication Gap" or "The Information Gap" or whatever key word was placed before "Gap," "The \_\_\_\_\_ Gap" depending on the news story, and the KRLA news was now straight news only. It was sad to see "The Credibility Gap" go but KRLA wanted straight news once again, and the new "Gap" sounded polished, professional, and reminiscent of the old days in 1966 and 1967 when KRLA news was award-winning. Leo McElroy was the force behind this new direction in the news. Another newsman of merit who had joined KRLA by this time was Paul Anderson who had the trademark,

"This (pause ... long pause!! ... pause) is Paul Oscar Anderson."

Anderson was one of the best, with this style newscast, somewhat on the "hammy" side, but was very professional.

So KRLA ended the year 1970 with Jay Stevens 6 to 9, Darin 9 to noon, Burns noon to 3, Sainte 3 to 6, "The Shadeo" 6 to 9, O'Hara 9 to midnight, and now the last remaining link to the days of "The Station of the Stars"; Johnny Hayes all night midnight to 6. 1970 was the year that KRLA had major remodeling, fresh new studios, all music now played by the control room engineer, solidified its lineup, and produced the brilliant Gathers No Moss, probably the most successful project of 1970 for KRLA. Another year was about to begin, and KRLA would now enter 1971 with one of the best programming decisions to ever grace KRLA's airwaves.

That decision brings us to February 1971. As we have said so many times in this book, a successful radio station should always have the strongest man in the morning and the second strongest in the afternoon. Toward the end of 1970 the two strongest personalities at KRLA were Dick Sainte and Johnnie Darin. By this logic it would have seemed appropriate to make Sainte the morning man and Darin afternoon drive, but this was discarded on two counts.

First Darin was P.D. and liked the mid-morning show, plus the strong block of Darin/Burns during the housewife hours was very successful. Secondly, Dick Sainte was a very strong counterpoint to 93/KHJ's Don Steele and, because of this, Sainte was kept in the 3 to 6 p.m. power slot where he was a definite strong force.

As we said in the last chapter, Jay Stevens had been the morning man for almost two years. But Jay Stevens told us recently during the research for this book that he never really felt he was a morning man type and felt better suited to say, afternoon drive such as the days of "Steve Jay" in San Diego, and in San Francisco. The only real humor that Stevens used in the mornings was an imaginary Harvey-like character, "Moby Duck." Stevens was always, as Mike Wagner, 1989 KRLA P.D. called him, "a warm, friendly voice." But not a strong morning man in the league with Dave Hull, or Emperor Hudson.

As KRLA entered 1971, Johnnie Darin was replaced as program director by Dick Sainte, and the most exciting and dynamic morning man since Dave Hull was hired by Sainte to replace Jay Stevens in the morning. Here's what Dick Sainte decided to do in February 1971.

The first thing Sainte did was fire Johnny Hayes. A few years ago in the KRLA studios in Pasadena, we showed Hayes a picture of Dick Sainte in a scrapbook from Research Archives, and Hayes sat up in his chair, pointed to Sainte's distinguishable face and said,

"That's the guy that fired me!"

Our research says that Sainte did not like Hayes' more "progressive" at that time style more than anything else and thought that Hayes in the all-night show was a weak link to KRLA's programming, as Hayes sometimes deviated from the mainstream TOP 40 format, and because of that felt that Hayes should go.

Johnny Hayes had never been heard on Los Angeles airwaves except for KRLA, and when he was terminated from KRLA, Hayes was quickly signed by KDAY on Alvarado near Silver Lake where Hayes could be heard as the new weekend man on 1580.



KDAY at that time had an "FM on AM" type format playing rather progressive underground music, and Hayes fit in to that format quite nicely. However, it was a shock not to hear Johnny Hayes on KRLA but on KDAY, a much smaller less-impact station. But Johnny Hayes on KDAY did a good job in that format, and hearing Hayes play the heavier music during daylight hours was a real treat. So we say good-bye to Johnny Hayes from KRLA in February 1971 as Hayes started anew at KDAY.

The man to take over the midnight to 6 show in clearly a demotion was the former program director, Johnnie Darin, who actually was quite good in those hours. Darin told us that management wanted to oust him from KRLA entirely but would let him stay on the lineup only in the midnight to 6 shift. Darin had been a great P.D., but for station politics with management, was given this unfortunate demotion. Darin was actually quite good in the midnight to 6 hours, and we feel did some of his better shows. Darin sounded more relaxed than he had in years, and with the pressure of programming lifted from his shoulders, Darin sounded quite happy. Darin told us he enjoyed those hours with Jim Maddox as his newsman and did some great midnight to 6 shows.

So Darin was moved out of the 9 to Noon show and now was midnight to 6. In Darin's old 9 to noon shift, Sainte brilliantly moved Don Burns who by now was quite a smooth, mature voice in mid-days, and Sainte kept a strong mid-day voice where he belonged in the 9 to noon mid-morning hours.

Replacing Burns in his solid Noon to 3 show was now Jay Stevens who again seemed more relaxed without the pressure of morning drive and developed a new sense of maturity in his new Noon to 3 hours. Gone was "Moby Duck", and instead Stevens gave a very polished show and seemed to "grow up" from the Boss Jock persona he had shed back in 1969. Stevens was actually quite good in the noon to 3 show, he sounded more mature, and housewives had a new delight on their daytime radio.

The type of person who is a classic morning man is someone who is funny, someone who is obviously multi-talented, and someone who has a spontaneity and unpredictable style that is reminiscent of the up-to-now "great" morning legends on KRLA, Dave Hull and Bob Hudson. The man brought in by Dick Sainte to be morning man is by far one of the best morning men in the history of KRLA.

As Darin had done before by looking to the Northwest for Don Burns, Sainte also reached "NW" for the new morning man at KRLA, someone who was truly delightful to listen to and one of the strongest air talents in Silver Age radio. We feel this man is one of the best sounding air personalities in the country. And that's Tom Murphy.

Even though there had been another Tom Murphy at KFMB four years earlier in 1967 (a.k.a. Bobby St. Thomas of KBLA), this Tom Murphy was actually the original Tom Murphy, one of great Irish humor and Black Irish good looks.

Tom Murphy had been a big hit at KJR, from Harbor Island in Seattle, and being brought down to Los Angeles was quite a coup. Murphy had real talent and certainly, without a doubt, the strongest man in KRLA's lineup. In fact next to Bob Hudson and Dave Hull in the entire 30 years of KRLA, Murphy was right next to them and in the top tier of morning legends.

It's hard to describe Tom Murphy's style other than somewhat irreverent, definitely hip, but sometimes a rather "smart" banter that made his show so refreshing. Murphy was a certainly the best thing to happen to KRLA since Dave Hull left in January 1969 and would probably have gone on to even bigger days as an L.A. morning radio star had it not been for the soon to fall "shadow over the pasture" that KRLA would never recover from as a major force in Los Angeles radio ever, up to the time of this publication in June 1989.

But for now in February 1971, KRLA finally had a strong replacement for Dave Hull that filled the Hullabalooer's chair. It took over two years, but KRLA finally had the strong morning man it needed and a super excellent choice for the leading player for the rest of the day.

So the Sainte had marched into the program director's chair, made some brilliant changes on KRLA in bringing Tom Murphy to the mornings and fine-tuned the KRLA lineup to be set for the Sainte's TOP 40 direction. However, the demands of P.D. were quite demanding to Dick Sainte, and so Sainte decided to give up his 3 to 6 p.m. show and just do weekends and fill-in. This was a loss to the KRLA lineup as Sainte in the afternoon drive was excellent, and the combination of Murphy in the mornings (the strongest man) and Sainte in the afternoons, the second strongest, was truly a great combination that couldn't have been better at this time in KRLA's history. But Sainte wanted to relieve the strain of afternoon drive and being in the P.D.'s chair at the same time, so in early 1971 Sainte marched out of the 3 to 6 p.m. show.

The ideal candidate at this time for the 3 to 6 p.m. show would have been Jim Meeker. Meeker had already been a very strong P.M. drive at KEZY, and he would have been a natural in that time slot. Instead, Sainte decided to move Shadoe Stevens into the important 3 to 6 p.m. shift and Russ O'Hara into Shadoe's 6 to 9 p.m. showtime, who, if you recall, had already had that shift back in the Summer of 1969 and most of 1970.

Shadoe had been one of those ultra-cool, ultra-hip Lee Duncan-type jocks that had that pseudo-hip-coolness about them that was in direct contrast to, say, Don Steele at KHJ. Shadoe had a way of putting words and phrases together in a rather hip avante-garde way, but was not a typical afternoon-drive personality along the lines of Dick Sainte or Don Steele, who were better suited to an afternoon drive show. But Shadoe was a different sort of "FM" style that used no humor, but more of a modified "boss jock" but with hipness style.

Joining the KRLA lineup in early 1971 was a real hot-shot who had really been electrifying in Santee, Lee Simms. Simms, who called himself "Lee Babi Simms" had been doing afternoon drives at KCBQ Santee in 1968 when we first heard him on Southern California airwaves.

Simms had a lot of energy but more in a "cool" fashion, rather than the ultra-hot Dick Sainte. Even Simms would have been good in the afternoon drive, but instead Lee Simms was signed 9 to midnight, and the excitement of Simms's show during those hours at times almost came close (if at least resembled) the excitement of Dick Biondi from four years earlier.

So with this lineup in place by the Sainte, it was Murphy 6 to 9, Burns 9 to Noon, Jay Stevens Noon to 3, Shadoe Stevens 3 to 6, O'Hara 6 to 9, Simms 9 to midnight and Darin midnight to 6, with Meeker and Sainte on the weekends.

The next change in the lineup occurred in the Spring when Russ O'Hara left the KRLA lineup (he would rejoin KRLA the following year) to create a vacancy for one of the more outstanding Sixties-era jocks, Dave Diamond, who was proudly placed in the "Eleven-Ten Men" lineup from 6 to 9 p.m.

Dave Diamond was first known to Los Angeles listeners as being one of the original 93/KHJ Boss Jocks in April 1965 and had the distinction of being the second voice of 93/KHJ. However, Dave Diamond left the 6 to 9 p.m. slot at the new 93/KHJ shortly after the station began "Boss Radio" and was replaced by the extremely talented Johnny Mitchell who had been known for years at San Diego's KCBQ as "Johnny Holiday," another Bartell originated name like "Shadoe."

Diamond's stay on KHJ was very short, lasting only two months, to where Diamond next surfaced high atop the Verdugo Mountains in Glendale at KBLA, along with another short-time 93/KHJ original Boss Jock and former KRLA personality, Roger Christian. Diamond had pretty much been a straight TOP 40 jock at KBLA until the strongest KBLA Super-"In"-tainer Harvey Miller ("Humble Harv") was lured away to the now powerhouse 93/KHJ, creating a vacancy in Miller's legendary 9 to midnight slot at 1500 AM.

When Dave Diamond had moved into the 9 to midnight show at KBLA, Diamond for the first time experimented with longer LP cuts and more underground type programming, which was unheard of on AM including KRLA, KHJ and KFNB. In fact Diamond was the first AM disc jockey in Los Angeles to play these new underground records for an AM audience, even before B. Mitchell Reed at KFNB.

In fact Diamond was the last voice heard at KBLA on June 16, 1967, as at midnight it became country KBBQ. Diamond's last show is an unusual show featuring country western George Jones songs, to get the audience prepared for the new KBBQ at midnight, combined with "The End" by the Doors and some heavier stuff from Love.

When Diamond gave his last show on KBLA and closed those call letters, Diamond said he would not be on the air at any other station in Los Angeles, but a few days later was picked up by KFNB, now a Westinghouse outlet, and signed to do an 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. shift right after B. Mitchell Reed from 7 to 11 p.m. and have a more progressive format of underground music in contrast to the M.O.R. "chicken rock" played at KFNB in the daytime hours. Expensive bumper stickers were printed "I Fly Diamond Mine Airways on KFNB 98." Diamond had a good hook with his last name by calling his show "The Diamond Mine" and each hour was a different "level" and so on.

So in Los Angeles radio history, Dave Diamond was one of the pioneer jocks in at-that-time underground radio and until now never had been appreciated for his contributions toward those early days of underground radio. Diamond was a good jock and a strong driven personality and would have been very well suited had he been put into the 3 to 6 p.m. shift instead of Shadoe Stevens. But instead Diamond was made 6 to 9 p.m., the same slot he had been in on 93/KHJ in April 1965.

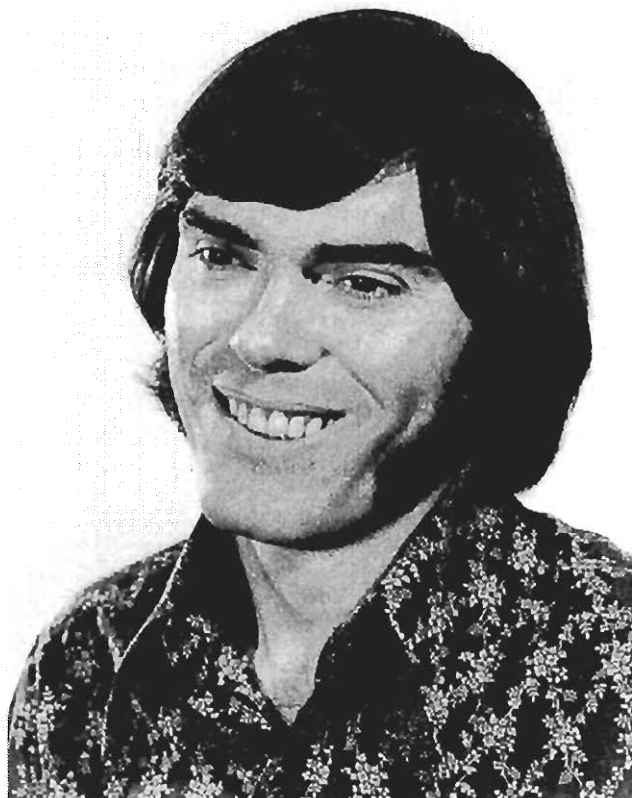
Diamond left KFNB in early 1968, when the station was about to switch to an all-news format, and went to RKO's KFRC in San Francisco where he had worked with Dick Sainte at that time, so Sainte knew a good strong talent when Diamond was available again in 1971. A trivia note: Diamond's first show on KFNB was from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. replacing the other Tom Murphy (a.k.a. Bobby St. Thomas). It wasn't until his second show did his regular hours 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. start where "the Diamond Mine" dug further into the new gems of underground music.

However, by September 1971, the winds of change would once again blow over the six magnificent towers in South El Monte at KRLA, and instead of Princess Blue Sky and sunny days ahead, a dark "shadow" would fall over South El Monte, and the glory days of KRLA as a TOP 40 innovator would come to an end.

Because after September 1971, KRLA would never again be thought of as a TOP 40 station at the forefront of what was happening to today's youth. The station would throw away its past and all of its memories and instead try to be something it couldn't, and in doing so caused mass defection from KRLA's audience, and which caused KRLA to never again be any major force to be reckoned with.

The beautiful pastures of South El Monte where Princess Blue Sky had graced the top of the six towers with soft pillow clouds would be cast away by a dark, forbidding "shadow," a "shadow" that would stop the growth of the now prosperous KRLA and to take the sunshine away from the "man in the sun" face in KRLA's lobby.

A "shadow" was about to fall over the pasture. The KRLA as we've known and loved was to die.



**TOM MURPHY**



DICK SAINTE

**JIM MEEKER**



**KRLA-1110  
SUNDAY 5-10 PM**

Jim Maddox



**KRLA PRESENTS**

**DON  
BURNS**



**KRLA-1110  
NOON-3 PM**



**KRLA-1110  
3 to 6 PM**



**DAVE DIAMOND**

**CHAPTER 9**

**"A SHADOE OVER THE PASTURE"**



**CHINA SMITH**

The KRLA transmitter site in South El Monte has always stood proudly and on days when the spirit of Princess Blue Sky hovered around the palm trees at the corner of Lexington-Gallatin Road, the KRLA sound was clear, strong, and the right time to lay on the grass by the giant sounds of KRLA in the Land of Eleven-Ten.

Ever since August 1959, KRLA had been the station that was always current, always on top of what was happening in Southern California's pop culture. The format was always where a person could hear the latest top music and the best in personalities. But "officially" in September of 1971 all that would change. KRLA would no longer be the leader in TOP 40. KRLA would never again be a major force in Los Angeles radio ever again.

In September of 1971 a dark, forbidding "shadow" fell over the Land of Eleven-Ten. Storm clouds over the towers in South El Monte completely hit Princess Blue Sky. For in September 1971, a "shadow" fell over the El Monte pasture. And KRLA as we all knew and loved would be no more.

In the Summer of 1971, Dick Sainte left KRLA to go where he was probably destined to go all along and become a Boss Jock on 93/KHJ. At that time KRLA was going to have a new program director, as Dick Sainte leaving KRLA created a vacancy not only in his weekend show but in the P.D. chair as well.

The man selected to become the new Program Director of KRLA was 3 to 6 p.m. afternoon-drive, Shadoe Stevens. Stevens had major plans for KRLA's format and upon taking over would move KRLA away from its mainstream TOP 40 format and into a progressive underground format similar to KMET or KPCC, where the music would become heavier and the sound of KRLA as a TOP 40 leader would be no more.

Stevens felt that, even though KRLA in the Spring of 1971 did finally reach its goal and made it up to the top of the ratings in Los Angeles radio, that the current format of KRLA was out of touch to what was really going on in the world. The whole counterculture was moving into the mainstream, and Stevens felt that the sound of FM with its heavier music and more hip personalities was the way KRLA should move.

Stevens felt that the "Eleven-Ten Men" such as Dave Hull, Emperor Hudson and Tom Murphy of past glories were just that, the past, and that what young people, more sophisticated now and more into the music, wanted personalities who would really know the music, not just announce the time and temperature. What Stevens wanted to do was to make KRLA virtually an FM format on AM and have KRLA develop a more hip, more cool and more FM-image than the Boss Jock sound on KHJ. True, KRLA was right next to KHJ, sharing the top positions in the ratings. But Stevens wanted to do his experiment, and that is for the first time in KRLA's history, the station would no longer play the hits but instead play the heavier music that KMET and KPPC were playing.

So instead of competing with KHJ and the TOP 40's on AM, KRLA would be an "FM station on AM" and go toe to toe with KMET, KPPC, and KLOS. The management of KRLA were convinced by Stevens, that KRLA was no longer in touch with the things young people were really into, the counterculture, the whole new radical lifestyle of the early '70's. And that playing the Partridge Family or the Osmond Brothers was no longer what people really wanted to hear. So Stevens changed KRLA.

The first thing Stevens did was to adjust the program schedule and start phasing out the KRLA personalities that Stevens felt were unhip and did not reflect the ultra-cool image Stevens wanted. Stevens felt that a morning man at a hip FM-type format should not be the wise-cracking, funny type of personality, say, like Dave Hull or Tom Murphy, two of the greatest morning men in KRLA's history, but be someone very straight and cool and not detract from the heavier music.

And since the morning show is virtually the most important on the station, and sets the "mood" for the whole day, who would be on in the mornings would be very important and create the "tone" that Stevens wanted. Tom Murphy did not fit that image. Stevens felt Tom Murphy was too slick and too much of a TOP 40 personality. Having Tom Murphy play Ten Years After's "Boogie" or other heavier groups at the time was not the right image that Stevens wanted KRLA to project.

So the first thing that Stevens did was to switch the shifts of Tom Murphy with that of Don Burns. Burns would be the new KRLA morning man in this new KRLA image, and Tom Murphy would be in the very less visible 9 to Noon shift. In a way, this was phasing Murphy out and clearly a demotion, since once a morning man leaves the morning show everything else is downhill.

Stevens felt Burns had the deep voice, the cool straight style that would not clash with the music. So Don Burns became the morning man toward the Fall of 1971 and with the new heavier music KRLA was virtually a new station. No TOP 40. No Hits. Lots of album cuts and progressive music. When the first rain fell down that September, it was like tears falling from Princess Blue Sky.

So the first Shadoe Stevens lineup was Don Burns 6 to 9 a.m., Tom Murphy 9 to noon, Jay Stevens noon to 3, Shadoe Stevens 3 to 6, Dave Diamond 6 to 9, Lee Simms 9 to midnight, and Johnnie Darin still exiled to the all-night shift but on the way out, and Jim Meeker on weekends. Rebel Foster also came back to KRLA briefly during this time but did not join the starting lineup, but did some substitute air shifts that late Summer and Fall.

Having Don Burns as a morning man was certainly different. He was not a strong, traditional morning presence, had very little "personality," but this is what Stevens wanted. He felt that the music was the star and that a happy, silly style was out of touch with the new serious music.

KRLA news reporter Jon Silvius, who was in college with us in 1971 and did a radio show on KPCC-FM in Pasadena with "Bill Earl" also on that lineup, told us that even he tried to talk the station out of going to this format and that it just wouldn't work. Silvius was right. KRLA lost all the dedicated listeners of the past who liked personalities on the radio and preferred a happier sounding TOP-40-style format.

Many of the new songs that KRLA played were drug-oriented and moved KRLA away from the teenybopper and "Porch People" that used to sit for hours on the steps and cry on Dick Biondi's shoulders, and toward the marijuana-smoking counterculture. But at that time in 1971 it was very, very important to have a new cool hip image, and with so many young people in the know who really know music started moving away from KRLA toward FM, Stevens felt that this FM format was in more keeping with the times, and that the day of the "silly personality disc-jockey" was over with.

Because of President Nixon's wage and price controls that were implemented that year, Stevens called this new format "Phase One" (like Nixon's) when he took over in late July and started to gradually "phase" in the more heavier music. Stevens even ordered new KRLA jingles where he would introduce "Phase Two" in September when the station would go totally with heavy music and no TOP 40 at all. More on "Phase Two" later in this chapter.

All the KRLA air talent were told to say less between records, tone down their styles and virtually adopt a "laid back" hip demeanor, even though some of them were clearly uncomfortable with this format. Hearing the great Tom Murphy 9 to Noon with "the brakes on" was clearly a waste of Murphy's incredible talent. But Stevens wanted the hip cool style, and Murphy was just not that way. Murphy tried, but you could see that this new music was not his cup of tea.

The first casualty of this new KRLA was Jim Meeker. Meeker, as said before, would have been a great member of the KRLA lineup and should have been given the 3 to 6 p.m. show when Dick Sainte moved into programming, but instead Meeker stayed on weekends and doing production. The 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday night Jim Meeker show was exciting radio.

But Meeker also did not fit in to this new ultra-hip image of KRLA and so left KRLA that Fall, as it was clear that he would not fit in to the new "shadow over the pasture" programming. Jim Meeker was an excellent TOP-40-style air talent. But again sounded very uncomfortable with the new music and laid-back FM style that Stevens wanted the station to have.

The second casualty that would take place would be the termination of Johnnie Darin. Darin virtually rebuilt KRLA from stagnant automation into the TOP 40 powerhouse it was in 1970 and 1971, but after being exiled to the graveyard shift and losing his P.D.'s chair, it was just a matter of time before Darin would leave KRLA and so with this format, with a de-emphasis of personalities, Darin didn't fit in either.

So what Stevens did is to replace Darin in the midnight to 6 spot with Tom Murphy! A complete and total waste of talent! However, Murphy with his smart-aleck-style demeanor and funny personality was totally out of place playing the new Stevens music 9 to noon. So since Tom Murphy was still under some type of contract, Murphy was moved into the midnight to 6 shift, and Johnnie Darin left KRLA.

However Darin was not out of radio for long, as he told us in the preparation of this book, that he wanted to spend more time with his children and so worked weekends only on KGIL and KDAY at the same time. He told us that KGIL would record the first part of his show so he could have time to get from the KDAY studios on Alvarado near Silver Lake up to the Panorama City area and north Valley where KGIL was located.

The man that Stevens brought in to replace Tom Murphy 9 to noon was exactly the right style that Stevens wanted, and that was the progressive sounds of Johnny Hayes, who would be virtually doing what he did in early 1969 when he did the Midnight to 6 show in a tandem with Jimmy Rabbit. Hayes had been at KDAY that summer in that station's progressive era and had wanted to come back to KRLA ever since he was terminated by Dick Sainte in the first part of 1971 earlier that year.

So Johnny Hayes returned to KRLA in the Fall of 1971 where he would remain on the air right up to the publication of this book in June 1989. Again the Johnny Hayes in this era of KRLA was not the handsome "boy next door" or "son away at college" that Hayes was back in 1965 and in 1966 on his Teen Topper show. This Johnny Hayes was one of the early 1969, when he had brought the vigil candles and did his progressive show in candlelight. Hayes now was of that cool-hip demeanor that Stevens wanted and so since Sainte was out, Hayes came back to do the 9 to noon show.

Again the sound of KRLA in the Fall of 1971 was totally different than a year before, and whereas in 1969 the Johnny Hayes show and Jimmy Rabbit's show were the "oddities" at the station playing the more progressive sounds, in the Fall of 1971 with the "shadow over the pasture," Hayes was right in the mainstream as KRLA was now all-progressive. In virtually every format of KRLA, Hayes has been able to fit in because his style is rather low-key, and he never was that "strong" a personality as, say, Dave Hull or Tom Murphy.

That is the secret to his longevity at KRLA, plus as the years continue, he would become an "elder statesman" of KRLA linking the past to the present, especially in KRLA's format today in 1989 where Hayes is very, very good. But at this time in KRLA's history, Hayes was "progressive" and low key and hip, and that is what Stevens wanted for the new format.

So with Johnny Hayes re-joining the KRLA lineup in the Fall of 1971, the new Shadoc-designed KRLA format was Don Burns 6 to 9, Johnny Hayes 9 to Noon, Jay Stevens Noon to 3, Shadoc Stevens 3 to 6, Dave Diamond 6 to 9, Lee Simms 9 to Midnight and Tom Murphy midnight to 6. Stevens would adjust this format very soon after by switching Lee Simms into the 6 to 9 p.m. shift and moving Dave Diamond 9 to midnight.

Stevens felt that Simms was less TOP-40 oriented than Diamond, and so in the higher visibility 6 to 9 p.m. shift should go to more hip, ultra-cool personnel who in this case was Simms. However this KRLA lineup was pretty much a reshuffling of the cards, and that to get this format to where Stevens wanted it, he would have to "raid" some of the talent from FM stations rather than tone down AM jocks as he tried to do with some of KRLA's who remained from the TOP 40 era, now over with forever.

The biggest name in Los Angeles radio in Progressive FM was really one of the first "underground" style personalities in Los Angeles, and that is B. Mitchel Reed. But Reed was already quite happy on the FM band, and it would take some persuasion on Stevens' part to get Reed to go back to AM where he had been a legend, before in 1967 "changing with the music" and becoming a pioneer of underground FM and progressive music.

Reed was first known to Los Angeles listeners when he did the all-night show on KFNB in the days before Color Radio in the mid-1950's. When Charlie Brown (Chuck Blore) created the KFNB Color Radio format in January 1958, Reed was retained by KFNB, and be part of Charlie Brown's "Seven Swingin' Gentlemen" in the 6 to 9 p.m. slot.

B. Mitchel Reed, or BMR, as he called himself, was one of the fastest talking disc jockeys in the history of Silver Age pop radio. He frequently used bells and horns and called himself "Your Leader BMR," "The Fastest Tongue in the West" and "The Big Apple on the West Coast." Reed being a New Yorker, Burton Myron Goldberg, moved back to New York in 1963 and left his 6 to 9 p.m. shift at KFNB. But after a year and a half, Reed was lured back to KFNB in his old 6 to 9 p.m. shift where he remained until becoming KFNB's morning man in late 1965 and 1966, before Westinghouse bought the station and Reed was moved back to evening hours.

It was at this time that Reed got into the "new music" that was happening in the world, and with Dave Diamond at KBLA from high atop the Verdugo Mountains, the more progressive sounds of the Doors, or Ravi Shankar, or Jimi Hendrix, and Reed could see that that is what he wanted to play instead of the TOP 40 music and "fastest tongue in the West" image. In early 1967, about the same time as Diamond on the other station, Reed started playing these "progressive" songs on KFNB in his 6 to 10 p.m. and later 7 to 11 p.m. shift and called his program "BMR - Better Music Radio."

It was at that time in 1967 that Reed wanted to leave AM radio entirely and do his progressive sounds on FM where there was all the freedom and free form he wanted, since FM was virtually a clean blank-slate. What Reed did was to team up with the "Father of Underground Radio," Tom Donahue, who already had been a pioneer of this new music in San Francisco, and team up with Donahue to program this music on KPPC AM and FM from the basement of the Pasadena Presbyterian Church. KPPC was the first underground station in Los Angeles, and while primarily an FM station 24 hours a day, KPPC also was on the AM dial at 1240 on Wednesday and Sunday from the twin towers atop the newspaper building next door, where Reed could get into his new music for the AM audience as well.

So Reed joined KPPC playing his own records and his own progressive music in late 1967 before moving over to KMET the next year 1968 with Tom Donahue during its "Underground Sunshine" format. Reed was there on progressive FM right from the start, and his reputation in Los Angeles was well-known as "the Father of FM" and whose reputation as the "dean" or FM progressive music was quite legendary.

But Reed knew that FM was the band of the future and that AM radio was dying out. That's why Reed was on FM, as FM radios were now becoming more available in cars and on portable radios as well. Before that, FM was primarily the radio for music purists and classical buffs, and rock music was just not played on FM plain and simple.

When rock music changed, after the Monterey Pop Festival and Sgt. Pepper, and became more serious with heavier lyrics than boy meets girl - boy loses girl, and where longer LP cuts were recorded such as "Revelation" by Love or the long version of "Light My Fire" by the Doors, AM radio stations with their heavy commercial load, didn't want to play long album cuts, so consequently FM, which had a better "sound" for music, filled that void and since there was such an open canvas on FM, Reed and others could see that FM was the wave of the future, and that AM radio was dying out.

People didn't want to hear screaming "Hullabalooers" or funny "Emperors" with this new music, but air talent who knew the music and had more to say than just the time and the temperature. Reed also knew one other thing. As

soon as auto manufacturers started putting FM radios in cars with stereo capability, AM would soon be no longer any type of force except for talk, news and sports.

Reed was indeed a pioneer to FM radio, and Stevens felt that Reed was just the man he needed, the "box office" name he needed, to have people realize that KRLA really did change and was a totally progressive station. Not a teenage TOP 40 station anymore.

But at this time in Fall 1971, AM radio was still the main band, and FM was still new and not as widespread. There were still more AM radios and for people who didn't have FM receivers but wanted progressive music and less obtrusive air personalities, KRLA would be that alternative. This was Shadoe Stevens' plan.

Reed felt that if he could reach a bigger audience than what he had on FM, it would be worth it, so Shadoe Stevens signed B. Mitchel Reed to KRLA. Because of Reed's maturity and the fact he would be the oldest jock at the station, it was felt by Stevens that Reed would be most effective in the afternoon noon-to-3 shift, so Reed was moved into the noon-to-3 slot, and Jay Stevens was exiled to midnight to 6.

Even though Jay Stevens tried to maintain a hipper image trading in his old black horn-rimmed glasses for gold wire rims and growing a moustache, Jay Stevens was still too "slick" sounding and too much a reminder of the TOP 40 style that Shadoe Stevens wanted to get away from. So to make room for Jay Stevens on the midnight to 6 shift, Tom Murphy was released from KRLA.

This was a sad event in KRLA's history because Tom Murphy truly had been one of the brightest spots in the KRLA lineup and as morning man earlier that year truly was a hit. But Murphy, more than anyone else, did not fit the style that Shadoe Stevens wanted and so Tom Murphy, who just a few months ago was the very popular morning man at the just about Number One station in Los Angeles, now was a former midnight to 6 personality at a progressive music station and now out entirely. Murphy deserved much better considering he was one of the best of the "Eleven-Ten Men" in its 30-year history. But Murphy was another relic of TOP 40, and one by one, those era personalities would be dropping off the lineup as the "shadow" still fell over the pasture.

So the next part of the lineup was in place, and the KRLA lineup at this time in late 1971 and early 1972 was Don Burns 6 to 9, Johnny Hayes 9 to Noon, B. Mitchel Reed Noon to 3, Shadoe Stevens 3 to 6, Lee Simms 6 to 9, Dave Diamond 9 to Midnight and Jay Stevens Midnight to 6. However, out of this lineup it was clear that the strongest man at the station at this point as a progressive AM was, without a doubt, B. Mitchel Reed.

Because of his "box office" possibilities and the fact that he made the station legitimate and if he was there, well, the station must be good, Stevens decided to go back to one of the "first commandments" of radio and put the strongest man in the morning show. So Don Burns was moved back to noon to 3 after serving his purpose as the first morning man of this new format. Burns was extremely low key in the morning and certainly created the mood that Shadoe Stevens wanted, moving away from the Tom Murphy slickness of the TOP 40 format.

B. Mitchel Reed as the new KRLA morning man was very successful in that he was the "box office" big name and also the most respected at KRLA from his involvement with progressive radio right from its start in Los Angeles. The listeners could trust Reed. For example on one show he warned his listeners about "bogus" Rolling Stones concert tickets that were printed and sold as real.

Reed also had encouraged his listeners to go on "A Donut Run For The Beamer," as he called it, where listeners would go to the Winchell's Donut Shop on Huntington Drive and Garfield in Alhambra and buy boxes of donuts, and then drive to the nearby studios of the Huntington Hotel to give them to Reed. These "Donut Runs For The Beamer," lasted for his entire run as the KRLA morning man. Sales of donuts at that Winchell's outlet soared as listeners would hope that Reed would eat their donuts and talk about it on the air, as he always did.

Reed was a very strong morning man even though the station was totally different, being all-progressive. He was definitely the strongest man at the station and also was probably the best progressive disc jockey of that era or even today. Don Burns knew he was just a transition morning man, as Stevens wanted people to forget about the wild antics of Tom Murphy, and so when Burns was moved back to Noon to 3, he knew it wasn't a demotion. B. Mitchel Reed was really the "anchorman" of this whole new progressive format, and Reed was an excellent morning man for that format and Stevens must be commended for that. That decision was a good one.

As stated before, Stevens called this new format "Phase One" when he took over in July 1971, and then in September it was time to now move into "Phase Two." All regular programming was stopped when this "Phase 2" was introduced. What Stevens did was as follows.



First, promo announcements were made on Eleven-Ten that "Phase 2 is coming" and for listeners to send away for a "program" that would list what "Phase 2" was all about. What "Phase 2" actually was, was about a half hour or longer of all the station's new jingles played back-to-back, which were very "progressive" sounding and not slick Drake-like as had been under the P.D. ship of Cox, Darin and Sainte.

Some of these jingles were sung by R and B soul singers, others sounded like church choirs, and some were downright unconventional. But this whole "Phase 2" and KRLA now was pretty unconventional and these new jingles complemented the heavier music.

Also very noticeably at this time, the advertising of KRLA changed where the commercials now were for stereo shops, water bed stores, and "head shops," as these type of businesses were the ones these new progressive listeners patronized. However, the best of all the new jingles that Stevens had created was one that sounded very, very good. A sexy female voice was heard singing this immortal line,

"KRLA Gives Great Music!"

That jingle would be the only one to last into the Roy Elwell era which would occur two years down the line after the "shadow over the pasture" had lifted. But that's getting ahead of things. The "shadow over the pasture" was still hovering overhead. Princess Blue Sky was nowhere in sight.

Since the Midnight to 6 time slot had been a "dumping" ground or exile for the TOP 40 jocks that Stevens was phasing out one by one, as expected, the next to go was Jay Stevens. KRLA would be back to just one Stevens on the lineup again, as Jay Stevens would be replaced midnight to 6 by another one of those FM sounding pseudo hip jocks in the mold of Lee Duncan and others, and that's the addition of Greg Shannon to the midnight to 6 a.m. shift.

Jay Stevens, even though he tried, did not fit in to the new format, and it was just a question of time when Jay Stevens exiled to midnight to 6 would leave. For someone who had been a morning man on KRLA for almost two years, even though not particularly "strong" as we've said before, Jay Stevens was still a very good TOP 40 personality and really did his best shows when he was Noon to 3, a much better time slot for him.

But Jay Stevens was not a progressive FM style personality, and so Jay Stevens left KRLA during this period in early 1972. However, Stevens would turn up soon in May of 1972 at KLIIS-AM from the Montecito Hills, playing mellow soft-rock, a much better station for his talents, and then when KROQ-AM signed on in September, from high atop the Verdugo Mountains, Stevens would join Johnnie Darin's programmed KROQ-AM along with other big names such as former "Eleven-Ten Men" Sam Riddle, Jim Wood and Jimmy Rabbit, and future "Eleven-Ten Man" Charlie Tuna in a slick TOP 40 format.

But by this time in 1972, KRLA was still heavy progressive and wanted its personalities to be low-key, ultra-hip and non-TOP 40. The next casualty to KRLA was replacing Dave Diamond with Mikel Hunter in the 9 to midnight show. Diamond already had been moved out of his 6 to 9 p.m. show in a trade with Lee Simms, but again Stevens felt that Diamond, even though a pioneer of this format from his days at KFVB in 1967 and KBLA before that, was too TOP-40 sounding and oriented and didn't have the hip style that Mikel Hunter would have.

Mikel Hunter was a very good progressive air talent in that style and format. Mikel Hunter was first heard by Los Angeles listeners at KLAC-AM sharing its towers with KFVB off of Soto Street, where he was part of the M.O.R. chicken-rock format which featured former "Eleven-Ten Men" Charlie O'Donnell and Gary Mack in 1970. But by this time in January 1972, Mikel Hunter was totally progressive and perfectly suited for the 9 to midnight hours.

"Hot Rocks Hunter" or "Motorcycle Mikel" as he called himself was very ultra-mellow and cool. One trademark of Hunter was always doing "Whew!" between records as he gave his comments about whatever.

As Stevens was phasing out, it seemed, all the TOP 40 jocks who didn't quite fit Stevens' new format, the next to leave would be Lee Simms. Simms did a good job tuning way, way down from his early days on KRLA as "Lee Babi" but still had that TOP 40 aura to him that Stevens felt didn't quite fit the format.

Simms' replacement in the 6 to 9 p.m. chair was John Rydgren. Rydgren, calling himself "Brother John" had been an ordained Lutheran minister and was actually heard on KRLA back in 1968 during its Sunday morning Christian-oriented "Silhouettes" show that the station had subscribed to.

Rydgren had a very deep voice and smooth style and was quite good as a progressive personality at KRLA. Rydgren was excellent. As he did on the "Silhouettes" show in 1968, Rydgren frequently read semi-religious non-denominational poetry on his show that he wrote himself, that was very introspective, but after all he is a minister.

Rydgren, also before coming to KRLA in 1972, was the solo voice of KABC-FM's (later KLOS) "Love Radio" format back in 1968 which was one of the first attempts for mainstream stations to go "underground" or "progressive." KABC-FM later would become KLOS. But John Rydgren was good and was a strong progressive format personality.

So at this time in 1972 we have B. Mitchel Reed 6 to 9, Johnny Hayes 9 to noon, Don Burns Noon to 3, Shadoe Stevens 3 to 6, John Rydgren 6 to 9, Mikel Hunter 9 to midnight and Greg Shannon midnight to 6.

However, it was becoming clear that the "shadow over the pasture" experiment was not working. KRLA was losing advertisers, and the old listeners who were loyal to KRLA from 1959 to 1971 were turning the station off. But there was a problem that caused the "shadow over the pasture" to fail. It was a simple one.

The music sounded better on FM. Why listen to AM to hear music that could be heard on KMET or KLOS? KRLA defeated itself by phasing out strong personalities because where in the past people would listen to their "favorite deejay," now KRLA was music-oriented. True, it had some great progressive personalities. B. Mitchel Reed was the best. Shadoe Stevens was excellent in this format. John Rydgren was superb. Mikel Hunter was good, too.

But that wasn't enough. FM was growing too strong. FM receivers were now in cars, and people simply wanted to hear their "heavier" music on FM. So this format really was doomed from the start. Stevens did take a close-to-Number One station and try to experiment. But when you do that you lose the continuity of the station. The old listeners went away. The new ones stayed for a short time to hear Reed or Hunter but preferred the music on FM.

KRLA as an AM TOP 40 could compete with KHJ. But KRLA could not compete with FM. It never had a chance. It is true that the times were changing, and Stevens felt that maybe KRLA would have "died" if it had remained TOP 40. Our research shows that this probably wouldn't have happened in 1971.

KRLA had a very, very strong lineup before Stevens took over as P.D. Tom Murphy was a very popular and super strong morning man in Los Angeles. He was destined to be a superstar probably in a couple of years. The others were very strong too. When the "shadow" fell over the pasture, the old listeners didn't like heavy music or drug-oriented comments; the new listeners went back to FM where the physical "sound" was better.

So when the "shadow" fell over the pasture, it lost every way around. There was no one left. Shadoe Stevens took KRLA into a lose-lose no-win position. There was no one left to listen to KRLA. Stevens also knew he couldn't go back to all TOP 40. That would look like a retreat, and besides Stevens really believed in this kind of format.

The problem was that Stevens did it to the wrong station. He tried to turn an AM rock legend into an FM on AM. It didn't work even though he did try. But what Stevens did is break the 1959-1971 continuity as KRLA being a viable, strong TOP 40 voice that people knew, trusted and were extremely loyal to, and then drove those people away by trying to reach out for the FM listeners, the ones who wanted heavier music.

But KRLA on AM playing that music could not compete with FM. It simply sounded better on FM and so the listeners turned off AM KRLA and turned on their FM's. The "shadow" over the pasture did destroy the old KRLA. KRLA lost its 11-year continuity. People didn't know what KRLA was, except an FM on AM. Ron Jacobs tried this at KGB, San Diego. That only lasted two years. FM programming on AM didn't work.

For overall listeners, KHJ was still on top in the Fall of 1972. People knew what KHJ was. They either liked it or hated it but knew what it was. KRLA had thrown that identity away by changing formats. It was a noble experiment. It was a common perception at that time that TOP 40 was an out-of-touch format to the new counterculture attitudes of that period. KRLA wanted to stay hip and on top of things. On paper it seemed that a "progressive" AM would work and would be more "in touch" with the times.

But the FM listeners went away. KRLA never ever had a chance against KMET or KLOS. There were too many FM radios that were available now. With FM now in cars, people who wanted "heavier" music kept their dials on FM. The "shadow" did fall over the pasture, and KRLA never ever recovered as a major force in Los Angeles radio as it had been when Johnnie Darin and Dick Sainte were programming Eleven-Ten.

However, we want to give Shadoe Stevens credit for this. He did expose the AM listeners to something they probably might not have heard otherwise. The esoteric heavier music was now available on AM for those who didn't have FM's. Some people didn't have FM's then. It was like VCR's today. Now about everyone has a VCR, but not in December 1978 when we first bought our RCA for \$650.00.

If all you had was an AM radio in your car in 1972 and liked progressive music, then KRLA did provide a good service to the community. But as FM receivers proliferated, AM was turned off by the hard-core music fanatics. And that's really the only ones who listened to KRLA in 1972.

It's true people would buy B. Mitchel Reed donuts. But the fan worship that say Dave Hull or Dick Biondi experienced wasn't there with Reed. People listened to Reed, and respected him. He was one of the best. But those listeners wanted music, they were more "into" the music than the disc jockey. They didn't tune on KRLA to hear "The B. Mitchel Reed Show" but to hear heavy music played by the Beamer! There's a difference.

So B. Mitchel Reed left KRLA in the Fall of 1972. He saw the handwriting on the wall and so went right back to FM where he, over the years before his untimely death in 1983, would surface on both KMET and KLOS. But Reed could see that FM on AM didn't work, and so after a great year at KRLA where he really was a very, very good morning man in that format, Reed left the 6 to 9 a.m. shift.

At this time Johnny Hayes would become morning man for the first time in KRLA's history in the 6 to 9 a.m. spot. Hayes already was on mid-mornings, so the move up to morning drive wouldn't be that drastic for the listeners. John Rydgren would move into Hayes 9 to Noon show and China Smith would join KRLA 6 to 9 p.m. Smith, like Greg Shannon, was another very low-key FM-style voice and was suited for this ultra-hip FM on AM format.

But without the strong morning man B. Mitchel Reed, the days of the "shadow" over the pasture were numbered, as the format was falling apart. Johnny Hayes was not a "strong personality" morning man, but he was at least familiar to KRLA listeners. However, the ones who heard the Johnny Hayes 6 to 9 a.m. show were probably not the ones who listened to him back in 1966 when the "tall and handsome" Hayes did the Teen Topper show 6 to 9 p.m. Those people grew up.

However if the 6 to 9 a.m. show is the "choicest spot" on a station, then it was deserving to give it to Johnny Hayes. Hayes was able to fit into any format simply because he is an adaptable personality. So Johnny Hayes was rewarded with the most visible spot on KRLA, 6 to 9 a.m.

So in the Fall of 1972 we have Shadoe Stevens in command of KRLA with the more progressive programming with Johnny Hayes 6 to 9 a.m., John Rydgren 9 to Noon, Don Burns noon to 3, Shadoe Stevens 3 to 6, China Smith 6 to 9 p.m., Mikel Hunter 9 to midnight and Greg Shannon midnight to 6.

However, Mikel Hunter, as B. Mitchel Reed before him, would also move back to FM since this format was starting to have a limited future. Hunter also knew that FM was really where it's at. Replacing Hunter 9 to midnight was Lee Simms who was brought back to KRLA after a several-month layoff. Also about this time, a short time later, Don Burns would leave KRLA and Greg Shannon would move into the Noon to 3 show from the midnight to 6 shift, certainly better hours and a step up for Shannon.

Another former "Eleven-Ten Man" would come back in late 1972, Russ O'Hara would be in the midnight to 6 show. A long way from just three years ago as AM drive. But KRLA was in a transition period and the format was still progressive oriented but now going even more esoteric, away from the heavier music into even more unconventional. The days of TOP 40 were long gone, and KRLA did not have, at this time, a focus.

Shortly after O'Hara rejoined KRLA in the midnight to 6 spot, KRLA would sign on a weekender for the first time since Jim Meeker left at the start of the "shadow" over the pasture. Johnny Michaels joined KRLA in the Autumn of 1972 to work weekends and relief.

The lineup was as strong as it could be, but the focus was diminishing. People really didn't know just what KRLA was playing now. It had really no audience anymore. In November 1972 Bob Dayton who had left KRLA in September, 1970 ironically to make room for Shadoe Stevens, now rejoined KRLA as a fill-in relief and weekender along with Johnny Michaels. But very few noticed, as KRLA did not really have a committed audience anymore.

Finally in December of 1972, Shadoe Stevens would make one last desperate attempt to get people to "take another look" at KRLA. He called this new format "Future Rock."

A very popular book out in 1972 was Future Shock, and what Stevens did was to change the KRLA logo to the same futuristic graphic style that was featured on the cover of the Future Shock paperback and for the first time in many months, KRLA would try to promote itself with several newspaper ads that might just try to turn the station around.

However right before "Future Rock" was initiated, John Rydgren would leave the 9 to Noon shift, creating a vacancy for either Bob Dayton or Johnny Michaels to move into. Stevens chose Dayton because of his maturity and the fact that some of those housewives who listened to KRLA 9 to noon would remember Dayton from when they were teenagers back in 1967, five long years ago.

Also at this time, a new KRLA jingle was heard where KRLA was sung to the "theme" of "2001: A Space Odyssey" movie in keeping with the "future"-oriented format. The problem was no one knew what "Future Rock" was. It was

really not clearly focused to anyone. But Stevens tried this as one last attempt to make a credible, but still hip, AM radio station.

The first promotion for "Future Rock" was a full-page newspaper ad in December 1972. It featured the heading "Future Jock" and showed a picture of Buffalo Bill Cody. The ad went as follows to try to explain what "Future Rock" was:

"Just out ahead of the rest of the party, finding the best of what lay ahead, rode the scout. They depended on him to find the right path to better things. The scout was the discoverer, the inventor, the astronaut. In today's L.A. radio, there's a new path being charted at 1110 on the dial. New music before it's entombed for months on a Top 30 chart. New and satisfying music before it's burned-out like an old campfire. With respects to Buffalo Bill, Leonardo da Vinci and Neil Armstrong, we present our scouts ... The Future Jocks of today's music. Hayes ... Dayton ... Shannon ... Stevens ... Smith ... Simms ... O'Hara. Future Rock ... It's something you can get into today. By KRLA 1110."

Another ad went:

"At KRLA in addition to the music of today, we're featuring music by established contemporary artists just in advance of the 'charts,' album cuts before you hear them anywhere else, new releases before they sell a jillion copies. Give Future Rock a try ... It's something you can get into today."

Not many did. "Future Rock" lasted only until March 1973. Shadoe Stevens left KRLA at the same time. Stevens tried to make KRLA something different. But KRLA lost its consistency and no one really knew what KRLA really was at this time in early 1973. Stevens blamed management for interfering with his ideas; management felt that a new program director might have the magic touch the station needed at this time.

So the "shadow" over the pasture that first hovered above the six big towers in South El Monte was lifted, and KRLA once again was faced with what to do now. The management of KRLA decided to bring back someone from the glory days of KRLA to see if the same magic could work again.

But what KRLA management did not do was to bring KRLA back to being a major TOP 40 station where it had been so successful in early 1971, which might have brought KRLA back. Instead of that decision that might have gotten KRLA back to as being a KHJ competitor again, KRLA would allow this new program director to try an experiment that might get people to listen to the station again.

This experiment, and the direction that KRLA was to be now, will be discussed in our next chapter, as we move into another room of the dream-house. The "shadow" over the pasture was no more. Princess Blue Sky had not gone away. Her spirit was still above.



B. MITCHEL REED





...by thousands.

BOB DAYTON in front of his KRLA electric radio microphone. Dayton is turned on



CHAPTER 10



ELWELL

"DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE"



LEE  
SIMMS

**KRLA-1110**

The man who came back to KRLA in March 1973, to take over the P.D. chair and to try to do something to turn around KRLA, was Rebel Foster. Foster had already been Program Director several times before in KRLA history and so the station felt that because he knew KRLA he might be able to turn the station around from its disastrous "Future Rock" format which never caught on because no one really knew what it was.

It would have been logical for Foster to try to bring KRLA back as a major TOP 40 station, but Foster had another idea for this once mighty AM trying to compete with growing FM. In late 1972 there were signs that an AM station like KRLA might not be able to compete with TOP 40 on FM in stereo. Because in December 1972, KKDJ on FM started to make some ripples and, with TOP 40 music in stereo, it appeared that may be the wave of the future that not even a "new" TOP 40 KRLA could compete with. So Foster did not bring back the "old KRLA" that some expected.

What Foster did was to make KRLA a rather soft rock facility leading toward current "POP" sounding hits rather than to TOP 40 and away from the truly esoteric "Future Rock." In March 1973 when we were in college we had a part-time job working for a security agency that would send us to various sites, some where we would sit in our car for hours to watch a site and, being a student, to study.

One cold, late afternoon in March of 1973, we were sent to a produce field next to the Texaco refinery on Durfee Avenue in South El Monte just east of Rosemead Boulevard, just two blocks away from the KRLA transmitter site and six towers on Lexington and Gallatin Road. We had not been listening to KRLA very heavy since the Summer of 1971 when the "shadow" fell over the pasture, so while we were sitting in our car under the big power line structures, we

turned on the car radio, wanting to pick up a station that would come in clear, considering the electrical power lines might cause interference.

Because KRLA was just a block or two away, and we were in sight of the towers, we turned on KRLA for the first time in several weeks. The first song we heard was "Tie A Yellow Ribbon 'Round the Old Oak Tree" by Dawn! We then knew KRLA must have had a format change. Shadoe Stevens would never have had that song on the playlist.

The next thing we heard was a live-sounding disc-jockey team, "Dayton and Foster." Dayton and Foster? Now partners? What we found out the next day was that Rebel Foster decided to turn KRLA into an all-two-man radio show station! Because Foster and Bob Dayton were old friends, it was "Dayton and Foster" from 3 to 6 p.m. "Hayes and Simms" would be the new morning team in morning drive. From 9 to noon it would be a new voice to KRLA, Steve Brown along with Russ O'Hara, "Brown and O'Hara." At other times it was "Simms and Michaels."

In other words, every show at KRLA was a two-man show. There is one problem with this. A station cannot take two randomly assigned disc-jockeys, suddenly put them together into a booth, and expect them to do a two-man show successfully.

The most successful two-man shows at this time were Hudson and Landry at KGBS, Lynwood, and Lohman and Barkley at KFI, La Mirada. These were extremely compatible comedy-oriented teams that wrote together, did sketches and played off each other's talents. Usually, as in most traditional two-man comedy, one man was the straight man, the other the funny man.

But take "Hayes and Simms." This was the new morning show at 50,000 watt KRLA! Both men seemed awkward in the situation and were certainly not "professional partners." Again, just throwing together two highly individual disc jockeys and trying to make a "comedy team" or radio act doesn't usually work. Because of the complete total originality of Foster's idea, it was really worth listening to. In the "Hayes and Simms" show, however, it was obvious that these two men were not that comfortable with this situation but struggled along from 6 to 9 a.m., the most important time slot at a station.

Steve Brown was an excellent personality, reminiscent of Tom Murphy two years before. Brown had great potential but he was teamed up with heavy sounding Russ O'Hara. The only two that seemed very comfortable with each other and where this idea seemed to work were Foster and Dayton. They really were a good team! Because of their friendship, they truly seemed to enjoy each other, constantly cracking the other one up. It sounded like two old friends in a bar.

The reason the "Hayes and Simms" show was in the mornings is that Johnny Hayes already had been morning man and it was thought not to make another change in that important time slot.

Because this "tied up" the lineup, by cutting their possible spread-out time in half by having two men on together at a time, the station repeated these shows during various other parts of the day. Pre-recorded. The disc jockeys were told to say,

"It's 20 minutes before the hour" rather than identify the hour because these shows would be used in various nighttime hours of the day or on weekends. You could hear "Brown and O'Hara" from 9 to noon and then hear the exact show from midnight to 3 in the morning. The same day.

The KRLA lineup consisted at this time of Johnny Hayes, Bob Dayton, Lee Simms, Russ O'Hara, Johnny Michaels and a new member of the "Eleven-Ten Men", Steve Brown. Steve Brown was one of the best personalities on KRLA since Tom Murphy and seemed to be the one star on the rise. When Shadoe Stevens left KRLA that March, both China Smith and Greg Shannon would leave with him, as Stevens went to KROQ-FM (the former KPPC) to do "Mother Rock", an ultra progressive format similar to what Stevens did at KRLA in 1971 and 1972, but even more heavier.

So KRLA under the direction of Rebel Foster was now all-two-man radio. It was an incredible experiment. KRLA even got press coverage on this format in articles in the Los Angeles Times. For a while they decided to "mix and match" the disc-jockeys. For example, if the "Hayes and Simms" show didn't work, how about the "Simms and O'Hara" show? Or "Brown and Michaels?" Or "Hayes and O'Hara?" The possibilities seemed endless.

However some critics felt it was the sign of a desperate station. Some people in the industry and listeners thought KRLA was a big put-on. It got people to listen again just to hear this experimental whole idea. It was a novelty. After the last two years of "underground progressive" music, with the change in music to more TOP-40-oriented tunes, the station did sound more mainstream again. But the main problem was in recording these shows and then playing them back on various other times of the day. Sometimes the "tapes" would not be played at the correct

times. You'd hear the disc-jockeys say its "23 minutes after the hour" when it was actually 10 minutes before the hour. These snags seemed to happen more often than they should.

But at this time of KRLA's history, there were not too many devoted listeners then, due to all the format changes since the late Summer of 1971 and "Phase One." People didn't really listen to KRLA all the time during this time in 1973 as they did in the days of "The Station of the Stars."

This "all-two man" experiment did not last long, for in May 1973 KRLA went back to traditional one-man shifts. And finally KRLA put the strongest man in the morning drive show where he should have been six years earlier. Bob Dayton finally became the morning man from 5:30 to 9:30 a.m. We had been waiting a long time. Dayton sounded great! More subdued than he used to be but still an improvement over "Hayes and Simms" or even Hayes alone, as a morning man because morning drive was not his best time slot to be in.

Following Dayton in the 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. spot was Rebel Foster. 12:30 to 3:30 was Steve Brown. Brown was actually the high mark of this whole lineup. Here was a personality with a lot of potential and good humor and seemed like a superstar in the wings. Next to Dayton, Steve Brown was the best. Johnny Hayes was 3:30 to 7:30 afternoon-drive which seemed to be a better time slot for this KRLA veteran than morning-drive. The two drive times with Dayton in the morning and Hayes in the afternoon, was a good combination that did utilize KRLA veterans with "box office" appeal. Lee Simms was 7:30 to 12:30. Our research shows Russ O'Hara was 12:30 to 5:30, but at press time we were unable to confirm that fact for sure. In reviewing airchecks his voice was heard doing promos so he was on the air at KRLA at that time.

On weekends and relief was Johnny Michaels, but suddenly not calling himself Johnny Michaels anymore, but his real name "Johnny Laurrello." No explanation of this was given to the audience. Even though many KRLA disc jockeys have used pseudonyms over the years, they have never switched from a pseudonym to their real name while right on the air. One day it was Johnny Michaels. The next day it was Johnny Laurrello.

Shortly after this one-man show lineup started, Rebel Foster left his 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. show to devote more time to P.D. duties and was replaced by Johnny Laurrello in those mid-morning hours. So by the end of May 1973, KRLA had a soft-rock lineup of Bob Dayton 5:30 to 9:30, Johnny Laurrello 9:30 to 12:30, Steve Brown 12:30 to 3:30, Johnny Hayes 3:30 to 7:30 and Lee Simms 7:30 to 12:30. Our research shows that Russ O'Hara was most likely 12:30 to 5:30 all-night hours. Rebel Foster did reliefs and a weekend shift or two. This lineup was quite good and was "all-live" at this point, at least during the week. The music was not TOP 40 but more adult contemporary pop soft rock hits targeted to an older audience, not teenagers anymore like in the halcyon days.

But even though this was a noble attempt and a decent lineup of good strong personalities, especially Dayton and Brown, the station by June 1973 could no longer afford to have the high-priced array of disc jockeys, so in June of 1973 at a time when very few people were listening to KRLA anymore, Bob Dayton, Johnny Laurrello, Steve Brown, Lee Simms, Russ O'Hara and Rebel Foster left the station and all that was left was Johnny Hayes and, now returning to the station, Greg Shannon. Rebel Foster did really try with his experiments, but the audience was no longer there and the latest solid lineup of talent was too costly at this time of KRLA's history.

It was now total automation on KRLA that Summer of 1973 with just voice-overs by Hayes and Shannon. No personalities whatsoever. No shows. This was bare bones radio, very cheap to operate. But the station was virtually broke, very few commercials anymore, no loyal audience and as 1973 was about to roll into 1974, even Greg Shannon would drop off the lineup to join Shadoe Stevens at "Mother Rock" KROQ-FM from Flint Peak in La Canada Flintridge. So now the only voice heard on KRLA was Johnny Hayes day after day, 24 hours a day. Hayes at this time was just used as a disembodied voice. No "Johnny Hayes Show," just his voice announcing song titles, promos, or spots or commercials when there were some.

It was very, very sad to see the mighty KRLA come to this. A station that was so, so strong just three years before in 1971 when Tom Murphy was morning man and Jay Stevens did middays. Three years is an eternity in radio. So now as we move to the end of 1973 and early 1974, KRLA was all-automated with just Johnny Hayes' voice tracks and the lowest point in the station's history ever.

The music wasn't TOP 40 anymore but a "KNX-FM" type mellow rock, no real hits, just "hybrid" type programming. KRLA at this time really was sad because it hadn't been a trendsetter or even keeping up with the pace since the Summer of 1971, when the "shadow" fell over the pasture and KRLA truly faded as any type of force in mainstream L.A. radio.



Budgetary problems caused KRLA at this time to have no more control room engineers in Pasadena, just an engineer person on duty during daytime hours to just be there for production or for whatever technical reasons, and now the transmitter engineer in South El Monte was the one who actually put the carts in the cart machine and played those cart tapes over and over from a playlist that was delivered to South El Monte daily.

The days of the engineer sitting in the transmitter building in South El Monte and fixing a scrambled egg in the kitchen looking out the window to the horse pasture and the Pomona Freeway were long gone, as the engineer actually was quite busy loading up the various cart decks and following the schedule of cart order for the cart decks now installed on the desk in the main room of the transmitter.

A new shelf was built right inside the door of the transmitter in the middle aisle of the room, with umpteen number of carts stacked high, and another one was built covering up the window right to the right inside the "shop," where the once full-length window was now covered up with a huge array of these cartridge tapes. KRLA was still barely making it with hardly any advertising and still without a license. This was a sad, sad time for what as little as three years ago was still "The Station Of The Stars." What happened?

It was clear that the station when the "shadow" fell over the pasture in Summer 1971 and the desperate format attempts afterward, Future Rock, All two-man shows, All one-man shows, All-Hayes and Shannon and now All-Johnny Hayes, that the station simply lost its core audience, failed to keep new ones with format changes, and completely stopped being a voice of any importance in Los Angeles radio.

It's hard to say who is to blame. Probably management for allowing the successful TOP 40 format to be replaced in the late Summer of 1971. Think of it this way, if KRLA had kept its Spring 1971 format with Dick Sainte at the controls through 1971, 1972, and 1973, would KRLA have amounted to this, this very low point as it is now?

Who can really say. But our research shows that it wouldn't have come to this. KHJ in 1974 was still very successful, with Charlie Van Dyke in the morning and a full team of talent. KRLA could have been even more successful too. KRLA was dying a very, very slow death. It still didn't have a license. And it not only was still turning over all profits to Public-TV and USC, but was at times actually losing money.

In late 1973/early 1974 KRLA would give itself one last attempt to try to save the radio station. A station that was so proud, so mighty, Casey Kasem's once-upon-a-time "Station Of The Stars" had come to this!

One man felt that maybe he could do something. One man who had sentiment for KRLA because he had been one of the very-first-year "Eleven-Ten Men" in 1959. KRLA had nothing to lose and everything to gain. At this time, this former "Eleven-Ten Man" would try to salvage the radio station.

It would not be easy. He would probably have to use automation, at least at first. But he had a vision for KRLA, to try to make it a credible voice again as perhaps a mellow rock M.O.R. station. He kept one jingle that was from the Phase 2 package of Shadroe Stevens. But this one, this former "Eleven-Ten Man" felt just might be the one to save the station,

"KRLA Gives Great Music!" sang the sexy, sultry voice.

So KRLA decided to do something different than the stagnant sounds of All-Hayes and Shannon, and now All-Johnny Hayes. This new program director was brought in, and at least this P.D. was someone who at least had some sort of respect for what KRLA was and its traditions. The new man to try to turn this KRLA into something better than what it was was Roy Elwell.

As discussed in Chapter 6, Elwell had been last heard on KRLA in December 1968, doing a recorded 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. show until January 1, 1969 when replaced by William F. Williams. Before then Elwell had been heard on various other stations in Los Angeles including a drive-time 4 to 7 p.m. talk show at KLAC and had also been seen on Channel 9 TV hosting a talk show on TV called "Tempo," one of the several Tempo shows that ran simultaneously on KHJ-TV. But last heard on L.A. radios in December 1968, Roy Elwell was now back on KRLA as program director, but with a more mellow attitude than in 1968 and had some new ideas for the KRLA he was about to take over.

The direction Elwell took KRLA was toward continued automation, but so slickly done that only a close listener could tell that it was automated. Elwell had a machine installed at the transmitter building in South El Monte where he and the other taped announcers would record every minute of the day in order, "It's 6:01," "The time is now 6:02," "Clockwatchers take note of the time at 6:03," and so on. So whenever the time was to be announced, usually and primarily in the drive-time hours, the voice of Elwell or whoever, would come on in a taped fragment that went around 24 hours a day sounding out the time minute by minute until the engineer pulled a switch and the time blurb

was heard over the air. It was quite foolproof and for a while even fooled this careful researcher and listener. This machine was kept right near the floor to the left of the KRLA transmitter main room.

The first thing that Elwell did upon arriving at KRLA was develop somewhat of a program schedule which didn't really exist with the alternating voice tracks of Hayes and Shannon and then just Hayes alone. Again Johnny Hayes was retained at KRLA, as he by this time seemed to fit into any format.

But by this time it didn't really matter who left KRLA, or who stayed, or any sentiment as in 1967, as very few people listened. The teenagers were not listening at all, and the station had no real core of listeners who cared anymore. KRLA was the happy memory station of listeners past. It no longer was part of their current lives. And to think it was only 7 years ago that KRLA was still "The Station of The Stars." But in radio and in 1974, seven years is an eternity.

As following the time-honored tradition of putting the strongest man on in the AM drive morning shift, Elwell decided to put himself in those hours in a pre-recorded voice track show. Elwell, as you remember from Chapter 1, was one of the first-year originals at KRLA and certainly was one of its best in those early days before becoming "Scott Bridges" then coming back to Los Angeles in talk radio. But the Elwell at this era of KRLA still had his very pleasant "smile in his voice" and was really a pleasure to hear again, as he was a link to the Radio Eleven-Ten of the early '60's.

So Elwell put himself in the morning 6 to 10 shift, recorded, and Johnny Hayes' pre-recorded show was from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For the 3 to 7 p.m. afternoon show, a brilliant piece of casting was done by Elwell, and that is from the "traffic" department at KRLA who always did some sort of air work in the past, being Daphne on the old Emperor Hudson adventures and even doing a Sunday night show in June 1962 being the first female disc jockey in Los Angeles, Sie Holiday was now made a full-fledged Eleven-Ten personality, becoming the afternoon 3 to 7 p.m. drive-time show talent. Holiday always had the kind of voice one could never get tired of. Sie Holiday was a delight in the 3 to 7 p.m. show.

So the two drive-time hour shifts were occupied now by KRLA veterans, Elwell and Holiday and the two of them in those hours really made KRLA sound good. For the 7 to midnight show, Elwell brought in an unknown to Los Angeles radio from the San Luis Obispo area, Evan Haning, who enjoyed calling KRLA "Radio Karla."

So it was Elwell 6 to 10, Hayes 10 to 3, the delightful Sie Holiday 3 to 7 and Haning 7 to midnight. For the all-night show, KRLA had solid automation, cartridge tapes played by the transmitter engineer back to back. In fact all of KRLA's programming was taped and played at the transmitter. The old historical disc jockey booth in Pasadena was now used as the room to make the tapes from, and it was sad to see no live shows from that famous window where such legends had sat before.

Also during this time Elwell had resurrected only one old KRLA jingle and that was the super, sexy ultra-classy "KRLA Gives Great Music" from the 1971 Shadoc Stevens package that never really was used much during the "shadow-over-the-pasture" era. This jingle had a lot of class, and it really fit in to KRLA's more M.O.R. image, now tilted toward mellow-rock sounds that KNX-FM had been featuring. Elwell also had a contest during this time where he would award prizes to listeners,

"Here. (long pause). Have a Zenith Cassette Recorder."

So this lineup continued on KRLA for the first few months of 1974.

At that time in 1974, we were finishing up B.A. requirements at California State University Long Beach, and in order to fulfill the requirements of a Radio-TV course, decided to do a visual-audio project on KRLA bringing in KRLA memorabilia and at the same time talk about to the class what KRLA was doing today. We already were known to some of the KRLA staff from the Fall and Winter of 1969 when as a freshman at Pasadena City Community College wrote the first 10 years of KRLA into an 80-page thesis.

So in the Spring of 1974, we along with a very attractive female classmate partner from Paramount whose name is long forgotten, drove up to the KRLA transmitter in South El Monte from my temporary apartment in Long Beach where we interviewed the engineer on duty and where we were given a tour of the KRLA transmitter, where the whole automated tape system was explained for our class project. Upon a solo visit by us alone to the KRLA studios in Pasadena to gather more information, a very delightful experience occurred which should be shared in this book.

We were introduced for the second time to Roy Elwell who we had met back in the Summer of 1968 and also saw through the glass at 11 years old. When we explained to Elwell what we were doing, he asked us about what we thought of KRLA today.

We honestly told Elwell that we thought the station sounded the best it had in at least a year since the days of Bob Dayton's morning drive show and Hayes' afternoon drive in the Spring of 1973. Elwell, delighted by our response took us into a side room and said,

"Bill, would you be willing to say what you just said on tape, and we'll play it over and over on the air?" We were quite flattered because in all the years researching KRLA our name was only on the air once when back in junior high school we called Dick Biondi to request a song and dedicate it to a girl named Edie Rayfield who we had a bad, unrequited crush on when we were 15. The record? "She's Just My Style" by Gary Lewis and The Playboys.

So Elwell had us sit in a comfortable chair and turned on a portable Zenith cassette recorder, and Elwell gave this for-on-the-air introduction,

"Listen to Bill Earl, about to graduate from California State University, Long Beach, and the Unofficial KRLA Historian, on the subject of KRLA today."

We started rather stuttering since we were ad-libbing and caught unprepared but still flattered that five years after our 80-page thesis, that KRLA would want our opinion. We said something to the effect,

"I think that KRLA today is the best it's sounded since maybe 'The Station Of The Stars', as Casey Kasem once called it", and then talked about how much we like hearing Sie Holiday and so on. We suppose we had forgotten the Bob Dayton morning show era last year, but that was so short-lived and we had no time to carefully prepare an answer.

Elwell thanked us, introduced us to the very classy Sie Holiday, and thanked us for our comments. He said they would be heard in a few days and be played probably every three hours or so.

The finished product lasted about one minute and was heard by us from our apartment at Brooks College on Clark Street in Long Beach. Our voice beamed loud and clear from the six big towers from South El Monte, and it was neat to be finally recognized for our earlier 80-page thesis and as the "Unofficial KRLA Historian."

The spot lasted about one minute and it was Elwell's introduction, followed by our response with the sound effect of ocean waves breaking in the background under our voice, and at the end of our comments, Elwell had spliced an old KRLA jingle from the 1959-1961 era "KRLA!" It was a classy spot and, as promised by Elwell, popped up on KRLA's programming every three hours for the next few weeks.

To this day in 1989, we thank Roy Elwell for his recognition of our research and for bestowing on us a title that was long overdue. It would not be until October 1981, that the honorary title of "Bill Earl" would be "Official KRLA Historian." By that time it was clear that "Bill Earl" was as official a historian that KRLA was ever going to have.

This last lineup on KRLA was a good one by having two all-time favorites in both morning and afternoon drive, Elwell in the morning, and Holiday in the afternoon. Elwell and Holiday were both very successful, but Elwell could see that the popularity of Sie Holiday was higher than his own.

Very few ego-driven P.D.'s would do this, but what Elwell did was put the strongest talent in the morning and so he moved Sie Holiday from 3 to 7 to mornings 6 to 10 and himself 3 to 7. This was actually a very good move because Sie Holiday became the first major female personality to have a morning drive-time show at a 50,000 watt radio station in Los Angeles. History had been made. Again Sie Holiday at KRLA made history.

It should be noted that during all this time at KRLA, Sie Holiday still continued her office duties at KRLA behind the scenes and coupled this with a morning drive show that was certainly something Holiday could be proud of. In comparison to today's many women over-achievers, Sie Holiday was the first. Sie Holiday now was the morning drive at KRLA in a pre-recorded voice track show, and because of her superior classy style, Holiday was a pleasure to wake up to. In fact, she was actually one of the stronger morning personalities at KRLA. She had an identity, a super pleasant style, a sense of tradition, and was a definite asset as the strongest jock at the station.

Roy Elwell now moved into the 3 to 7 p.m. afternoon drive and sounded excellent. Elwell always had a smooth, smile-in-his-voice delivery and afternoon drive Elwell actually found his perfect niche, at least at an M.O.R. oriented KRLA. He was a "name", and thousands of Angelenos "rode with Roy" home on their afternoon drives home in his pre-recorded voice track show.

So the Spring of 1974 had virtually the same lineup as a few months before but with several chairs reversed. But by the Summer of 1974, Elwell teamed himself and Sie Holiday together to do the 6 to 10 a.m. shift (pre-recorded voice tracks) and the 3 to 7 p.m. shift (pre-recorded voice tracks) as a team. Elwell told us he was 'living out the

manager's fantasies" when asked about his team show with Holiday. The other two airshifts with Hayes in mid-days and Haning at night stayed the same.

It was also about this time that Elwell devoted a quarter of the broadcast day to a taped out-of-town show called "Nightcap" with Herb Jepko out of Utah. This program was heard on Eleven-Ten during the midnight to 6 hours during the Summer of 1974, and it was sort of a "happy vibes" call-in show where it sounded like people from "South Succotash" with virtually nothing else to do would call in and in so many words be grateful they were alive and on and on and on.

So "Nightcap" with Herb Jepko was "played" via tape every night. This last lineup that Elwell put together lasted until November 1974 when Elwell decided to fine tune the station and try to make a more conventional M.O.R. soft rock station. What Elwell did now was to go away from the "Sie and Roy" split shifts and go back to a more traditional schedule.

The new lineup with Elwell's air force in November 1974 was to once again have Sie Holiday by herself in the mornings but in a 5 to 9:30 a.m. shift pre-recorded voice track show followed by former KRLA newsman who now turned KRLA "Eleven-Ten Men" personality, Tom Beck. Beck, who had been a founding member of the great Credibility Gap back in 1968, and the chief male announcer on The Pop Chronicles in 1969, now was a mid-morning disc jockey playing the mellow rock KRLA sounds between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Beck did have the voice and maturity for those hours and did a good job in that shift.

One day in the early Spring of 1975, we called Tom Beck on one of his few weekend "live" shows about gathering information on KRLA for possibly a future book, as we had given Beck one of our old 1969 thesis, and Beck gladly read our request over the air. Beck was always nice to us, and it was nice to hear him as a disc jockey, even though it was clear he sounded more comfortable as a newsman.

Following Beck from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m., Don Burns formerly of the Darin/Sainte/Shadoc days came back to Eleven-Ten in a very M.O.R. afternoon show again like Beck, in a pre-recorded voice track show. For a while both Beck and Burns did a two-man show with pre-recorded voice tracks, but this arrangement did not last for very long.

Following Burns was Roy Elwell himself back to afternoon drive from 3:30 to 7:30 and Johnny Hayes from 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. Both Elwell and Hayes show were pre-recorded with voice tracks. Automation followed from 11:30 p.m. to 5:00 a.m.

This lineup lasted until May 1975 when we on our way to Disneyland, turned on the car radio and on the Sie Holiday show, Holiday was on vacation, and we heard for the very first time in two years "live programming" and "live" voices from KRLA.

The voice was very familiar. But the name he gave was "Matthew Frail." "Matt Frail." "Dr. Matthew Frail." "Old Doc Frail." He claimed he was a veterinarian from Simi Valley and Ojai and lived with his wife, Twilight, who he has known since he was 13, and his two sons, Matthew and John. He drove his old pickup truck to KRLA from Simi Valley to do his disc jockey show! A veterinarian as a disc jockey? In the immortal words of Sie Holiday from 1965, "You're putting me on!"

This had to be the ultimate put-on. There was no "Matt Frail." It was actually Lee Simms who had returned to KRLA to do Sie Holiday's morning show "live" on KRLA.

The idea for the name "Matthew Frail" came from the slightly built KRLA station manager, Hal Matthews. Roy Elwell told us that Matthews did not want Simms to use "Lee Babi" on the air. So as a chop to Matthews, Simms created the whole persona "Matthew Frail."

The idea of changing one's name on the air already had been done by KRLA two years earlier in 1973 when Johnny Michaels one day decided to go by his real name, Johnny Laurello. Many air talents use different names in different markets, but to change one's name at the same station or city doesn't happen very often.

The talent who seemed to do this the most was Vic Groupi of KBLA. When he was at KBLA he was "Vic Gee." When he was on KBBQ when it changed over in June 1967, he was "Vic Grayson." June 16 - Vic Gee. June 17 - Vic Grayson. And when Groupi/Gee/Grayson went to KIQQ-FM he used a Drake name from a few years before in San Diego, "Jim Carson." So here was one voice, a familiar voice to L.A. stations, using three different names in one market.

In the case of Lee Simms, Simms always was a very ego-driven personality, and most listeners knew they were listening to Simms, and it was all a giant put-on. In a way this really did work because it was so bizarre it actually was funny. But most important, Elwell decided to initiate live programming once again for the first time

in years on KRLA. This was truly a pleasure to hear. So when Sie Holiday came back, Lee Simms, known now as "Dr. Matthew Frail" became the new morning man due to his incredible popularity during Holiday's vacation, and Holiday would be moved to another show time we'll discuss later in this chapter.

One feature of Simms' new morning drive show was where he turned the mike up very loud to pick up very sensitive sounds and where Simms proceeded to drop coins from his pocket, his own loose change on the desk, and for the listeners to guess what each coin was in comparison to the others by dropping each one and for the listeners to phone in and win Simm's change. In contrast to other stations "million dollar" prizes, this actually was funny and it really worked.

One of the more surreal things about Simms' morning show was where he sang over the song that was popular at that time, "I'm Not Lisa." Simms sang over the song and remember he now called himself "Old Doc Frail."

"I'm not Lee Simms. My name is Matthew. Lee Simms left you ... long ago." Again Simms was totally bizarre at times but actually funny and actually was a pleasure to listen to more so than his earlier days in 1971.

Simms never did acknowledge that he was actually "Lee Simms" and not "Doc Frail." But the audience did not seem to mind because they were in on the put-on, and for the first time in years, people now were starting to listen to KRLA again. Whether it was because of Simms, or because of live programming, or because of both, KRLA suddenly was sounding better in the mornings again as the lead-off to the rest of the day. The "live" sound of KRLA really was better. So Lee Simms returned to KRLA and was signed to the live morning show 6 a.m. to 9:15 a.m.

The next slot in this new program schedule was from 9:15 to 12:30 occupied by the delightful Sie Holiday. And again this was live radio. The sight of seeing the attractive Sie Holiday through the glass doing her show live was really a treat. Holiday never sounded better and really reached her broadcasting peak during these mid-morning shows.

Following Holiday from 12:30 to 3:45 was a newcomer to KRLA Johnny Magnus. However, this was not the first time slot that Magnus was heard on KRLA. During Sie Holiday's vacation, when Lee Simms did the morning drive "live," Magnus first opened the KRLA microphone in May 1975 in a 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. shift directly after the live Simms show. This was just a temporary single shot arrangement, as when Sie Holiday got back from vacation she was moved out of morning drive and into the new 9:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. hours.

Magnus had been best known to Los Angeles listeners and most famous as being one of the long-time jocks at KMPC, North Hollywood on Burbank Boulevard next to L.A. Valley Junior College. KMPC had been a station where the disc-jockey turnover was very, very rare, and at that time if you made it to KMPC you were pretty much set for life.

But Magnus had tired of his 9 to midnight show at KMPC and had felt he had been passed up for a daytime shift too often and so left KMPC in the early 1970's, replaced by Clark Race. KMPC was never a threat to KRLA because of its older M.O.R. audience, and with Johnny Magnus now joining KRLA in "daytime" hours, Magnus seemed to find a new groove.

Magnus originally was first heard on L.A. radio at the soul R and B KGfJ from the Odd Fellows Hall in South Los Angeles around 1963 before moving to KMPC, the real big time. But after leaving KMPC, Magnus had not really scored an important shift in Los Angeles radio, so the Johnny Magnus show on KRLA was quite a refreshing change, and to top it off, again this was more "live" programming.

One feature of Magnus's show was where he had a portable chalkboard in the booth with him and where before playing a record he'd say,

"Will our next guest enter and sign in?" (Shades of "What's My Line?") At that point you'd hear the "chalk" on the blackboard as Magnus wrote the name of the performer. This was creative, original radio and this was a trademark that Magnus used very, very well. The music was still this soft mellow rock.

The other Magnus trademark was "Weather With A Beat" where Magnus would read the weather forecast from all over the United States with an instrumental jazz record playing in the background. Again very classy. Magnus had a style all his own, sort of a jazz-type of patter and Magnus was very knowledgeable about the music, frequently giving credits to the sidemen session players on the various records. Magnus was of the old school, a knowledgeable disc jockey and highly creative talent who copied no one else and was really truly an original, which can't be said for most other announcers at that time.

Before the next major talent to join KRLA at this time, Roy Elwell was in a temporary position during the afternoon drive from 3:30 to 7:30 and Johnny Hayes handled nights. For a short time Hayes show was called "Spirit in the Dark" where soft R and B music would be heard.

For this new schedule and for afternoon drive in the Spring of 1975, Roy Elwell brought in a legendary Los Angeles middle-of-the-road air talent, Paul Compton. "New Beginnings for Paul Compton" was how the station announced Compton joining KRLA and again as with Magnus, Compton knew the music, was very knowledgeable about Frank Sinatra music in particular, and may be best known to Los Angeles audiences as one of the last personalities at the old KHJ 930 AM ("Radio 93") in April 1965 right before at 3 p.m. on April 27, 1965 when it became 93/KHJ and Boss Radio.

Compton was not picked up to remain at KHJ as a Boss Jock (he would certainly have been a good one) and so in April 1965 left KHJ. Compton had a rather jazz-like persona and again was quite distinguishable and certainly had a style all his own.

Hayes followed from 7 to midnight. From midnight to 5:30, according to the Los Angeles Times radio logs, was listed "Valerie." Our research was unable to determine if this was a live show or voice-tracks, or even syndicated, but this listing did occur in Los Angeles newspapers. On weekends KRLA featured during this time live programming with Tom Beck doing a midday M.O.R. show and also a live Sunday night show. One of our associates in Research Archives aircheck department called Beck during one of Beck's Sunday night shows but because of no control room engineer, this call could not have been put over the air. Beck's comment when our associate, Bob Maslen called him, "I thought we only had one KRLA historian!" Thanks, Tom.

It needs to be said at this point that during the resurrection of live shows, all the actual "records" (tape carts) were still played by the engineer at the KRLA transmitter site in South El Monte. The personality would "talk" to the unseen engineer over the phone from the booth in Pasadena and the engineer would still follow the script as far as the record order, etc. So KRLA was once again "live" for at least most of the day and again proved that live radio sounds better.

It should be mentioned now that in late 1975/early 1976 KRLA added a show that seemed rather out of place considering that the station was current mellow soft-rock. KRLA programmed on weekends a show broadcast from the old Ciro's night club in Hollywood, now an "Oldies But Goodies" club catering to the English-speaking Mexican-American audience, hosted by a man who had always been a proponent of "Oldies But Goodies," Arthur Egnoian, known professionally as Art Laboe.

Laboe had been heard on Los Angeles airwaves at primarily KPOP from Courtland Street in Lynwood which would later become KGBS. Laboe never was a major mainstream disc-jockey in Los Angeles but always had a following on the "fringe" stations that specialized in R and B "oldies." Laboe had also put out his own series of records "Oldies But Goodies" and had hosted R and B "oldies" concerts at the now-demolished El Monte American Legion Stadium.

It needs to be said that Laboe didn't favor all past hits from the Billboard charts such as late '60's psychedelia or, for example, the Beatles or Gary Lewis and The Playboys, but certain select records that were indeed from the past charts, but the type of "soul" R and B that was so heavily favored by his demographic audience such as "Angel Baby" as an example. If the record didn't have that "oldies" sound (primarily R and B) or wasn't a hit in his targeted community, Laboe usually didn't play it.

So Laboe's show was heard on KRLA on weekends during this late '75/early '76 period of KRLA and since he owned the old Ciro's nightclub, now called "Art Laboe's" (later the Comedy Store), and did remotes on his second level in the night club, it was a natural promotion vehicle also for publicity for his "Oldies But Goodies" albums.

Even though we had been following Los Angeles radio since 1961, we had never heard of Art Laboe until December 1969 when during KRLA's "Rotten Record of The Decade" shows such "Eleven-Ten Men" such as Johnnie Darin would parody a screaming, shrill "Art Laboe" soundalike hawking his records over the air. The next time we heard of Laboe, actually the first time we had ever heard Laboe on the air, was the excellent program Laboe did from XEPRS (formerly XERB) from Rosarito Beach, Mexico where from midnight to 3 or so in the morning, Laboe bought those hours as a paid commercial where he played selections from his "Oldies But Goodies" records, in the Summer of 1971.

The frequency 1090 was a very ultra-powerful one, labeled at 50,000 watts, but since the station and towers were in Mexico on the east side of the main highway overlooking the beach, the power of that station was probably much stronger. It was said that 1090 could be heard in the entire Western United States, similar to the old Dr. Brinkley shows at XERA in Ciudad Acuna, Mexico south of Del Rio; Texas back in the 1930's.

The programming of XEPRS was R and B soul music where in 1971, even though a Mexican station, played American music with American personalities such as Roger Christian, formerly of KRLA (see Chapter 1) and Brad Edwards who had been famous from his days on the chicken-rock KGBS from Lynwood (and FM on Flint Peak, La Canada). But it was this

post-midnight show of Laboe's that really had a classy sound, and even though it was pre-recorded it still sounded almost surreal in that here's this voice from the past coming from a station in Mexico. It was as legendary and reminiscent of the station in the movie "American Graffiti" with "The Jackal."

Laboe would record his shows at his Original Sound recording studios in Hollywood and then they would be shipped (or driven down) to Rosarito, Mexico in Baja, California where the show would be played via tapes from the transmitter and sent out from the three big towers at the 1090 site to, as said before, half the United States and beyond.

In 1971 when 1090 was XEPRS, "The Soul Express," we first heard the Laboe show while driving on Del Mar in Pasadena coming home from our girlfriend-at-the-time's house, and the show had an element of excitement, mystery and intrigue! What's this Anglo guy doing down in Mexico playing "Oldies But Goodies." Art Laboe. He really does exist after all. This was exciting radio and the airchecks of those shows are a true delight to hear.

So KRLA had Art Laboe from his club on the weekends along with the other M.O.R. programming as we move into 1976, and KRLA made it into another year. Another feature that KRLA had in early 1976 was former KFI, La Mirada and Pre-Boss Jock KHJ personality Robert Q. Lewis interview celebrities in pre-recorded shorts which would be played over the various shows. "Robert Q. Lewis in Hollywood" was a regular feature throughout the broadcast day and again gave KRLA some more class. The use of interviewing on KRLA's programming seemed to be on the increase, as on Roy Elwell's pre-recorded weekend shows on KRLA in early 1976, Elwell would interview various "celebrities" (such as Cathy Rigby, the athlete, for example) and integrate these celebrity interviews into the KRLA programming.

However, in early 1976, KRLA had still the financial problems by not having its own license and by having to turn over its profits to USC and KCET as per orders of the FCC back in 1964. The cost of having such big names as Simms, Elwell, Compton, Magnus, Holiday, Lewis, Laboe was quite staggering to the station where the commercial load was quite down.

So the management of KRLA in 1976 virtually up against the wall and with very little revenues into the station decided that the whole thing had to go in favor of a syndicated programming possibility, something from Drake-Chenault, a total all-automated station where the programming would be "bought programming" from a syndicator. This appeared the way KRLA was going to go except for another possibility that existed.

The person who had the most highly rated program on the station approached KRLA management and said they would put their own money into the station to bail it out, become part of KRLA management itself, save the station from going under, and try to give the station stability so it could be awarded a permanent FCC license from its interim license that it had been under for so many years.

The station was at a crossroads. Something had to give. So in early 1976 Lee Simms, Roy Elwell, Paul Compton, Johnny Magnus, Sie Holiday and Robert Q. Lewis were released from KRLA and their shows became a thing of the past. The M.O.R. format that Elwell had initiated in late '73/early '74, even though a good attempt, was too costly without a whole lot of return.

What KRLA decided to do was to virtually turn the station programming to the KRLA air talent whose show had the highest ratings at the station and see if he could do what others couldn't. The KRLA transmitter was in El Monte. El Monte also was the home of other special memories for so many from generation to generation. El Monte was the home to the romantic Legg Lake, especially at night with a brown-eyed girl from your dreams. El Monte was the home to KRLA. El Monte was the home for so many romantic memories. New "memories from El Monte" will come in our next room of the dream-house.



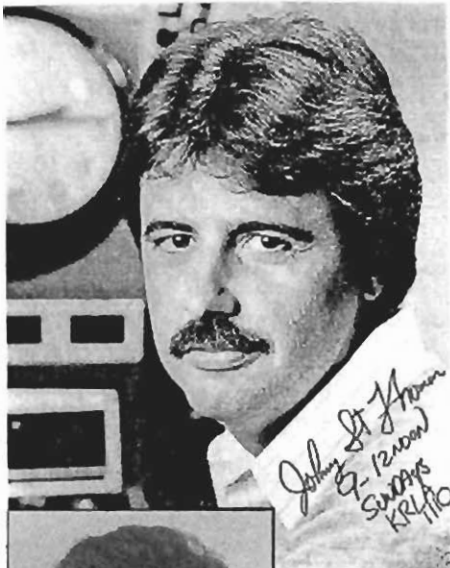
**PAUL COMPTON**



**Johnny Magnus**  
"Johnny Magnus Show"



Ah, ha! Who have we here? None other than Daphne of Emperor Hudson fame! (To those in the know, she's also called Sie Holiday.) Sie had her own show on KRLA.



## CHAPTER 11

### "MEMORIES FROM EL MONTE"



JOHNNY HAYES

Manny Pacheco

KRLA, the once great "Station of the Stars" was broke in early 1976. It could barely pay its bills. The station had a strong lineup of mostly middle-of-the-road personalities, but even that was not enough to draw in the audience or advertisers. They weren't there anymore.

Roy Elwell really tried to make a go of this format. He did have big names like Lee Simms, Johnny Magnus and Paul Compton, but a middle-of-the-road esoteric jazz-M.O.R. format just wasn't what would pull in an audience on AM radio at this time. Elwell's format was an interesting one, but many found it hard to define and certainly different from the famous TOP 40 days and heritage of this once-upon-a-time legendary station.

KRLA was losing money. The salaries of Simms, Magnus and the others were quite steep, and the station just couldn't afford them anymore. Even though it was supposed to turn over all profits to public TV and educational radio as a condition for its interim license, it could no longer do that because the station was barely able to pay the electricity for its Pasadena studios and South El Monte transmitter. There was talk that maybe KRLA might have to go off the air due to lack of money to keep it in operation. The station was forced to lay off the entire announcer staff except for only two, Johnny Hayes who since September 1971 has been solidly entrenched at KRLA, and the weekend show host from his nightclub in Hollywood, Art Laboe.

KRLA almost bought a Drake-Chenault syndicated format for a total automation format, but instead decided to use the man responsible for the most popular show on the station. So KRLA decided to take Art Laboe up on his offer to save the station by putting his own money into it and in doing so became program director and a part of management.



Laboe agreed to save the station but never in KRLA's history has the influence of one man been so great as in the five-plus years that KRLA was programmed by Art Laboe. Not even in the days of the "shadow over the pasture." Laboe's influence was greater over this once mighty radio station. And thanks to Art Laboe, KRLA was reborn and had a very successful new start.

The call letters would remain the same, but the station would not. KRLA had a fantasy Emperor at one time with Emperor Hudson. This time, KRLA would have a real king, Art Laboe, known affectionately as the "King of Sunset Boulevard."

Laboe would make the entire 50,000-watt, once mighty radio station over in his own direction and demographics and did proudly save KRLA. New memories from El Monte would be made from the KRLA towers standing tall in their South El Monte pasture. If Laboe hadn't "come to the rescue," it was quite possible that KRLA might have to shut down its powerful transmitter and sadly become a thing of the past. But Laboe would see that that wouldn't happen.

Part of Laboe's "deal" to bail out KRLA was to have total control of the programming. With the station barely able to pay its bills, management could see Laboe as maybe the only hope. Laboe was remembered by so many as "loving the oldies," and Laboe's music was so special to so many and it was this blend of oldies and new currents that brought back KRLA. Some said it couldn't be done. Art Laboe knew it could.

To many, Laboe seemed to be more of a myth than a legend because he was never a major mainstream radio star in Los Angeles in the Silver Age. Laboe never was one of the great "Seven Swingin' Gentlemen" from Color Radio KFMB. Laboe never was one of the KRLA "Eleven-Ten Men." Laboe was never one of the 93/KHJ "Boss Jocks." Those stations were the big ones of their eras. KFMB, the 50's. KRLA, the early 60's, KHJ, the late 60's. Laboe was never heard on those stations during their glory years, and never a major radio star on Silver Age mainstream radio. But Laboe was one of the most popular names in radio history in a different way.

Art Laboe was a big giant star in the English speaking Mexican-American communities by his involvement in so-called "fringe" radio which targeted its programming to a more ethnic audience who like the so-called "oldies." No one came close to capturing such loyalties and popularity over generations than Art Laboe. Art Laboe is a hero to so many Southern California generations after generations, after generations.

Most people think that "oldies," regarding records, would be anything that was a past hit on the Billboard chart. But when "oldies" are defined to Art Laboe's audience, it is clearly records that have a strong R and B, black, or even a "salsa" type flavor.

(One of the most beautiful songs of the decade of the '80's that KRLA made popular during the Art Laboe era was "Together" by Tierra that captured that special feeling for so many. This record, even though at the time a "current," certainly was a good example of an "oldies" sound record.) Art Laboe really knew this music and had the special touch for knowing what was special to his audience.

An "oldie" to Art Laboe's audience would be "I Do Love You" by Billy Stewart, "Wishing On A Star" by Rose Royce, or "Angel Baby" by Rosie and the Originals. This is what Art Laboe featured as the core playlist on KRLA. No Beatles. No Flower Power. No late '60's. Very little British Invasion, even though that music was very instrumental in building up KRLA to be the greatest radio station in the country. But KRLA would achieve greatness in a different way, and thanks to Art Laboe KRLA came back.

Laboe had been featured years before on KXLA in the early 1950's before the days of KRLA (see Chapter 1) but achieved most of his popularity from remote broadcasts on KPOP (later KGBS) on Courtland Street in Lynwood, where the remotes were from a '50's era drive-in restaurant in Hollywood. These live remotes were legendary, and people came from miles and miles to meet Art Laboe and be part of these special broadcasts.

Laboe also had put out a 15-record album series called "Oldies But Goodies" which featured mostly R and B and soul acts targeted to Laboe's core audience. Laboe even presented concerts at the now-demolished El Monte American Legion Stadium. The song "Memories of El Monte" was written and recorded about this legendary music palace. Those concerts are considered legendary and hold a special place in the hearts of so many who were there.

We first met Art Laboe in 1972 while Laboe hosted a request and dedication show at the old KPPC-FM in their studios on Chester Street in Pasadena after they left the Pasadena Presbyterian Church. We recall one girl who requested and dedicated "Let's Stay Together" by Al Green to the guy she loved. She made a special "pilgrimage" to meet Art Laboe.

As stated before, Laboe had a tremendously loyal core audience that followed him to the various fringe stations that Laboe's show was heard on over the years. However, taking over KRLA held a special fascination for Laboe. And that is why Laboe was able to succeed especially well with KRLA from 1976 to almost 1982. This was one of the most successful eras in all KRLA's 30-year history. KRLA had been reborn. Thanks to Art Laboe.

The water-cooled KRLA transmitter had been built back in 1955, back when the station was KXLA. The transmitter was getting old and over the years the signal of KRLA was weak, especially in its night-time signal. In 1976, the signal had gotten much weaker than from its days in 1965 on the Dick Biondi and Bill Slater request shows. The station always had reduced power at night, 10,000 down from 50,000 watts, but at this time in 1976 the signal day and night had been increasingly weak.

It is a common fact in radio reception that the closer one gets to the transmitter towers, the louder and clearer the reception will be. Therefore, if you live in El Monte, South El Monte or Pico Rivera which is almost in the "shadows" of the KRLA towers at that time, KRLA would be your "clearest" and "loudest" station on the dial.

Because of this, Laboe would program his music for the high-minority community and demographics in which the South El Monte transmitter was then located. Since the transmitter towers were right there in South El Monte, the surrounding demographically targeted community would embrace KRLA as their station right down the street from Legg Lake in the Whittier Narrows Park Area where so many locals spent their weekends with "pinata" parties and "menudo" cook-offs. And coming from most of their radios in the park would be their favorite kind of music, now available just one block away. Their music would never sound clearer.

So Laboe felt that the marriage of his programming on South El Monte's very own KRLA would be a terrific hit. And it was. KRLA did thrive during this period and actually at one point became the number one music station on AM. Laboe had a winning idea! We were told of Laboe's plans by Sherman Cohen, who Laboe had signed as one of his assistants. Cohen called us on February 26, 1976 and told us that Laboe would be starting his programming the following day on February 27, 1976 and to be sure to listen. What we heard was this.

As we have said before, all the music on KRLA was actually put over the air by the engineers at the KRLA transmitter site in South El Monte. The live announcing was from Pasadena, but the actual collection of recorded programming, such as spots, commercials and promos, and of course, the collection of "records on cart," the music, were right there in the transmitter building on Lexington and Gallatin Road.

When Laboe took over the programming on February 27, Laboe had a brilliant idea to initiate his format to KRLA. Laboe would broadcast the morning drive show live from the KRLA transmitter building right there in South El Monte, where Laboe would be actually operating the "cart machines" himself and having a hands-on, literally, control of the music. This music was very special to Art Laboe and he wanted to make sure his "oldies but goodies" would be presented in the best way possible. A microphone was rigged up right there in the middle room of the transmitter building and Laboe actually did a "live" show from the KRLA transmitter for the first time in the station's history. Art Laboe had many new ideas during his almost six-year era, and this was one of the best.

As we have discussed in earlier chapters, there was always an emergency tape reel at the transmitter that would go over the air live if the lines were temporarily severed from the transmitter to the Pasadena studios. Several times this tape had to be played. But this was the first time in the station's history that the air talent would actually conduct a show live from the KRLA transmitter! During that show, and several shows after that, Laboe kept making references to the fact that he was broadcasting live from the KRLA transmitter in "your town and community" South El Monte. Laboe really cared about this audience. He served this community very well.

The community responded in full. Tales were said of the locals actually bringing Laboe "huevos" from their nearby homes right there in the South El Monte area right next to the transmitter building one block away from Legg Lake. Laboe during those early first live shows really brought the station close to the community and made KRLA "their station." This was reminiscent of the loyal fans who made "the donut run" for B. Mitchell Reed in 1972. Two different eras, but examples of listeners loving their stations. It was a successful idea. Suddenly Laboe's demographically targeted audience and community embraced KRLA as their own station and suddenly all thoughts of the old KRLA, the once-upon-a-time "dream-house," had disappeared. The old listeners who grew up with "The Station of the Stars" weren't listening to KRLA anymore. But there were a whole lot of new ones, thanks to Art Laboe and the new KRLA!

So for the first few days it was Art Laboe in the morning drive "live" from the KRLA South El Monte transmitter. This was a very successful move on Laboe's account and further solidified the important base and core of his targeted audience. The station now started to thrive again. A whole new demographic audience was listening to KRLA. And this audience was one of the biggest in KRLA's history and, thanks to Laboe, are still loyal to KRLA today.

Laboe also initiated other new programming devices to KRLA as he took over the station in 1976. First, there was no more mention of KRLA as "Radio Eleven-Ten." Laboe now made sure KRLA was "Hit Radio 11" and had jingles made of "Hit Radio 11-KRLA" with Spanish-accented vocalists on this jingle. Secondly, Laboe had another idea that proved very successful. Laboe knew that many in his demographically targeted audience rode the RTD buses. So big KRLA banners would be placed on the sides of the buses, some of the first radio advertising on public buses, which today is very common. But at that time in 1976 KRLA was the first, another important and lasting innovation from the talents and successful thinking of Art Laboe. And it's no understatement that if it hadn't been for Art Laboe there may not be a KRLA today. To this, all devoted "Eleven-Ten" listeners should be eternally grateful.

Art Laboe's style was warm, friendly, and at times somewhat "corny" and certainly not "slick", but that was part of Laboe's charm. He had a one-to-one relationship with his audience, and when he did "live" shows he was at his best. He sounded like he really was talking to just you. Not too many personalities have had that ability. Laboe was totally unique, and it's no surprise that so many generations looked up to Laboe as their friend, their comfort, and their hero. Laboe was revered by his audience and had an almost "omnipresence" and a legendary quality that has lasted for over 30 years in Southern California. The unique thing about Art Laboe is that he was probably better known than most of the mainstream air personalities at the major stations. Laboe's audience was loyal and deep and transcended all ages in his special demographics. If KRLA was the home for heroes in its history, then Art Laboe held a special honor and position. It is difficult to explain just how Art Laboe was so mythical and, in a way, legendary. Many TOP 40 listeners in the Silver Age never heard Laboe but always knew of him. The term "Oldies but Goodies" was created by Laboe and his 15-record albums with those titles are some of the most special records in his audience's collection.

What makes Laboe even more unique is that even though Laboe was not Hispanic himself he had that complete and total loyalty from that audience that transcended all ages. Laboe realized that the type of music that would fit the "Oldies but Goodies" direction had such a strong, emotional attachment to his audience. The music brought back so many memories of growing up in Los Angeles and being a soundtrack to the lives of his special audience.

As we mentioned in Chapter 10, Laboe's shows from XEPRS in 1971 were heard in the entire western United States that Laboe's almost mystical quality coming over the radios in so many homes and neighborhoods. The dances at the El Monte American Legion Stadium were a cultural tradition that brought so many together in love with their own special soundtrack.

Even the record albums themselves that he produced were special collections that were designed to bring so many memories back to those who listened to Laboe. So when Art Laboe gave KRLA its successful rebirth in 1976 and coincidentally because KRLA also was in El Monte just really down the street (Tyler Ave.-Santa Anita) from the old El Monte American Legion Stadium, Laboe's presence in this community went full circle. Art Laboe would now bring new "Memories from El Monte" - KRLA in El Monte - to so many loyalists who knew him as their friend and as the one who really understood what music would touch their hearts.

To continue KRLA's fresh new start and re-birth thanks to Art Laboe, a new logo of KRLA was implemented by Laboe with the "K" and "R" of KRLA dropping below cursorily, below the other letters. Also Laboe would not only play "oldies" (selected R and B soul mostly) but also blend in some new records too that fit the KRLA demographics. A weekly playlist would be now printed and available in stores every week. Art Laboe really and truly brought KRLA back!

But the most successful Laboe innovation was the KRLA "Hit Man" contest where blue-and-white paper bumper stickers would be available at local merchants and listeners would be encouraged to put these stickers on their cars. If a KRLA promotion employee ("Hit Man") pulled you over in your car and if your radio was tuned to KRLA, you would win \$100.00. The original KRLA Hit Radio 11 bumper stickers were blue paper with white print, but the later ones were made of vinyl with yellow letters on a blue background. Suddenly these stickers were all over town and people started to talk about KRLA again. KRLA had been re-born thanks to Art Laboe!

As far as the on-the-air programming, Laboe usually did the 5 to 9 a.m. show "live" at least for now with the rest of the day taped except for evenings after 7 p.m. Johnny Hayes would do a live request and dedication show.

Also Laboe would initiate a new feature called "The Big Eleven Countdown" where one particular year would be highlighted during the Noon to 1 "lunch hour," counting down the top 11 songs from that particular year. This program would be broadcast "live". The stories that Laboe would tell on this 12 noon show were reminiscent of the "Stories Behind the Stars," made famous by Casey Kasem at 12 noon all those years ago.

So after Laboe took over KRLA in 1976, the schedule was tentatively like this: Art Laboe would be "live" 5 to 9 a.m. 9 to Noon would be automated with Laboe voiceovers. Noon to 1 would be the Big Eleven Countdown Show "live" with Art Laboe. From 1 to 7 p.m. would be automated with Laboe voice tracks. From 7 to 11 p.m. would be the request show with Johnny Hayes, "live." From 11 p.m. to midnight Laboe would initiate a show called "Love at Eleven" where "oldies" love songs would be played for one hour. Later this "Love at Eleven" show would be replaced by "The Elvis Hour" where each night following the alleged "death" of Elvis Presley in August 1977, one-hour from 11 to Midnight would be devoted to all-Elvis music. From "Elvis to Elton" was Art Laboe's slogan for his new KRLA. Those who liked Elvis Presley really appreciated these late night offerings. But from 1976 to August 1977, the "Love at Eleven" show with voiceovers by Laboe and also his assistant, "Jack the Hitman" Jack Roth, would be heard pre-recorded. All-night from midnight to 5 would be more pre-recorded music and voiceovers by Laboe.

So it was, no overstatement, in many ways, KRLA was now virtually "All-Art Laboe" radio with Laboe's own voice being heard from midnight until 7 p.m. at night, 19 hours out of the broadcast day. Nobody seemed to mind about the lack of personalities. Laboe was so legendarily accepted by his demographic community that any time his voice was heard there was a built-in comfort factor there that no one seemed to complain about. Art Laboe was the star they wanted to hear, and Art Laboe was a superstar in KRLA's 30-year history.

Also about this time in 1976 and early 1977, Laboe used the services of former 93/KHU "Boss Jock" Billy Pearl and his assistant Tom Greenleigh, where Pearl would even do some "live" shows in the evenings himself in early 1977 as "Jack Cheese." Pearl and his partner developed many of the promotions on KRLA in these early years of Laboe's involvement and was very successful in helping establish this new format. Art Laboe was on a roll!

The only other "air talent" that was heard on KRLA during these Art Laboe years were "Jack the Hitman" Roth, who would fill in for Laboe once in a while on the morning show, calling himself just "Jack the Hitman," and also "Mike the Newsmen," Mike Horn. Both Horn and Roth were not strong air talents but did carry out what Laboe wanted in a very low-key, without much personality or individual style that might have overshadowed the music. But Laboe wanted it this way. With the exception of Johnny Hayes who was useful to Laboe in this format, Laboe did not want any other "names" as air talent, only his own.

If someone were to think of KRLA, it would be "Art Laboe" rather than a team of "Eleven-Ten Men", as KRLA had in its halcyon days of Beatle Radio and "The Station of the Stars." Laboe did not want to have any other "names" confuse the listeners, as it was Laboe's idea to just have his own name in the forefront of KRLA as the main "box office" attraction, and any other voice on KRLA, with the exception of Johnny Hayes would just be a low profile voice.

Jack Roth rarely used his own last name; it was always "Jack the Hitman" or with Mike Horn it was "Mike the Newsmen." Once in a while they let slip their own last name but very seldom, and Laboe had a very strong autocratic control of the radio station. And since Laboe had such an important financial and management influence on the station, no one questioned Laboe's programming, as Laboe did rescue KRLA from disaster, gave the station a re-birth, and made it the number one music station on the AM band. Art Laboe brought KRLA back.

Laboe did bring in one rather talented air talent who again did not have a strong personality but probably was the best one that Laboe would sign. So, John Newton, known on the air as "Johnny St. Thomas," would be another on-the-air voice and also worked behind the scenes with Laboe's management. St. Thomas also did various substitution air shifts, such as the Noon to 1 "Countdown" show once in a while. Johnny St. Thomas was probably the best new talent in the Laboe era.

But at this time in KRLA's history, Laboe was at the controls and he could do virtually whatever he wanted. He was pulling in the ratings. He had a personal financial stake in the station, and he was in charge. And he brought KRLA back!

However, one major change would take place in these early days of Laboe's realm at KRLA. Johnny Hayes had been doing the night-time request and dedication show from 7 to 11 p.m. As many of these callers had "nicknames" (Harpo, Droopy, Sleepy, etc., however, no Docs, Bashfuls, or Grumpys) it was thought that Laboe would be more "sensitive" to these nicknames, as Johnny Hayes at times, a Southerner and an Anglo unfamiliar with that culture, might say some

names in jest or not pronounce the name right. Art Laboe cared about his audience and wanted to make sure they were happy. Art Laboe truly and sincerely cared about his loyalists.

So Laboe would take over the night-time dedication show himself 7 to 11 and Hayes would move to the 12 noon to 1 p.m. "Countdown" show. And Laboe would pre-record his morning drive show at this time with live news updates from "Mike the Newsmen." Hayes was better suited to the nostalgia-oriented lunch hour "Countdown" show, and Laboe was a bigger "box office" draw for the community calling him up at night.

However when the workload got too strong for Laboe to do the 7 to 11 p.m. show every night himself, because of Art Laboe's many interests and "Original Sound" recording studio in Hollywood, Laboe brought in two other relatively low-personality names to do the Request show 7 to 11 p.m., Rick Morales in September 1980 who had some fame earlier in Los Angeles as "Mucho Morales" on 93/KHJ in the waning days of the station, and later in March 1981 Manny Pacheco. With them in that show, Laboe's audience felt a certain comfort hearing someone who "understood" their culture and concerns. Morales started as "Rick Morales" but later went back to his KHJ name, "Mucho Morales."

Again, having these two select air talents was an important link in Laboe's bringing KRLA closer to his targeted community. There were also very few Hispanic air talents on Los Angeles radio at that time, and Laboe should be commended on giving broadcasting work to ethnic broadcasters who had been pretty much locked out of commercial mainstream radio for many years before. For this Laboe should be highly commended. No one did more to open up KRLA to this group than Art Laboe. Laboe was a hero!

During the "disco" fad of 1978 and 1979, Laboe also instituted a certain amount of disco programming on the live 7 to 11 p.m. show. Art Laboe continued to have the magic touch!

But probably the most important milestone in the Art Laboe era was KRLA in 1979 finally achieving its regular FCC license, no longer an interim license station as it had been for so many years. The stability and profit-making that Laboe brought to KRLA certainly was a factor to be considered in the station, finally, since 1964, finally being awarded a regular station license. This may not have happened had it not been for KRLA's rebirth, thanks to Art Laboe.

For further information on the license situation of KRLA, we recommend former KRLA engineer Don Beem's college thesis on KRLA on the shelf of Cal State Fullerton's library. Again, we do not discuss KRLA's license problems here in this book, as most listeners were unaware of these behind-the-scenes developments, and besides Beem did such a thorough job on this other side to KRLA's history. Again our book studies the sound of KRLA as the soundtrack to so many lives and how the dream-house had a mystical, fantastical effect on the listeners and the "Eleven-Ten Men" who were heard from those six big towers in South El Monte. And the Art Laboe era truly was one of the most successful.

Also it should be mentioned here that sometime in 1979 or 1980, a car crashed into the field where the KRLA transmitter towers were standing proudly in South El Monte and demolished one of the towers. Shortly around this time a "7th" tower was added to the KRLA transmitter tower field. Also because of changes in the FCC requirements, not all the KRLA red tower lights had to be turned on at night as before when all lamps had to be on after dark. So before, when four towers were lit with their impressive red lights, now only two or three were actually required to be illuminated at night. For those of us who always used those towers as a landmark, it was a major change in a spectacular sight.

KRLA also purchased during the Art Laboe era an expensive "trailer" mobile studio for newscasts that would be located at Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa. This mobile studio could also be moved around the community and used for remote broadcasts, getting the station right into the community. Also another programming innovation by Laboe was called "Mini-Concerts" where two or three songs by the same artist would be heard back-to-back. Or when "Hitmen" in the field would allow listeners to announce records from in-the-field tape recordings. Laboe's magic continued to pay off.

Finally in the Summer of 1977 after we had urged Mike Horn for many months who had close ties to Laboe and was always, most of the time, cordial with us, to do something with the Beatles on KRLA, to at least broaden the base, to get KRLA more like it used to be in the era of "The Station of the Stars," a Beatles record was about to be heard for the first time in the Art Laboe era. In other words, Laboe already had his core audience, so an effort was made toward the listeners who used to love KRLA as Beatle Radio all those years ago and missed those days and era, and may-be not listening to KRLA with its different focus at this time. We had hoped that Laboe would do something in this direction.

Even though Art Laboe did not like the Beatles or this music era, one weekend Laboe allowed Horn, after much lobbying from us, to do something with the Beatles. So Horn asked us to supply airchecks and old KRLA Beatle jingles to Pasadena studio engineer Phil Little who made dubs of the KRLA Beatle jingles and KRLA Beatle interviews we had saved in our archives from 1964, and incorporate these into KRLA's Beatle programming that weekend. We were excited to try to get this era back for KRLA.

According to Horn, it took a lot of pressure to finally get a Beatles record played on Laboe's programmed KRLA, but the weekend did go over in the Summer of 1977, and it was a pleasure for us to hear such happy Fab Four vibes on KRLA again. The Beatle interviews were heard, but sadly Dave Hull's voice was edited out. The only other salute to the Beatles during the Art Laboe era was on a KRLA survey playlist sheet distributed in record stores in December 1980. On the back of the sheet was a very touching display box from a station that was Beatle Radio a long time ago. "John, We Will Miss You Always." That said it all. Those who loved the Beatles thank Laboe for this.

But that one weekend in the Summer of 1977 that saluted the Beatles, turned out to be a one-shot deal, and the Beatles were not heard again on KRLA during this era of Art Laboe's programming.

One famous George Harrison song is "All Things Must Pass." So in October 1981, the presence of Art Laboe at KRLA was greatly reduced by management decisions. But to paraphrase the famous saying, "The King is dead, Long live the Kingdom." The Kingdom of Eleven-Ten would live on as the winds of change over the Land of Eleven-Ten would bring KRLA to once again face up to its great, proud heritage.

In many ways Laboe was like a hero in literature or in the movies, who came into the situation during a time of difficulty and saved the day, then rode off into the sunset when his job was done. Art Laboe was that hero.

The five-plus years of Art Laboe's involvement at KRLA will go down in the station's history as some of the most successful. It was true that much of the past heritage of KRLA from the halcyon years was no longer really part of the Art Laboe era. But to Laboe's audience it didn't matter. KRLA to them was Art Laboe and what he brought in. Laboe took an available audience and gave them a station and made it successful. A lot of traditions and sounds of the old KRLA were not heard during this era because Laboe's audience were not part of the "Porch People" or Hullaballoosers or Beatlemaniacs from KRLA's past.

But there really were two KRLA's that had successful lives. "The Hudson Era", as Mike Wagner calls it, and of course, the Art Laboe era, and both eras, even though quite different, were both very special to their own audiences. Laboe may not have liked the Beatles, late Sixties groups, or psychedelia. But the music that Laboe did feature was songs that had lasted for generations and hold a special place in the hearts of so many. Laboe's songs bring back so many memories of strolling along the shores of Legg Lake or parked along the side of Lexington-Gallatin Road with the one you love. And love is all you need.

Laboe gave KRLA a rebirth and a new life in 1976. Now in October 1981, the involvement of Art Laboe would change. The station that Laboe had rebuilt, salvaged, and made come alive again was about to be transformed back into the dream-house that stood so proudly up until the Summer of 1971.

KRLA was now about to go home for the holidays to once again recognize its glorious past. Like a beautiful castle on a hill or an impressive building along the freeway in South El Monte, KRLA - the Dream-House, would be open again.

The fresh air blew down upon the field. Even the horses seemed content. The spirit of Princess Blue Sky was high above the now seven impressive towers, towering "up, up and away" into the clouds overhead.

A gentle breeze blew through the red-and-white towers. Princess Blue Sky was happy. Her radio station had come back.

The logo for KRLA Radio features the call letters "KRLA" in a large, bold, stylized font with a thick outline and a slight shadow effect. Below "KRLA", the word "Radio" is written in a smaller, simpler, sans-serif font, also with a thick outline.

**Dave Hull**  
**is back with 25 years**  
**of great hits featuring**  
**the exciting sounds**  
**of the 60's**

**3pm-7pm**



**KRLA AM 1110**

The station that keeps you remembering



HUMBLE HARV





"People tend to consider me more of a friend . . . I think," says KRLA personality Tarrv McGovern of his early morning shtick.

# Rege Cordic plays 25 years of great hits featuring the exciting sounds of the 60's

5am-9am



## KRLA AM 1110

### WIN THE GRAND PRIZE!

A Beatles British vacation for two via:

**LAKER  
AIRWAYS**

200 other entries will receive "KRLA Beatles at the Hollywood Bowl" album!

Winners' names will be announced during the Beatles Bonanza on the weekend of December 4th, 5th and 6th. So keep listening!

## KRLA AM 1110



DAVE HULL

### CHAPTER 12

### "HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS"

In our last chapter we discussed the sound of KRLA from early 1976 to the Fall of 1981 when the station was programmed by Art Laboe. The direction of the station was no longer the station of the Hullaballooer but now directed for the past five years toward "Oldies But Goodies" and a culture different from the one that built KRLA, embraced it and then sadly lost it when the "shadow" fell over the pasture in 1971.

The station reborn by Art Laboe was about to make a change, as the KRLA management decided a new direction for KRLA was due. One theory our research shows is that the management wanted Laboe to do a live morning show, and that Laboe did not want to do live radio. Another theory went that the management of KRLA wanted more control of the direction of KRLA, namely the new manager, Bert West, and so when KRLA entered October 1981, a change was blowing in the wind, and Art Laboe's influence was about to come to an end.

We first read about a change at KRLA in the newspaper, that Art Laboe would be giving up his morning show and that Rege Cordic, a mature sounding former KNX-AM, Columbia Square in Torrance M.O.R. personality from the mid-Sixties would be taking over the morning show, and that "Jack the Hitman" Roth would be the new program director. We contacted KRLA about the changes, as after all no one can write an 80-page thesis on a radio station and not take an interest in the station's direction.

We were put in touch with Jack Roth who said,

"Bill, I need you to come down to KRLA! I've got some big news but I can't tell you over the phone."



We told him we'd be down and were interested in what was happening. Roth knew that we had written a thesis on the station back in 1969 and knew about the days of the "Station Of The Stars" and even the Johnnie Darin era, so we went down to the station at the Huntington Hotel, were invited to lunch with Roth and manager Bert West at the hotel's restaurant, and the plan was put to us. Bert West asked us at the meal table,

"Bill, what do you think of Dave Hull?" We were surprised that Dave Hull's name came up, because Art Laboe did not like the Dave Hull era of KRLA and the Beatles. We recall saying that we have kept in touch with Hull, that we remember student teaching at Highland Oaks School in Arcadia where Hull's daughter, Lisa, was in the fourth grade, and had met Hull's son in an Arcadia High School shop class in the Fall of 1978 when we continued to do work for that school district.

We told him very straight,

"Nobody's better than Dave Hull" and then told the story of how Hull was at the top of the ratings in January 1969 when being "rudely interrupted" by being fired by KRLA and replaced in the mornings by William F. Williams.

After lunch, Roth took us into his office and said,

"Bill, we're going to bring back Dave Hull."

Roth not only told us that he was going to bring back Dave Hull but also sign to KRLA Harvey Miller who had been doing airshifts at KUTE-FM, Glendale, playing sort of a hybrid disco-soul, geared toward an "urban" audience. Roth said that he had to retain Rege Cordic in the morning shift, so Cordic's shift was set, Hayes would continue a mostly pre-recorded mid-day show with the "Countdown" feature Noon to 1 live, and that Hull would be signed for afternoons 3 to 7 p.m.

Roth told us he was going to move the station toward the direction of the Sixties where KRLA had not been sounding in many, many years. Roth wanted to bring back Hull and Miller because they both had that '60's built-in audience.

But the biggest news of all that Roth hit us with is that,

"Bill, for Halloween weekend, we're going to bring 'em all back!"

Roth then told us he was going to have what was so successfully done by KMET in November 1972, nine years earlier, when they brought back all the KFWB "Seven Swingin' Gentlemen" for one day to salute the old KFWB glory days. Roth said he was going to top that by having this "re-union weekend" all weekend, Saturday, October 31, and Sunday, November 1st. He was going to bring back an array of the personalities most associated with KRLA in the peak years 1964 through 1966.

He said that for Saturday Bob Hudson would be 6 to 9. Johnny Hayes 9 to Noon. Casey Kasem would come back at Noon, but only for one hour, as Kasem had not done live radio in many years (since KRLA in 1969) and only wanted to do an hour, as it would be a challenge enough in itself.

From 1 to 3 he was going to bring in Ted Quillin. Quillin was a great radio personality but really came before KRLA hit its peak in 1965, but would be back 1 to 3 p.m. live. For 3 to 6 p.m. would be Dave Hull. Dave Hull told us he thought that this reunion and his return to KRLA should have been billed as "Home for the Holidays" but this line was rejected by the KRLA brass and never used. In respect for Dave Hull and for his lost great idea, we've resurrected Hull's phrase for the title of this chapter.

Roth also was to have Harvey Miller 6 to 9 p.m. for his first show on KRLA. Because Miller was going to stay on the station after the weekend, that it was appropriate even though he was not a KRLA alumnus.

For 9 to midnight that Saturday, Roth signed Bobby Pickett to come back and do a revival of his 1964 Halloween show, 17 years later. But for midnight to 6 on that Sunday morning it would be just more taped programming, no disc jockey alumni, just automation. We recommended Bill Slater, Pat Moore, or Bobby Dale.

The following day there would be a special public-affairs-type show right before 9 a.m., that would have interviews with some of the returning alumni. 9 to Noon would be Charlie O'Donnell. Noon to 3 Dick Moreland and 3 to 6 Rebel Foster who would once again "do" Maude Skidmore.

For the evening hours KRLA would play a pre-recorded Bob Eubanks show from 6 to 9 and Dick Biondi 9 to 11. Eubanks apparently did not want to do live radio, as he hadn't been on the air live since 1967, and Biondi was currently involved with activities back East.

At that point, Roth asked us what we'd like to do, as he wanted us to have some part of the festivities. We told Roth about how in 1974, Roy Elwell had called us the "Unofficial KRLA Historian" and how we did the one-minute spot on the air.

This is what we proposed to Roth and his assistant P.D., John Newton, known on the air once in a while as "Johnny St. Thomas." Our idea was for us to do a series of about maybe 10 spots, about 1-1/2 minutes long, where we'd recall some key moments of KRLA during those halcyon years, 1964 through early 1967.

In the background while we would be talking about KRLA, the instrumental record "That's Where It's At" by the T-Bones would be played, as it was the KRLA theme music made into a record. Roth said for us to do a sample "audition tape" and let him hear them.

We recorded a sample at home and the next day brought the tape to Newton. Newton said they were good and to go into the middle booth between the control room and the disc jockey booth to cut the carts. This was very exciting for us, as here we were sitting in the booth and doing promo spots for KRLA.

One last thing. We asked Roth if we could change the "Unofficial" to "Official" in our honorary title "Official KRLA Historian" as due to our extensive collection of airchecks and printed memorabilia, it was only fitting. If not us, who else? They said yes.

So that one day in October of 1981, we cut the series of spots. To the background of "That's Where It's At" by the T-Bones, the spots which we wrote ourselves were as follows:

"The Sixties are back on KRLA. Hi, this is Bill Earl, the Official KRLA Historian. In January 1967, Bob Eubanks was heard 9 to noon, the KRLA Beat was in its fourth year, and the Pat Moore show was heard every morning midnight to six, with Moore music! KRLA. We were there in 1967 and 14 years later we're still right here with you in 1981. This is Bill Earl. The Official KRLA Historian." (end of spot).

We made about 10 or so of those. All were used except for one. The one that wasn't used went as follows:

"The Sixties are back on KRLA. Hi, this is Bill Earl, the Official KRLA Historian. In May 1965, KRLA welcomed Johnny Hayes to KRLA on weekends. With the exception of a few months in late 1968 and for 9 months in early 1971, the Johnny Hayes show has been heard on KRLA solidly since September 1971 and is the longest running KRLA personality in the history of the station! KRLA. We were there in 1965 and 16 years later we're still right with you in 1981. This is Bill Earl, the Official KRLA Historian."

Roth also told us that he would be asking Dave Hull to do a sort of practice show one afternoon in mid-October, substituting for Johnny Hayes on the "Countdown" show from noon to 1 "live." So on Monday, October 19, 1981, Dave Hull, clearly the greatest in the history of KRLA, was once again heard on KRLA at 12:00 noon. His show began.

"Now let's see, where was I, when I was so rudely interrupted back in January 1969." It was a classic line from the Hullballooner.

Dave Hull sounded somewhat stiff, as he had not been heard on L.A. radio since 1979 on KMPC-AM, North Hollywood where he did the late night "Love Line" show. But as the show progressed, Hull got better and the magic was heard again. The combination and chemistry of Dave Hull on KRLA was a dream come true for all the Hullballooners. Unfortunately, this Dave Hull warm-up show had not been publicized ahead of time, and listeners, unless they just happened to turn KRLA on or knew ahead of time like we did, it was unfortunately missed by many.

So Dave Hull was back. Art Laboe was no longer on the air but still had some limited involvement with the station, and October 1981 moved forward to the reunion weekend.

The best on the reunion weekend was Bob Hudson. Hudson sounded better than he had in years. Hudson had not really done a live one-man show since 1971 when at KGBS, Lynwood, before he teamed with Ron Landry. So hearing Hudson do the morning show on Halloween really was a treat.

The first of our "Official KRLA Historian" spots was heard on Hudson's show and after the spot, Hudson said, "OK, thank you Bill, now here is the way out of the station ... you go through this door ..." and then you could hear a sound effect of someone crashing down or opening up a closet where everything falls on them. After that sound effect Hudson said,

"Bill, that's the wrong door!"

We thank Bob Hudson for making that spot sound even better. Radio was "the big screen" then. Hudson was better than ever, and this particular show was even better than when he returned in 1985.

Johnny Hayes went on live with the shutters open on the glass window in the studio from 9 to noon. This was the first live show that Hayes had done for more than just an hour in years. Hayes never sounded better, and with his recollections from KRLA Beats that he read from during his show was a nice touch.

Casey Kasem noon to 1 was way too short, and Kasem never was able to get back into the swing of things. Kasem sounded very out of practice in doing a live show, several on the air errors were made, and it's unfortunate that Kasem couldn't have done a full show to really warm up the way he had in 1966 and 1967, Kasem's greatest KRLA years.

Ted Quillin from 1 to 3 p.m. had some great "doubles." After playing a commercial for a women's clothing store "It'sadilly," Quillin said,

"It's a dilly. Yep. That's what she told me. It's no record. But it's a dilly."

But it was Dave Hull 3 to 6 p.m. that the excellence really happened. During his show the KRLA lobby was reopened and coming into the station were the lost legions of "Porch People," women in their 30's now married and mature like Susie Hanks and Denetia Arellanes, who first used to come to the lobby to see Hull years ago. This was sad and yet happy to see those loyal fans come back to the station of their youth - KRLA - the home for heroes, and their very special hero, Dave Hull.

After Hull played our "Official KRLA Historian spot," Hull said:

"Did you hear that? Bill Earl? Yes, he's still here at the station carrying around this big, huge scrapbook! The world's full of them!"

Thanks, Dave?

After Hull came Harvey Miller once again calling himself "Humble Harv." Next, Bobby Pickett during his 9 to midnight show actually brought in a large metal ash can just like the old days to do his Halloween show with actual taped segments from the show he did 17 years before.

The following day, Charlie O'Donnell came back to Eleven-Ten and "The Jolly Lean Giant" did one of his best shows reminiscing and sounding as polished as ever as he did back in 1967. Dick Moreland returned to the lineup from noon to 3 on Sunday. Moreland had been suffering from "pyorrhoea," a dental problem, and it was obvious in his show that his pronunciation and enunciation suffered due to the loss of some of his teeth, and gum problems.

An interesting note on Moreland's show. Ian Whitcomb had come by the KRLA studios to chat with Moreland. Whitcomb was the "British Invasion" singer whose most memorable song, "This Sporting Life," was heard on KRLA during its 1964 and 1965 heyday.

Moreland announced over the air that Whitcomb was writing a book about KRLA. We, upon hearing that, thought maybe we lost our scoop, but when Whitcomb's book came out, only a couple of pages mentioned KRLA briefly, and it was not even that accurate with several names of the "Eleven-Ten Men" given wrong.

Following Dick Moreland on the reunion Sunday was Rebel Foster at 3 for his 3 to 6 p.m. live shift. This time Foster brought back "Maude Skidmore" who finally was allowed to break loose. The first words heard at 3 p.m. on Foster's show were the "voice" of Mrs. Skidmore exclaiming,

"This is Maude Skidmore. I'm a twat and you're not!"

Us Foster fans waited years for that bit of classic radio.

An interesting side note, that during Foster's show the last remaining turntable in the booth was put to use by Foster playing a copy of "Mr. Rebel" which was not on cart at the South El Monte transmitter where all the other records were played during this special weekend.

It was a real treat to see a legendary "Eleven-Ten Man" actually cue up a record from the booth. Hearing "Mr. Rebel" which was supposedly written for Rebel Foster was an added bonus. Foster sounded brighter than he had in years.

Following the Rebel Foster return we@the recorded shows of Bob Eubanks 6 to 9 p.m. and Dick Biondi 9 to 11 p.m. where pre-recorded voice tracks, and records, of Eubanks and Biondi were played from the South El Monte KRLA transmitter.

The reunion weekend was a major event in KRLA's history, as camera crews from TV stations came into the Huntington Hotel studios to film the reunion, the big luncheon a few days before, the disc-jockeys on the air and the festivities. Even we were interviewed for the Eleven O'Clock news on the history of KRLA and for "2 on the Town," a local TV magazine show popular in 1981 (but sadly the footage of us ended up on the cutting room floor). A newspaper ad with caricatures of the Beatles was used in promoting this reunion weekend.

So KRLA with this reunion weekend did the first successful break from the era of Art Laboe. We even answered some of the phones at KRLA during the weekend, and people who hadn't listened to KRLA in years were suddenly once

again turning on KRLA and having a new excitement in the station that hadn't been felt in years. Suddenly for just a weekend some of the magic of the glory days of KRLA was once again there.

The first regular day following the reunion, KRLA opened with Rege Cordic from 5 to 9 a.m. Cordic was an old school M.O.R. personality who was already known to Los Angeles listeners as Bob Crane's replacement in the Fall of 1965 on KNX-AM, Torrance, from Columbia Square off Hawthorne Boulevard.

Following Cordic was Johnny Hayes who had his regular pre-recorded show except for the one-hour live "Countdown" show. Following Hayes at 3 was the return as a regular daytime personality everyday, Dave Hull.

To keep with the spirit of the Sixties that Roth tried to instill at Eleven-Ten, on Hull's first show back was about a 1/2-hour phone call to Ringo Starr, "Beatle Ringo" where Starr plugged his new record which was played right after the interview. This was magic hearing Dave Hull, "the 5th Beatle" in Los Angeles interview Starr where Hull asked Starr questions that had been phoned in to Hull's show before the call to Starr was made. There was no doubt that there was a chemistry there, with Hull talking to Starr, and it seems even the things about the Beatles that caused Hull to break with them in 1967 seemed a thing of the past and long forgotten.

Clearly the strongest man in the lineup was Dave Hull from 3 to 7. On Hull's afternoon show he created a character called "Miss Goodbody" who was supposedly the stations "censor" and when Hull would say something rather "naughty" (much, much more than he ever had been from 1963 to 1969), you could hear the sound effect of a body falling over, the illusion that "Miss Goodbody" would faint at the sound of something "blue".

One of the funniest lines Hull ever had on his show at KRLA during this era was when he read something on the air about the popular video game at that time "Donkey Kong". Hull said slowly,

"Donkey Kong. (pause) That sounds kind of dirty."

So Dave Hull continued to be the biggest "box-office" draw to KRLA's coming "home for the holidays," and listeners who hadn't really been listening to KRLA in years were now reliving happy memories driving home with the Hullabalooer.

Before we talk about the next two shows on KRLA's lineup in November 1981, we need to look at the visual side of KRLA, since Roth's changes from the era of Art Laboe before. KRLA which had used the certain slant style graphics under Laboe was modified somewhat in that the Laboe labeled "Hit Radio 11" was dropped and replaced with "KRLA AM 1110" with the same slant style letters slightly altered. Also, for the first time in years, KRLA actually had rotating ads in the newspapers, featuring sketch drawings of the head and shoulders of Hull, Hayes, Cordic and the next regular addition to KRLA, Harvey Miller.

Harvey Miller first came into Los Angeles radios as the mid-day voice high atop the Verdugo Mountains in Glendale (Burbank license) when that station went to live disc jockeys in 1965. When Miller first joined KBLA he just called himself "Harvey Miller," but after a while the nickname "Humble Harv" became his signature and the surname "Miller" was dropped almost altogether.

KBLA had never been a very strong station due to its weak signal, even though its personalities were first rate. When in early 1967 rumors took over KBLA that the station would soon be changing to a country format that year, 93/KHJ which was now almost virtually tied with KRLA in listener popularity could see that it had a lineup of personalities at KBLA in which 93/KHJ could skim off the top the best KBLA "Super In-tertainers" to join KHJ as all the KBLA staff would probably be looking for new stations to go to very soon.

Miller was by far the most popular personality at KBLA in his 9 to midnight show and without a doubt was the "star" of the KBLA lineup. So in early 1967 Miller was lured away from the soon-to-be-gone KBLA which would switch to country in June, and so Miller joined the 93/KHJ lineup as a "Boss Jock."

Because of Miller's massive popularity at KBLA, when it was announced on KHJ that Miller was now a 93/KHJ "B.J.," KHJ went all out in its introducing Miller to the 93/KHJ audience by staging a big "Welcome Humble Harv" party at the Hollywood Palladium, featuring not only KHJ radio personalities but movie stars, the press, fans, and V.I.P.'s. Miller's popularity as the "biggest frog" in the small pond at KBLA really was a coup for KHJ, and KHJ went all out behind promoting Miller at the party.

The featured food at this extravaganza was hamburgs called "Humbleburgers." Miller continued at 93/KHJ from his joining in February 1967 in various time slots usually in the evening, except when moved to afternoon drive when Don Steele briefly left in a contract dispute, and even though was not as loose as he had been at KBLA with a much looser format, did sound good behind the KHJ microphones.

The deep, soulful voice of Harvey Miller from the twin towers of KHJ at Venice and Fairfax was one of the best in KHJ's lineup, as Miller had a style all his own. Many times you could hear Miller shout "Stones!" or "Motown!" or "Psychedelic!" before the appropriate song.

Another feature on Miller's KHJ show was the "Humble Harv Astrological Forecast For Tomorrow" where Miller would give a particular Zodiac sign forecast with sitar music in the background. Miller was quite a star on 93/KHJ and was always a Los Angeles radio personality in the top tier, when Miller disappeared from his night-time KHJ show in May 1971, and then from Los Angeles airwaves, until resurfacing again in Southern California radios on KKJF-FM in early 1974 and have a major "comeback" when that station became KIIS-FM along with KIIS-AM ("K-Double I-S") and had an exciting blend of talent featuring Miller in its lineup prominently in Miller's best time slots: mid-mornings and mid-days.

After an almost three-year absence, it was a reward to Los Angeles listeners to hear Harvey Miller again. His loyal fans stayed with him during his absence from Los Angeles radio and followed him over to KUTE-FM in 1981 where Miller was last heard before being tapped by KRLA and Jack Roth to do the 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. show in November 1981.

Following Miller's show on KRLA at 11 p.m. was Roth's replacement for Laboe's "Elvis Hour"; and that was the "Beatle Hour" where music from the Beatles as a group, and as individuals was heard for one solid hour with the pre-recorded voice of Dave Hull commenting and reminiscing about the Fab Four. This was certainly an excellent show, even though pre-recorded, and reminiscent of Dave Hull's "Saturday Night Specials" in the Summer of 1964 where Hull played exclusively Beatle records.

So the new "60's oriented" lineup was in place with Cordic 5 to 9, Hayes pre-recorded 9 to noon and 1-3 p.m. and live noon to 1, Hull 3 to 7 live, Miller 7 to 11 live and the pre-recorded "Beatle Hour" 11 to midnight followed by more pre-recorded programming midnight to 5.

As discussed in the last chapter, we had been given several involvements by Roth during this revival of KRLA in the Fall of 1981. One involvement that was given to us was to be the solo special guest on the "KRLA Connection" talk show Sunday night/Monday morning from 11 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. This program was the main "talk show" on KRLA and was a carryover from the Art Laboe era when it started.

We were supposed to do the show the last night of the reunion weekend on Sunday, November 1st, but because of previous scheduling commitments, the "KRLA Connection" show with "Bill Earl" did not get scheduled until a week later when all the momentum of the weekend had evaporated. We did the show with Mario Machado on the next available Sunday night in November 1981 but were handicapped by no promotion whatsoever, the fact that it aired after when it was supposed to have been on the reunion weekend, and the fact that the "host" of the show, Mario Machado did not really think the topic was that important to do a whole show on.

The "KRLA Connection" show was primarily a call-in public affairs show, and the topics usually ranged from minor community involvement issues to current affairs. A show that talked about a KRLA that had long since disappeared did not seem that important to Machado, and in reviewing airchecks of the show, it is clear that Machado was tolerant but not very hot on the idea of doing a show saluting the decade-or-more-ago programming of KRLA.

This would have been a much more successful show had we been allowed to conduct the show by ourselves as sole host and guest. (After all, we had been a "personality" at KPCS-FM in Pasadena from 1970 to 1972.)

There was definitely some cool vibes by Machado and many times while we were making a point, Machado would cut us off mid-sentence and talk to the callers about off-the-subject questions. However, the show was memorable for two big things.

First, we had put together an aircheck collage tape of big moments from KRLA from 1964 through 1967 that engineer Chris Hayes played on the air from the control room along with one of the "This is Bill Earl - Official KRLA Historian" promos from the reunion weekend. Hearing the old KRLA via airchecks over the big towers from South El Monte that night was really *deja vu*.

That aircheck collage was put together by us and featured important moments on KRLA from the heyday, such as Valhalla, Bob Dayton, the 1967 firing of Dave Hull and other big events that were broadcast over KRLA from Research Archives aircheck library. Because we were deferential to Machado during the show in fear of Machado cutting us off and bringing out a back-up guest, we pretty much let Machado do it his way, and we were lucky to have the "live" airtime that we had.

The show was a very good show, regardless of Machado's disinterest in the topic and our enthusiasm constantly being stifled by the host. But one good line came out of the show that's worth repeating here.

When one caller said that KRLA "stunk," and didn't like the programming, Machado said something to the effect of sending some "big, tough" KRLA staff members to the listener's home to "take care" of him for criticizing the station, all in fun, of course. Our line on the air was,

"Mario, I've got a better idea. Let's send Humble Harv over!"

This program would have been a good show had it been promoted and put on the KRLA reunion weekend, but it never was, and so very few listeners even heard the show.

Shortly after the reunion weekend and this show, KRLA programmed two outstanding weekends of merit and that was "The British Invasion" weekend and the "All-Beatle weekend." For the "British Invasion" weekend, even Charlie O'Donnell was called back to do promos and hourly I.D.'s.

"The Beatle Weekend" actually used old Beatle interviews from the KRLA archives, and KRLA actually put out a brochure sent to listeners, that featured the bold KRLA (KRLA 1110 AM) new logo replacing the slanted-letter modified Art Laboe one, and was in many ways a direct throwback to the halcyon days of KRLA in 1965.

Another new addition joined KRLA in November 1981, and that was the return of Russ O'Hara. O'Hara, we were told, had recently inherited a large amount of money and was seen driving around the L.A. area in a fancy expensive red luxury car.

Russ O'Hara rejoined KRLA in November 1981 as a relief personality filling in for one or more nights when Harvey Miller was unavailable for his show. O'Hara became the permanent "substitute" for Miller, and the O'Hara of November 1981 was somewhat more subdued than the O'Hara of 1969 and 1970.

Also rejoining KRLA in December 1981, as a relief and once-in-a-while personality, was Rebel Foster who once again had "retired" his famous Maude Skidmore character.

One of the major contests of late 1981 was a contest that was featured proudly on the back of a KRLA weekly music list giveaway that featured the headlines "The Beatles Are Coming," and where listeners could win a trip to England. These survey sheets, as since 1980, had continued to be given away by KRLA every week via record stores but never had the picture of Dave Hull, Rege Cordic, or Harvey Miller on the back, but did get around to featuring the promo sketch of Johnny Hayes on the back on a very attractive "buff with orange ink" issue in early 1982.

We want to conclude 1981 with probably a major coup on KRLA for one night that showed that KRLA could be a major powerhouse again, if only for one night. KRLA decided that for New Year's Eve from 3 p.m. on December 31st to 5 a.m. January 1st, that KRLA would park its mobile studio trailer which up to now had been an "Orange County Newsroom" parked at Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa, on the Northeast corner of Garfield and Colorado in Pasadena for New Year's Eve 1981 on the parade route for the Rose Parade. You could watch the deejay through three glass windows on the front end of the trailer.

Hull did a terrific show from 3 to 7 p.m. live from that trailer and was reminiscent of the days when all sorts of fans used to gather around the big glass window at the Huntington Hotel in 1965. Following Hull from 7 to 10 that night was Harvey Miller who left the trailer between records (which were still played on carts from the South El Monte transmitter) and mingled freely with the fans.

But the real star of this special programming arrived from 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. in three of the most exciting hours heard on KRLA in recent years. Dick Biondi, who had not been heard on KRLA since August 1967 in a live show had been flown out from the Midwest where Biondi was to resurrect his New Year's Eve traditional show which he had done for two years in a row back in 1965 and 1966.

Biondi was great. And not only that, the people who gathered around the trailer simply were overwhelmed. A lot of these people too young to have remembered the KRLA of years before simply couldn't believe how fantastic Biondi was.

We were there outside the trailer and heard the responses from the parade-goers on the street.

"Who is this guy?"

"He's fabulous!"

"Why isn't this guy on KRLA?"

Biondi invited the people outside the trailer into the mobile unit to say "Hi" on the air, and Biondi with his confidence and professionalism handled these three hours with fantastic style and pace. Also some of the old "Porch People" such as Denetia Arellanes and others who had sat on the steps for Dick Biondi back in the '60's were coming back to the trailer site to see Biondi once again in person. We saw people in their '60's down to children in their early years, fascinated by this "skinny disc jockey with horn-rimmed glasses." Biondi was no doubt a star.

During this 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. show which at midnight broke in the New Year 1982, Biondi invited us into the trailer after mentioning us being outside the trailer many times before, to have "the Official KRLA Historian" say New Year's greetings into the mike.

Following Biondi from 1 a.m. to 5 a.m. was Russ O'Hara "live" from the trailer on the parade route. O'Hara was as good as he's ever been and did probably one of his best shows with a live "party" audience. He even resurrected the "Russ O'Hungry" nickname by saying that he was

"Always hungry, always hungry ... for a pizza!"

This was a fantastic way for KRLA to end 1981.

So the Cordic, Hayes, Hull, Miller, O'Hara and Foster air force continued on KRLA until February 1982, when on Monday, February 8, Rege Cordic left KRLA. We had hoped for Bob Hudson who would have been a very strong morning man to take over the morning drive chair, but apparently a "telegram" letter Hudson sent to management diminished his chances.

It was reported to us by sources that have asked to remain nameless that even Charlie O'Donnell had been offered the morning show, but because of his television commitments O'Donnell declined.

So for the next week, KRLA would "audition" two of its part-timers in that spot. For the week of February 8, the morning show was given to Russ O'Hara. On Friday, February 12, KRLA "auditioned" Rebel Foster in the morning show for one day, but this was mainly keeping the seat warm for who would be signed by Bert West, manager of KRLA to do mornings the following Monday, February 15. Johnny St. Thomas and "Jack the Hitman" Roth were still also on the weekend lineup (St. Thomas Sundays 9 to Noon and Roth just once in a while) but were involved in management and were never seriously discussed as possible morning men because of being busy behind the scenes.

The person signed for mornings was a favorite of Bert West from his days in San Francisco years before, where he had been a moderately successful personality in the early 1970's, and an unknown to Los Angeles listeners, Terry McGovern. McGovern took over the 5 to 9 a.m. show "live" and had a low key, almost witty mellowness, but did not have the energetic craziness of, say, Dave Hull or Tom Murphy years before.

So KRLA passed up big names from its reunion weekend and brought in a total unknown as far as Southern California, Terry McGovern. McGovern seemed likeable and was quite "honest" with his listeners.

McGovern had one memorable feature on his show, and that is his "Rude Awakenings" where he would call listeners at random and wake them up. Probably the most memorable feature of the Terry McGovern show was where McGovern would do a Marlon Brando impersonation of his character in "The Godfather"; where McGovern in the "Brando voice" would take calls from listeners and pretended to do them favors making their wishes come true.

Terry McGovern also had a local comic call him up and do traffic reports as "Reynaldo Impala." McGovern also relied heavily on comedy cuts from comedy albums. In fact, on his very first show on KRLA, the first record he played was the National Lampoon's version of a parody of Les Crane's "Desiderata." As Crane had been a big name in San Francisco at KYA as Johnny Raven, this was inside "Northern California humor."

In early 1982, KRLA decided to call itself "The Heart and Soul of Rock and Roll" and new white, with black bold letters with the new KRLA logo, bumper stickers began appearing all over the Southland, along with similar ones that were placed on the windows or glass doors of merchants, who gave away the stickers, had proudly displayed. The stickers also featured a red KRLA "heart" which became a new KRLA trademark.

So KRLA began calling itself "The Heart and Soul of Rock and Roll," its survey sheets were re-designed to feature this new logo and masthead with a "heart" at the top and became the new look for KRLA. Also about this time in 1982, KRLA came out with a "Heart and Soul" record album put out by Rhino Records with liner notes about the history of KRLA. We were not consulted on the liner notes but it was reasonably accurate but very abbreviated. A KRLA "Heart and Soul" bumper sticker was included in this package.

It was in the Summer of 1982 that KRLA did decide to bring Bob Hudson back on the air, and it did so for two weeks that Summer of 1982, for vacationing Terry McGovern who had gone to Ireland. One noticeable feature of the Terry McGovern show during the time McGovern was there, and also when McGovern was off, was a sportscaster "Tim McGovern," who was McGovern's own brother signed to do KRLA sports.

Tim McGovern had called himself "Sportsfan" and did the sports from a total fan's point of view rather than as an insider-Stu Nahan style. This really worked as "Sportsfan" was quite good.

Bob Hudson did a good job substituting for Terry McGovern, and hearing Hudson in the morning, even if it was just substituting, and Hull in the afternoon, was really another example how KRLA did come "Home for the Holidays" in late 1981 and early 1982.

So McGovern came back and KRLA ended the year 1982 with its lineup of Terry McGovern 5 to 9 "live," Johnny Hayes "live" from noon to 1, and pre-recorded voice tracks from 9 to noon and 1 to 3, Dave Hull "live" 3 to 7, Harvey Miller 7 to 11 p.m. and pre-recorded programming from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m.

However, an interesting development took place about this time in regard to the "'60's" direction that Roth had moved the station in. Roth recalled going to a personal KRLA appearance, dressed up as a character from the Laboe era "Big Louie," at a shopping center or event, when he overheard a group of Mexican-Americans say to the KRLA promo member at the time,

"Man, you guys have taken away our radio station, Homes!"

And that was pretty true. KRLA had deemphasized its programming that had been geared to a more ethnic audience under Laboe, and that did have an effect on Roth. Roth remembered how Art Laboe had virtually saved the station, gotten the station a permanent license after years and years of the interim, and remembered the loyal group of Hispanics who rallied around KRLA from 1976 to 1981. It was true. Latins did not relate to the Beatles or British Invasion weekends. They wanted to hear their Art Laboe "Oldies But Goodies."

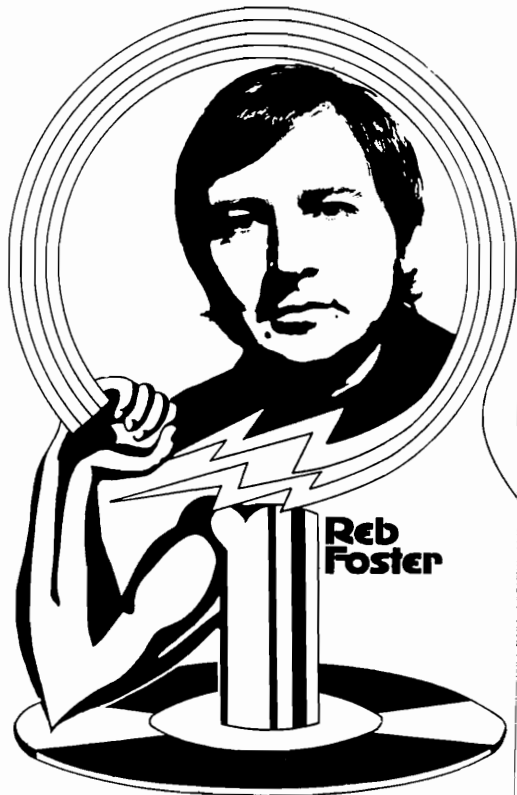
KRLA did go "home for the holidays" in October 1981. But in a way the old saying that you can never go home again in this case may be partially true. The Hullballoos were happy to get Hull back, but there wasn't enough of that base to make a difference. KRLA needed to get its base back that had been so loyal to the station for all those years under Art Laboe. Jack Roth had to do some retracting. The dream-house was about to be fine tuned to keep its new audience and not lose its old one. Our story continues.

# KRLA PRESENTS

**RUSS  
O'HARA**



**KRLA-1110**







# Michelle Roth

Michelle will drive home with you every afternoon between 3 and 7, Monday through Friday. She's never racy but she'll make the time race by. For a good time, dial 1110am for Michelle!

**KRLA 1110am**

*Well, Thanks so much  
for your support!!  
Love  
Michelle  
Roth*





**RUSS  
O'HARA  
KRLA-1110**

**CHAPTER 13**

**"SILVER AND PEWTER"**



**ROGER CHRISTIAN**



**KRLA-TTIO  
JOHNNY HAYES**

Jack Roth decided that KRLA was losing its old base of listeners that had been loyal to KRLA during the Art Laboe era. The new listeners who rejoined KRLA when it came "Home For The Holidays" wasn't enough. KRLA needed them both. KRLA had to appeal to these two groups and couldn't afford to lose anyone.

When Roth could see that the Art Laboe-based listeners were tuning out KRLA and felt "their station was being taken away," Roth made some major decisions. But before those decisions were made in early 1983, KRLA would have another change in the lineup as KRLA enters 1983.

Terry McGovern was brought down from the Bay Area by Bert West to be morning man at KRLA, as he had known West, and also wanted to continue his acting career in Los Angeles, where there clearly were more opportunities than in the Bay Area. But McGovern, as hard as he tried, was unable to really "catch on" as a major morning voice in Los Angeles, and so it was decided that McGovern would leave KRLA after his last show on Friday, January 21st, and continued his work in television and in commercials.

So on Monday, January 24, 1983, KRLA, to replace Terry McGovern in the mornings, would do what it did back in August 1967, and that is move the strongest man into the morning show, Dave Hull. Hull was now back in his morning chair that he had left in January 1969.

Hull would be heard "live" from 5 to 9 a.m. Johnny Hayes followed from 9 to Noon "automated," noon to 1 "live" with the "Countdown" show, and then from 1 to 3 p.m. with pre-recorded voice tracks again.

For the week of January 24, KRLA signed Russ O'Hara to do afternoon drive from 3 to 7 p.m. as sort of an "audition" for that time slot to see how he'd sound. Actually O'Hara sounded quite good, very fast paced and slick and it was clear O'Hara wanted that shift due to his excellent "audition" this week.

As we said before at the beginning of this chapter, Roth wanted to bring back the old loyal audience that was more ethnic demographics and had been the core of KRLA's audience from 1976 to 1981. Roth was afraid that the old audience didn't see much programming for them on KRLA after it came "home for the holidays."

So when Harvey Miller left KRLA at this time in January 1983, Roth brought back to Eleven-Ten, Mucho Morales who had already been in the Art Laboe era pre-1981. The reason why Morales was rehired and signed to do this evening show 7 to 11 p.m. was as follows.

Miller did not attract the Latin audience that had been KRLA's listeners in the evenings from 1976 to 1981 and what Roth badly wanted back to KRLA's audience. It was thought that Morales being Hispanic himself would be able to be a "draw" to get those listeners back who remembered Morales from the Art Laboe era. So Morales was put into the 7 to 11 p.m. shift.

Because Roth wanted to go back to the Art Laboe era, along with his new audience that liked Hull and O'Hara, Roth dropped "The Beatle Hour" and instead brought in from 11 to midnight "The Oldies But Goodies Hour" which featured in a pre-recorded hour the pre-1964 R and B and early rock and roll. Actually the "60's" focus of the station really only lasted the first few months of Jack Roth's stewardship as P.D. as back in early 1982 when "The British Invasion" weekend did not attract as many listeners as "Oldies But Goodies" or "Motown" weekends, the "60's" oriented KRLA was replaced by more early rock and roll and "oldies" along with its mix of selected current hits as well.

So it was no surprise when "The Beatle Hour" finally was replaced, as there were not enough Beatlemania anymore to make up KRLA's core audience, and so "The Beatle Hour" became a thing of the past. The station moved away from its '60's focus and back toward the music popular during the Art Laboe era.

So Hull was set in morning drive and Hayes continued in mid-days. Even though O'Hara was excellent during his week in the 3 to 7 p.m. shift, instead of making O'Hara permanent as expected, the following week KRLA decided to try out Rebel Foster in the 3 to 7 p.m. shift, where Foster reigned for the whole week in early February 1983.

Foster sounded unusually restrained and not too relaxed or upbeat as he had been in the past. It was later said to us that Foster did not like having to "audition" for his old afternoon drive-time show that he had so proudly reclaimed back in August 1967 when Hull was morning man too. So this week went by with Foster sounding good and live but in contrast to the fast paced O'Hara the week before seemed slower and did not put on as tight an effort.

Also at this time KRLA was experimenting with "AM stereo" and made references to the fact that if you had an AM stereo receiver, you could enjoy KRLA's personalities and programming now in stereo. Unfortunately not too many did, but we did have a Sony AM stereo unit in 1983 and KRLA did sound excellent with this system. KRLA also gave directions how to hear KRLA AM stereo using two regular AM radios at this time in 1983, which brought the great AM stereo sound to the Land of Eleven Ten.

For the third week without a regular 3 to 7 afternoon drive in February 1983, KRLA seemed to be unsure who it wanted in the important 3 to 7 p.m. drive time hours and also was concerned about the high cost of having either O'Hara or Foster there, which would be a sizeable salary as both men are big names. As a cost-cutting measure KRLA decided to use neither and would do some "creative" programming on the schedule.

KRLA decided to do this. Dave Hull would be live 6 to 9 and taped 5 to 6 and 9 to 10. Johnny Hayes would be pre-recorded with voice tracks for five daytime hours 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The "Countdown" show would be dropped from the noon to 1 spot it had held for the past few years. Johnny Hayes would then go on the air "live" from 3 to 7 p.m. and do the "Countdown" show live from 6 to 7 p.m. instead of from noon to 1.

The idea of moving the "Countdown" show to 6 p.m. we felt was a great idea, as this hour was always a pleasure to listen to during the "years" 1964 through 1968 when Hayes would always have a KRLA Beat or two in the studio and read articles from it. Also sometimes Hayes would pay tribute to the "Eleven-Ten Men" of old by mentioning names or lineups on the air.

This 6-to-7 p.m. show was a much more accessible hour for the "Countdown" show, and it was neat to hear a relatively pretty good show during prime time, as not everyone had noon to 1 as a lunch hour and could very easily have missed the show. Putting this strong show into a prime time-hour was a good move on paper.

However, the audience didn't like it, and so within a week or two of the "Countdown" from 6 to 7 p.m., it was suddenly without explanation moved back to the Noon to 1 slot. So the schedule at KRLA changed again with Hull in the morning, as before. Johnny Hayes pre-recorded from 10 to noon. The "Countdown" show would be back from noon to 1 "live." Johnny Hayes would be pre-recorded from 1 to 3 p.m. and live for afternoon drive from 3 to 6 p.m. Mucho Morales would now be heard from 6 to 11 p.m. followed by more pre-recorded automation from 11 to 6 a.m.

In April 1983 KRLA for two weekends brought back on two Saturdays in a row, Bob Eubanks who unlike the 1981 reunion shows where he "pretended" he was back in the halcyon days of 1966, this time Eubanks spoke as sort of an "Elder DJ" about his involvement at KRLA and with the Beatles. One of those Saturdays in April 1983 Eubanks did an all-Beatle show where he reminisced about the Fab Four and his involvement in promoting the three Beatle concerts from 1964 through 1966.

However, these programs were not heavily promoted on KRLA, and one would have had to just turn on KRLA on those two Saturday afternoons to hear this example of such quality programming from one of the legends in KRLA's history. On one of the shows Eubanks even saluted us by referring to a young man who "wrote a college thesis" on the history of KRLA.

Also in 1983 two other voices entered the KRLA scene during this time. Dick Hugg who had been similar to Art Laboe working at "fringe," second tier, R and B stations in the Los Angeles area for many years as "Huggie Boy" and had ties to the Mexican-American listening audience, was signed by Roth to handle the 11 p.m. to 12 midnight show with pre-recorded voice-track automation. This move in early 1983 was designed to further increase the Latin audience which Roth desperately tried to win back to KRLA during its sudden about-face from '60's orientation in early 1982.

The other voice to join KRLA was former KMPC and KFI personality Sonny Melendrez who filled in for Dave Hull during a short time in mid-1983. With Melendrez in as a substitute morning man, the Hispanic audience had three personalities at KRLA to identify with, Melendrez, Morales, and Hugg.

However, the next major change to occur at KRLA was in August 1983 when Jack Roth left the station and P.D. post along with both Russ O'Hara and Rebel Foster who also exited KRLA at about the same time. So the Jack Roth era came to an end at Eleven-Ten, and the door opened to a new breeze of a somewhat different direction.

Joining KRLA in August 1983 were Jim Pewter taking over as Program Director. Pewter was best known from his days in the early 1970's at KRTH-FM. Pewter also did a pre-recorded weekend show on KRLA at this time.

Coming on board with Pewter were Michelle Roth, only the second female disc jockey in KRLA's history, and the return to KRLA of a voice not heard from the towers in South El Monte for many, many years (since 1961) Roger Christian who was a friend of Pewter's and worked with Pewter at KRTH in the early '70's.

Pewter immediately adjusted the KRLA lineup by moving Michelle Roth into the afternoon 3 to 7 p.m. show "live," and trimming Johnny Hayes' live involvement to just noon to 1 with 10-noon and and 1-3 pre-recorded as before with just voice tracks. Once in a while Roger Christian filled in on the Michelle Roth show during afternoon drives "live."

It was clear that Christian who had been out of live radio for quite a few years sounded at times out of practice. However, Roger Christian was a legendary Los Angeles radio voice, a solid personality, and it was good to hear the return to KRLA of someone who was important in the early days of KRLA's history.

Michelle Roth in the 3 to 7 p.m. drive time show was quite a change from the all-male lineup for so many years. Roth was blonde, attractive and glamorous in a less-sophisticated way than, say, the only other female air personality at KRLA, Sie Holiday. Roth had a good spirit to her sound and a pleasant style.

But the best decision Pewter made was bringing Roger Christian back to KRLA, and it was a pleasure to hear Christian during the rare "live" shows he did during this time in 1983. Christian never was part of the starting lineup though, and it was a surprise to longtime L.A. radio listeners that Pewter didn't put Christian on every day. Christian had a famous close to his shows that is a classic in radio and deserves repeating here,

"That's all she wrote - Sleep warm - Later lover!" Christian was a super talent, and it was good to hear him back at home on Eleven-Ten.

So the lineup for late 1983 and early 1984 showed Hull in morning drive, Hayes in middays, Roth afternoon drive, Morales now back to 7 to 11 p.m., Hugg recorded 11 to midnight and on weekends Johnny St. Thomas, Roger Christian and sometimes Jim Pewter himself.

But probably the most important development to KRLA programming in the Summer and Fall of 1983 was to bring back a show that had not been heard on KRLA since 1970, the repeat year-long airing of "The Pop Chronicles" in exactly the same time slot it was featured in during its long run of 1969 and 1970. The only change was a disclaimer recorded by John Gilliland who created the series back on KRLA in 1968 and 1969 that nothing had changed from the original shows and that there may be references to names and people who are no longer with the station.

The reason these shows were never altered is Gilliland wanted the shows to sound exactly as they were first heard and "after all, you can't change history." Hearing these programs each Sunday from 6 to 7 for over a year on KRLA, concluding finally in August 1984, was a real treat for those of us who may have missed some episodes when first aired all those years before.

In early 1984 Roger Christian would depart the KRLA lineup. The replacement on weekends for Roger Christian in around March 1984 was none other than the man to first open a microphone at KRLA all those years ago back in August 1959, Jimmy O'Neill.

Since O'Neill left KRLA way back in September 1962, O'Neill went into local television, hosted a nationwide television show twice a week on ABC-TV, "Shindig!"; and had been a radio personality at KFMB and most recently at KDAY in 1969 and 1970 where we interviewed O'Neill in December 1969 for the 80-page thesis that this book is an expanded version of. So having the "first voice" of KRLA back to Eleven-Ten in March 1984 was really a coup and homecoming.

O'Neill had been heard on KRLA way, way back all those years ago, and those who remember O'Neill from both radio and television knew a super talent when they heard one. However, it was said to us later that because 1984 was the year that KRLA would celebrate its "Silver Anniversary" of 25 years (1959-1984) Pewter wanted to have O'Neill back, as O'Neill would be involved in special KRLA programming during the Labor Day weekend of 1984 which will be discussed later in this chapter.

So KRLA into the Olympic Summer of 1984 featured Dave Hull "live" 6 to 9, Johnny Hayes "live" noon to 1, Michelle Roth "live" 3 to 7, Mucho Morales "live" 7 to 11 p.m. and the rest pre-recorded automated programming with voice tracks featuring Dick Hugg and now a syndicated show with Wolfman Jack.

Two very memorable events took place at KRLA in the Summer of 1984. The first major event which was KRLA great programming was the Dave Hull show on August 23, 1984. This was the 20th anniversary of the first Beatle Concert that KRLA had brought to Southern California, as discussed in an earlier chapter, and this was one of the best shows that KRLA had featured in a long time.

Hull reminisced generously about the Beatle concert and his involvement and played the actual tape of the Beatles performance that night at the Hollywood Bowl. For those who were not there on that legendary night, it was a treat to hear Hull discussing such an important event which shaped KRLA's history.

The other main event in the Summer of 1984 was Labor Day weekend when KRLA celebrated its "Silver Anniversary" with Jimmy O'Neill in a pre-recorded voice track show, counting down the very first KRLA Tune-Dex from September 1959 on a Saturday afternoon in September 1984. O'Neill not only played the TOP 30 records off that precious playlist but also reminisced about the early KRLA from that era, its disc-jockeys and its contests.

O'Neill even played part of an aircheck by himself and of Sam Riddle, also an "Eleven-Ten Man" from the early years long before the days of Beatle Radio and "The Station Of The Stars." And to top off this program KRLA had actually printed up goldenrod record surveys, an exact replica of the very first KRLA survey from September 1959. O'Neill stayed on Eleven-Ten right up until "the end" of the KRLA that made its studio home at the Huntington Hotel at 1401 South Oak Knoll, Pasadena.

It was in December 1984 that we who had been working for Frosty Harris, one of the first "Eleven-Ten Men" in 1959, at the El Monte Adult School, was told by Harris that KRLA had been sold. Bert West, the manager of the station and the representative of the owners of the station which included Bob Hope, had been in negotiations to sell the station to a giant conglomerate.

It was announced in December 1984 that Greater Media, an East-coast broadcasting company which currently was running KHTZ, an FM outlet in Los Angeles (ironically the former FM frequency of KGBS with facilities on Flint Peak, in the La Canada-Glendale area, the home for several former "Eleven-Ten Men" in years past) would be adding KRLA-AM to its combination and make a combined combination AM and FM team in Los Angeles. KHTZ-FM was a soft rock outlet with a staff of mostly low key air talents except for Charlie Tuna. When the station's sale was to be inked, KRLA

would be moving out of its long time studios at the Huntington Hotel in Pasadena and even closing down the real "heart" of KRLA, its South El Monte transmitter site.

When Harris told us, it was quite a shock, as it was hard to comprehend a KRLA without studios in Pasadena and transmitter in South El Monte. Since 1941, "KRLA" (or XXLA and KPAS) had been located in those locations.

The other news, upon us calling some contacts the following day is that the current KRLA array of personnel both on and off the air would be selectively laid off, as the station is absorbed into the larger broadcast facility. Some of the current KRLA on the air staff would be laid off, a lot of the behind-the-scenes staff would be gone too.

The first rumors that came down the pike in late 1984 and early 1985 are that former KIIS personality Mike Wagner would be the new morning man from 6 to 10 a.m. and that Don Steele, one of the original 93/KHJ "Boss Jocks" in 1965 would be afternoon drive. Dave Hull would be leaving, as Hull did not want to stay on with a sizeable cut in salary and so Wagner would be Hull's replacement. Again, all rumors.

More rumors surfaced, the most frequent in January was that Charlie Tuna, now morning man at KHTZ-FM would be morning man on the "New KHTZ AM and FM combination" simulcast to go head to head with Rick Dees on the AM-FM simulcast at KIIS-AM and FM. Again, more rumors.

Research Archives checked out these rumors, and we found that, yes, KRLA was sold and yes, it was closing its Pasadena Huntington Hotel location and also relocating the KRLA transmitter site from its home since 1941 and sadly bringing to an end the KRLA towers proudly standing tall below Princess Blue Sky in South El Monte. We found out that the KRLA transmitter site was going to be moved to a former landfill site in the city of Irwindale right on the Arcadia-Monrovia border.

This site was most recently in the news as being L.A. County Supervisor Pete Schabarum's submitted choice for a county jail facility! Because of public outcry from the nearby residential neighborhood in Arcadia and from the Annunciation Church in Arcadia just one block away, the proposed prison site did not go through.

It was at this time that the property was noticed by KRLA and chief engineer Don Beem, who were looking for another site for the towers. With the county jail facility killed, KRLA acquired the property adjacent to the corner of Myrtle Avenue and Longden Avenue in Irwindale, and plans were put on the drawing board to build an expensive broadcast facility on that lot.

The only problem with this location was, being on the site of a former landfill, there would be a methane gas problem and that the station might have to build a methane gas burning system to alleviate any problems with this situation. The reason that the South El Monte location at the corner of Santa Anita Avenue bordering the Pomona Freeway would not be kept is that when the station was sold, that pasture property would not be part of the deal.

So the rumors continued about what would happen at KRLA when the station's new programming and move would commence in March of 1985. Even though a Mike Wagner morning drive and Don Steele afternoon drive with Johnny Hayes from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. was heavily rumored, it was clear that the new KRLA had bigger plans for its programming.

Finally in early 1985 it was announced that, yes, Don Steele would be the new afternoon man at KRLA and that KRLA would acquire a "heavyweight" big name to be morning man but could not announce the choice now. The rumors again leaned toward Charlie Tuna and Robert W. Morgan, who had been the original morning man at 93/KHJ in April of 1965, the same time that Steele had been doing afternoon drive.

The early "talk from the street" was that Wagner, who had always admired the "Boss Jocks" of 93/KHJ, would fashion the new KRLA or KHTZ-AM with former "Boss Jocks" which seemed to confirm that either Morgan or Tuna, both KHJ alumni, would be involved in the new station. When we called Dave Hull during early 1985 for information on the "new breeze" at Eleven-Ten, Hull said to us that he knew who the new morning man would be and that it was someone that we liked. That's all that was said.

In doing some "Kolchak-like" investigative work, we uncovered that Bob Hudson would be signed as the new KRLA morning man and that Hayes and Steele would be the midday and afternoon personalities. The evening show was still up in the air.

We also found out that Michelle Roth and Mucho Morales would not be retained as KRLA on the air personalities, but that Jim Pewter would begin in a very limited capacity, and so would Jimmy O'Neill probably staying on in a weekend capacity. Hearing that Bob Hudson would become the new morning man was exciting, as had it not been for a famous "telegram letter" Hudson had sent to management in early 1982, Hudson probably would have been morning man then.

So finally it was announced that Friday, March 1st, would be the last day of KRLA under the old owners and that Saturday, March 2nd, would be the new KRLA in its new studios on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles. (Because of the Pasadena license, an office would be located at the Pasadena Hilton Hotel.) The transmitter site in Irwindale would be built the following year in 1986, and the transmitter site in South El Monte would be gone in January 1987.

Again unknown to the public who only knew of KRLA from its location on the radio dial, this new change was quite sweeping and would be a major change in the history of KRLA. Also on Saturday, March 2, the format would change. KRLA which up to now since 1976 had been a blend of both current hits and past classics would be now an "all-olddies" station with no selected current hits played.

The KRLA music lists which had been printed for at least the past five years would be discontinued. The final issue? A photograph of Dave Hull sitting in the Pasadena disc-jockey booth. The end of an era, and the end of any printed KRLA "survey," as an "all oldies" station there would be no need for a weekly survey of hits.

On Friday, March 1st, would be the last day of KRLA at the Huntington Hotel, and a farewell celebration was held in the station's lobby. Former KRLA "Eleven-Ten Men" Dick Moreland and Roger Christian were present during this celebration and during the Michelle Roth show from 3 to 7 p.m., we were invited into the booth by Jim Pewter to say a few words over the old KRLA microphones as the "Official KRLA Historian."

We said good-bye to the old KRLA over its microphones, live on the Michelle Roth show, and then sat in the lobby and watched fans, groupies, listeners and others roam freely through the facility as "everything" had to be given away by midnight when the new owners would forever lock the doors. Nothing from the early days was given away, just tons of Art Laboe era tee shirts, stickers, old Laboe-era surveys, and key rings.

None of the real old memorabilia like KRLA Beats were on the premises as having been long, long gone by all the changes on Eleven-Ten over the years. We did find one souvenir given to us. An old "Rubber Baby Buggy Bumper Sticker" from 1967. We still have it. The last real souvenir from Pasadena.

At midnight all the people left, and the studios and offices at 1401 South Oak Knoll in the hotel's old "carriage house" were closed. At the end of the Mucho Morales show, a tape was played, quite a memorable one that was very reminiscent of the tape played back on December 31, 1969.

The last record played on KRLA was a special one as KRLA, as we fully discussed in an earlier chapter, was "Beatle Radio." And no song could be more appropriate than a Beatle song.

It was a solo record by Beatle George Harrison from 1970. The song? "All Things Must Pass." With the lines about how all things must pass away to an instrumental background, the voice of newsman Richard Beebe was heard saying how KRLA had been located at the Huntington Hotel since 1941 and was about to come to a close.

Beebe mentioned how KRLA started as KPAS and had been a major station in the lives of so many people who heard the station over the years as the "soundtrack to their lives" (our words). Then after a brief history, the voices of all the old KRLA staff members said good-bye one after another, the personnel who would not be joining the new station.

Among those voices heard were Dave Hull, Penny Biondi, Johnny St. Thomas, Michelle Roth, Mucho Morales and Chief Engineer Don Beem who also would not be staying on. After all these voices were heard one by one with a farewell good-bye, a very appropriate song was played.

It was Bob Hope, who was one of the owners of the old KRLA singing "Thanks For The Memory." This record was played in full and at the end of the record at 12 midnight, a new voice was heard. The voice was that of Don Steele announcing that KRLA would be signing off the air for a few hours and will be back on the air early Saturday morning at daybreak, and to listen then to the new KRLA.

So at midnight the end of an era occurred. KRLA had been sold, and the Pasadena studios had been closed forever. The following few days all equipment and signs of KRLA would be removed from the property. There was no more KRLA at 1401 South Oak Knoll, Pasadena.

True, KRLA would still be coming from the South El Monte horse pasture under the wrapping arms of Princess Blue Sky, but it would not be the same. No longer could a fan come over to the studios and watch the "Eleven-Ten Men" through the big glass window. There would be no more KRLA at the Huntington Hotel.

KRLA would now be broadcast out of a big skyscraper on Wilshire Boulevard along with an FM station in the next room. No window where you could watch the deejay, as in 1964.

That night we left the Pasadena location when the security guard locked the doors for the last time and walked alone into the parking lot thinking of all the times we had visited the station. From the first time back in 1961 after school from St. Phillips in Pasadena as a 5th grader to as an adult and "Official KRLA Historian" in March 1985. For 24 years, we had made pilgrimages to KRLA.

As we drove away from the Pasadena studios, we put in an aircheck of an old KRLA program we had in the cassette player. It was the Charlie O'Donnell show from June 16, 1967, when O'Donnell was the morning man.

We drove from the Pasadena studio now closed, east on Huntington Drive through San Marino to Rosemead Boulevard in San Gabriel, then south on Rosemead Boulevard in South El Monte to the Pomona Freeway east, exiting on Santa Anita. Before us in the night-time field were seven big towers standing proudly with the eternal red lights glowing from 3 of them, like an eternal vigil candle in a church.

We parked our car in the lot at Legg Lake across the street, looked up, thought of all the great moments of KRLA, turned up the aircheck. We heard Charlie O talk about the Monterey Pop Festival that night, then we turned it off and it was silent. KRLA had signed off at midnight. We dialed Eleven-Ten. Just static. The sound of Eleven-Ten was quiet. Even though the towers stood before us, nothing was heard on Eleven-Ten.

We turned off the radio. Drove home. And dreamt of the dream-house.



Jim Pewter



O'NEILL



**KRILA PRESENTS**  
**JAY STEVENS**



**6 AM to 9 AM**  
**KRILA-1110**



BUCK BUCHANAN



Brother John Rydgren



DON STEELE



Johnny Hayes

## CHAPTER 14 "FREEBASING TANG"



Right after the introduction by Don Steele on Saturday morning at 12:00 midnight, the new KRLA signed off the air for changeover purposes. At 5:00 in the morning, KRLA went back on the air with new jingles and a new location where the weekends recorded programming would originate, from the Wilshire Boulevard studios.

No more music carts played by the engineers in South El Monte. The South El Monte transmitter was back to the way it was back in 1972. The engineer just "sat transmitter." No more playing carts over the air.

The equipment and studios at the Huntington Hotel were beginning to be removed. No sound of KRLA came out of Pasadena. However, because KRLA would still be licensed in Pasadena, an office was set up at the Hilton Hotel. No studios. Just an office to satisfy the license requirement.

The studios were in Los Angeles. The transmitter would still be in South El Monte. As long as the transmitter was in South El Monte, KRLA was still KRLA. After all, the tower location where listeners actually physically receive the station is what counts. But that would be short-lived, as over the next two years, a new transmitter location would be built in Irwindale on land selected by outgoing chief engineer Don Beem, who was not picked up by the new owners. So KRLA on March 2nd was half old and half new.

The programming that weekend consisted of total automation on that Saturday and Sunday with promos of Bob Hudson's show to start the following Monday and voice tracks pre-recorded by Don Steele, who would be doing a live show on Monday also. The new jingles sounded great. KRLA had not had new jingles like this since 1971. The new upbeat jingles set the scene for the new KRLA. A lot of anticipation was how the live shows would be the following Monday.

On Monday morning at 5:00 a.m., the new KRLA on Wilshire Boulevard began its live programming. Bob Hudson sounded great 5 to 9 a.m. His first caller? An old-time fan named Bill Earl. Hudson kept the great humor and attitude that made him a morning classic.

Nine to noon was Mike Wagner. Wagner was best known to Los Angeles listeners as an air personality at KIIS-FM in the late '70's. Wagner had a likeable style and fast paced show. Plus it was live, and that really made a difference. Wagner also was program director, and as so many P.D.'s do, scheduled himself nine to noon. Wagner's show was fast paced and bright and was quite good for those hours. He was a fresh voice to Eleven-Ten and certainly helped round out and update the "oldies" sound of the others.

Also it needs to be mentioned at this time that KRLA was playing all gold. No current hits as with the old format and owners the week before. Just back to back gold. This was a consistent format.

Following Wagner noon to 4 was Johnny Hayes, now "live" for four hours a day. Hayes had been doing a mostly pre-recorded show and it was a real pleasure to hear Hayes live every day now. Hayes sounded very upbeat, turned on, and fast paced, reminiscent of his first days at KRLA back in 1965. The "Countdown" feature still continued in the noon to 1 time block.

From 4 to 8 p.m. was Don Steele. Steele, calling himself as always "The Real Don Steele" sounded exactly like he did back on 93/KHJ in April 1965, as if no time had elapsed. Steele, a classic "screamer" air personality, gave this afternoon drive a hot, fast energy that Michelle Roth the week before was just not able to do. Steele was an original with his "Tina Delgado is Alive!" and other trademarks.

From 8 to midnight and to keep the ethnic audience KRLA had built up since 1976, KRLA brought back Art Laboe "live." Laboe's show was just like his last ones in 1981, with a heavy dominance of music preferred by his special demographic audience.

From midnight to 5 a.m. KRLA continued its automated pre-recorded "Wolfman Jack" show that KRLA had bought for those hours. The following weekend KRLA was loaded with weekenders, as Mike Wagner told us, to "make a statement," that KRLA was back with "names."

John Rydgren, last heard on KRLA in 1972 during the "shadow over the pasture," was back as "Brother John" in a pre-recorded format 6 to 10 a.m. Saturday and Sunday. He was not live because of his stroke several years prevented him from doing a tight live radio show.

Jimmy O'Neill, who was a carryover from the old owners did a live show from 3 to 7 p.m. on Saturday. Harvey Miller ("Humble Harv") was brought back from 10-2 p.m. on Sunday, and Val Valentine, the only Hispanic air talent on the air at the time would be live Sundays 2 to 5 p.m. Dick Hugg ("Huggie Boy") a holdover from the old owners, continued to do his show Saturday 7 to midnight and Sunday nights 6 to 10 p.m. Hugg, an Anglo, had great appeal in the Mexican-American community from his days on KRKD (later KIIS-AM) a fringe station in Los Angeles and also XEPRS in Rosarito, Mexico in the early '80's.

All the weekend programming except the all-night show, Johnny Hayes Saturday show, and John Rydgren's were "live." Rydgren's show was pre-recorded because Rydgren had suffered a serious stroke several years before on KRTH-FM, and it was decided Rydgren would be more comfortable recording voice tracks.

Jimmy O'Neil, the new Saturday 3 to 7 p.m. air talent, told us an interesting story during the writing of this book. O'Neill had said that P.D. Jim Pewter several weeks before the station was sold wanted to replace Dave Hull in the morning drive with O'Neill and would have happened had the station not have been sold.

But that's what was going to be and not what did happen. It would have been interesting to hear O'Neill as a morning man for the first time since he had originally been "cast" as morning man from 7 to 10 a.m. back in August 1959.

O'Neill did become the KRLA morning man for just one day on the last day of the "old KRLA," Friday, March 1st. The station had fired Dave Hull the day before because they thought that Hull would use "blowing up" sound effects to Don Steele and other "preview" spots of the new KRLA coming up. Actually Hull was quite professional in his final week and even played comedy cuts he made with the new morning-man-to-be Bob Hudson from their "Hudson and Hull (Judson)" album. This was a classy touch on Hull's part, as it gave listeners a nice transition.

But management was concerned about what Hull would have said on the last Friday, so Hull was replaced by O'Neill for that one day. No mention of Hull was heard on O'Neill's Friday morning drive. But O'Neill did a good job that

last day, he even saluted us who called him that morning, and we're glad O'Neill was carried over by the new owners. After all he was the first voice of KRLA. It was only fitting.

However, O'Neill only stayed on KRLA for several weeks in the Saturday afternoon drive, as he needed to work more hours each week for income reasons. O'Neill later would be selling Chevrolets at an L.A. auto dealer. We feel that was a waste of talent and O'Neill should have been put on the air at some L.A. station, being a pioneer in Los Angeles radio, and also on television with "Shindig!" on ABC-TV twice a week in the mid-sixties. O'Neill sounded as good in 1985 as he did back in 1961. O'Neill was, and still is, a legendary talent.

When O'Neill left KRLA, Harvey Miller was given his 3-7 p.m. Saturday afternoon drive show. Val Valentine's show on Sunday afternoon was expanded from 2 to 6 p.m. afternoon drive. The new KRLA was only a couple of months old in May of 1985 when Miller left the KRLA lineup. Miller was replaced by Rebel Foster who returned to KRLA from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sundays and Saturday afternoon drive 3 to 7 p.m.

At this point of our story we need to back up one month to Bob Hudson's April 1st show. As an April Fool's treat, old KRLA promos were played over the air during Hudson's show. The most memorable one was an old promo from 1962 where the voice of Bob Eubanks was heard asking the listeners to hear him "every morning 6 to 9 a.m." Ironically, it was Hudson who replaced Eubanks during that morning drive slot back in 1963.

Before we move any further into 1985, we need to mention an event that took place in April during Bob Hudson's morning drive show. Hudson had called up rival morning man on KMGG-FM Robert W. Morgan (one of the original 93/KHJ "Boss Jocks" in April 1965) and while waiting for Morgan to come to the phone from hold, put over KRLA's airwaves the entire programming off the air of KMGG including jingles, commercials, etc.

The following day, a memo was given to Hudson stating in so many words that management did not appreciate Hudson's actions and that Hudson might be "disciplined." Hudson read this memo over the air in disapproval of it and those of us who can remember William F. Williams "IFIAFFI" had a sense of *deja vu*. We called Hudson on the air at that time and mentioned to him over the air about William F. Williams many years earlier reading of memos over the air.

Hudson the following day, after reading the "memo" over the air, was not heard during his 5 to 9 a.m. show and no mention was made by Harvey Miller during that morning drive show that he was filling in for Hudson or whatever, so many listeners "jammed the switchboards" asking what happened to Hudson. Hudson returned the following day but it never was made clear that Hudson was actually suspended, or was it just an elaborate publicity stunt. Still it did get mentioned in the newspapers, and people were once again talking about KRLA.

It was in May 1985 that Johnny Hayes celebrated the 20th anniversary of his first show on KRLA by doing a one-hour special "Countdown" show featuring records he played on KRLA on his first day back in 1965. Two special guest in-studio visitors to that "Countdown" show were Casey Kasem who congratulated Hayes over the air "live" and also Charlie Tuna from KBZT-FM (formerly KHTZ), KRLA's FM sister station "down the hall." This was the first time Tuna was heard on KRLA. The one hour "Countdown" show on that Friday was an exciting one and an example of how good live radio sounds.

The next day on Saturday, Hayes did a four-hour "20th Anniversary" of his first show with old promos and pre-recorded salutes from various KRLA alumni over the years, and even a salute from the "Official KRLA Historian" Bill Earl. Hayes had personally called us late one night several weeks earlier and asked us to record a tribute for him.

Moving into June of 1985, Bob Hudson was featured in a Wilshire Boulevard parade riding in a "throne" and also resurrected his old "Hudson's Commandos" by having breakfasts for winners of KRLA contests, in which Hudson would be featured at the head of the table with a huge buffet breakfast with lots of fruit and a big gourmet spread.

Souvenir "shot" glasses were given away at those breakfasts featuring the KRLA logo and "Hudson's Commandos." However, this revival of "Hudson's Commandos" was nothing like the fantasy "commandos" of the '60's with fictional characters like Colonel Splendid or Daphne, and basically was just a "fan club" for Hudson. Also that summer of 1985, Hudson was featured broadcasting live from Main Street at Disneyland as part of an anniversary celebration of the amusement park that Disneyland was sponsoring.

An interesting event did happen though in September 1985 on Hudson's show time. Hudson was absent from his show one day in September of 1985, and apparently no one was available to take his show from the regular staff of weekenders and relief. So KRLA brought in, for just that one day, an excellent personality who was working in production for KBZT-FM "down the hall," Don Murray who we met when we recorded our "20th anniversary" comments for the Johnny Hayes show in the Spring.

Our first reaction in hearing Don Murray was Murray was fabulous! He had the same style, very reminiscent to Don Mackinnon at KFWB in 1965, and Murray also was funny, bright, irreverent, and in some ways reminiscent of another great KRLA morning man of the past, Tom Murphy. This was a lost gem in KRLA's programming, and those of us who were fortunate enough to hear Don Murray that day got a real treat.

Shortly after Hudson came back, it was decided to "streamline" and "tighten up" the Bob Hudson show, that Hudson needed a "partner" to play off of and to do on-the-air skits. It was determined to team Hudson up with Rebel Foster (who hired Hudson for KRLA back in 1963) and have a "Hudson and Foster" show, even though it was never called that. Hudson just said that this is Bob Hudson along with Rebel Foster in the "buddy seat." With Foster out of the weekends and into the two-man morning shift, Harvey Miller was brought back to the weekends.

It was in October 1985, the following month, that Mike Wagner who had been program director and 9 to noon personality, was given greater responsibilities behind the scenes and so Harvey Miller took over the 9 to noon show and even as Program Director in the months ahead for a short time as Wagner continued to work behind the scenes and do occasional reliefs once in a while. Wagner's voice continued to be heard doing various promo announcements during this time and the "voice" of the turkey ("gobble, gobble") during KRLA's Thanksgiving contest.

However, as the year was ending, Rebel Foster left KRLA and was replaced in the "buddy seat" by Buck Buchanan who had worked with Hudson in the early '80's in Hawaii. Buchanan also was the son of the situation comedy actor Edgar Buchanan, most famous from the "Petticoat Junction" TV series.

Buchanan had earlier supplied the "voice" of John Lennon's ghost on some of Hudson's earlier shows in '85. The team of "Hudson and Buchanan" was a funnier pair than Hudson and Foster. (Again it was not called "Hudson and Buchanan"; but "Buck Buchanan in the buddy seat.") There seemed to be a better chemistry with Buchanan and Hudson, and we were hoping they would have done an album. They were a good team.

However, right before the end of the year in early December, John Rydgren, who had been doing the Saturday and Sunday 6 to 10 a.m. shows pre-recorded would leave KRLA for medical reasons and be replaced by Gary Marshall, who hadn't been heard on Eleven-Ten since 1970. We would lose Rydgren to "Princess Blue Sky" in December 1988, a loss to the radio profession. Besides the weekend drive-time shift, Marshall would also be involved in KRLA production behind the scenes and be the voice of various promos and spots.

So KRLA ended the year 1985 with a solid lineup and gold format. Don Steele was so popular in the 4 to 8 p.m. afternoon drive shift that KDOC-TV in Orange County resurrected Steele's old dance TV show with frequent promos for KRLA on the show.

However, KRLA would suffer a severe setback in early 1986 which would change the morning drive show, which as we have stated many times should be the strongest, most stable "box office" show in the lineup. In December 1985 it was reported that singer Rick Nelson was killed in a plane crash, supposedly from a fire started on board the plane crash that "may" have had to do with freebasing cocaine. Also in January 1986, the U.S. space shuttle had blown up causing two major aviation disasters in the news the same few weeks.

In February 1986, Hudson and Buchanan had performed a skit on the morning show, that it was announced that the reason the space shuttle blew up was the astronauts on board were freebasing Tang (the orange drink powder that astronauts in the past had taken on various other space missions). The joke was funny, but apparently station management and listeners' negative comments were so outraged that Hudson and Buchanan were both taken off the air immediately.

Station management thought the joke was in poor taste, and negative mail responding to the joke was enough to cause management to feel that Hudson and Buchanan should go. Hudson told us he actually was only commenting on all the negative reports about Rick Nelson and that it wasn't fair that those rumors of Nelson involved with cocaine (which was found in Nelson's body) was unfair to the memory of Nelson and his family. He also didn't like the repeating showings on TV of the space shuttle blowing up.

So Hudson and Buchanan were "suspended" from the air, but as days went on and Hudson's contract was up on March 1st, it was clear they were not coming back. Replacing them in the morning show was former KRLA morning man from 1969-71, Jay Stevens. Stevens was only there as a temporary fill-in until it was decided what to do with the morning show.

Stevens was "a warm, friendly voice," to handle the important morning show due to his experience as a classic Eleven-Ten morning personality of the past. Stevens was very successful with his voice-over work and production

company and consulting service and did not expect to stay on as morning man due to his important other commitments. We did enjoy hearing one of our favorites come back. We always liked and respected Jay Stevens! He's one of the best.

Also on a temporary weekend basis at this time from April through June, KRLA brought in an air personality most recently heard as Dave Hull's traffic reporter on KHJ-AM in its final days and KRTH-AM after the call letter change, Mark Denis. Mark Denis had been a major Southern California radio personality for many years, and it was expected that Denis may have a future as an "Eleven-Ten Man."

Denis was first heard on major Southern California airwaves on KFXM, Colton, at the same time Steve Jay (Jay Stevens) was starting out on Southern California airwaves. The two were together again, now many years later, except now Steve Jay was "Jay Stevens" as we have discussed in an earlier chapter.

Denis, however, was best known from his work at KMEN in San Bernardino where in the early '60's, Denis was heard at the same time at KMEN as future KRLA alumni William F. Williams and Johnnie Darin. Denis coined his famous expression that is a classic in radio,

"Denis, anyone?"

A very famous picture of Mark Denis was at KMEN where Denis would look very philosophical holding his glasses to his chin. A priceless relic!

From KMEN, Denis went on to become a KGB BeachBoy/Boss Jock in San Diego before joining KFI as Program Director in 1969 and doing various work at KWOW Pomona and KEZY Anaheim before joining 93/KHJ during its "Car Radio" days in 1984 as the mid-day personality, and switching to just traffic when Dave Hull did the morning show.

Denis, a graduate of Pius X High School in Downey as "Denis Melbourne" is one of the nicest human beings in broadcasting, and a slick, well polished adaptable air talent who is quite versatile in his abilities. We had the pleasure of having lunch with Denis at Nickodells on Melrose, and for several years afterwards Denis used to call us up on our birthday and wish us a happy birthday.

As stated earlier, Jay Stevens was put into the morning show on a temporary basis and by the summer of 1986, KRLA took a slightly different turn. KRLA wanted to re-solidify its Mexican-American base and so moved over from KBZT-FM "down the hall" and brought in Danny Martinez to be the new morning man.

It was thought that Martinez would be a big "box office" draw for the demographic audience that KRLA wanted to re-solidify. Martinez had been best known to Los Angeles audiences as being a 93/KHJ Boss Jock at several times and also served with Mike Wagner at KIIS.

In the past Danny Martinez was a pretty straight "Boss Jock"; but at this time Martinez did seem to exhibit a free-reign style by bringing in comedy and humor and such characters as "Cousin Cochina" and "Juan Moretime." Martinez was heartily promoted by KRLA in a one-half-page ad in the Herald Examiner in July 1986 and did try very hard in the morning drive. In a station that did still broadcast from those big towers in South El Monte, a predominantly Mexican-American community, it was nice to see KRLA serve that community by having as its morning man, the top shift, a Hispanic air personality.

With Danny Martinez as morning man, Jay Stevens went back to doing some weekend shifts at KRLA before dropping off the schedule entirely with his consulting business Stevens' main concern. (Stevens is the voice of "The Warehouse" and Paul's Big Screen TV's.)

One day in July 1986 we were driving down Longden Avenue headed east when suddenly we saw what we had been expecting since we first heard the news in December 1984. Five beautiful strong clean red-and-white transmitter towers were reaching toward the sky ahead of us, east on Longden Avenue.

We knew what they were. We also knew the end would be near for something else. We turned on KRLA on our auto radio. No, KRLA was still coming from South El Monte, it wasn't that close. We drove on toward the "Steele towers from Irwindale."

It was a hot summer day. The foothills of the nearby mountains looked dry. But the towers before us were mighty. Longden Avenue became like the Road to Oz and yellow brick road, where instead of an emerald city and castle, we drove forward to explore this new "dream-house" ahead.

# KRLA 1110am



SALUTES

## Charlie Tuna!



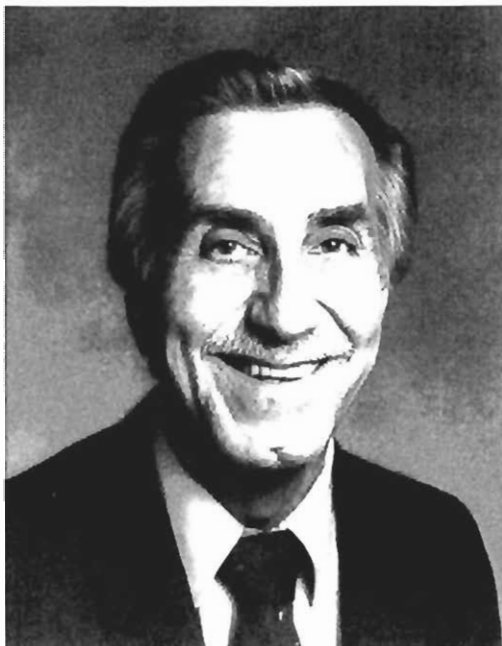
for  
waking  
up  
Southern  
California  
for

**20**  

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**Years!!**

**Mornings**  
**5 to 10 a.m.**  
on  
**KRLA 1110am**



DICK HUGG



MANNY PACHECO

## CHAPTER 15

### "TUNA WITH GOOD TASTE"



Lohman



BOB HUDSON

As we have said all along in the last two chapters, it would be just a matter of time before construction would begin on a new KRLA transmitter site which was to be at 277 East Longden Avenue in Irwindale. Since early 1985 we had frequently visited this site, seeing very slowly the land cleared for a new construction development.

The work on this property, due to it being a former landfill, really went at a snail's pace until July 1986 when we, who at the time lived in next door Arcadia, could see five new clean big red-and-white towers standing proudly at that site. Upon investigating the site a new "bomb shelter" style transmitter building was being built with a large garage for KRLA's mobile studio trailer, and also right inside the new transmitter building, an emergency studio was being built for possible live broadcasts from Irwindale.

We were given a tour of the soon-to-be completed facilities, and the site of the new five big towers right in the foothills was quite a picturesque one, but a sad one as it was just a matter of time before the South El Monte transmitter site, the home of KRLA for all those years would soon be history. But in the Summer of 1986 it was still about six months away from completion of the new transmitter site to be in full operation.

But it would be the end of an era when that day would soon come. For now at this point in 1986, it was still KRLA out of its faithful, water cooled transmitter at 825 North Lexington-Gallatin Road and its legendary towers reaching up to Princess Blue Sky.

KRLA continued in late Summer and early Fall of 1986 to fine-tune its evening schedule, bringing in Dick Hugg to do an 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. weeknight show, followed by two pre-recorded hours of Art Laboe from 10 to 11, and Harvey



Miller 11 to midnight. Miller continued to be the 9 to noon personality at approximately this time in 1986. This 9 to noon slot was the best time slot for Miller, as his maturity and deep voice were well suited for a female housewife audience even though by 1986, the "female housewife audience" was slowly evaporating. It's no longer like the '60's and '70's.

The evening programming changed again in late Summer 1986 when KRLA scheduled Wolfman Jack who had been already heard on KRLA in a prerecorded syndicated all-night program, but this time Jack would be doing the 8 to midnight shows "live" from his home.

However, in September 1986 it was clear that Danny Martinez as the morning man was not as successful as KRLA had hoped for, so KRLA decided to try something new in the morning. Earlier in 1986, the legendary Los Angeles radio team "Lohman and Barkley" broke up. Roger Barkley, the straight man, went to "beautiful music" on FM, whereas Al Lohman, the "funny man," had not landed a radio spot yet.

It was a brilliant idea in September 1986 to team up Al Lohman with former/suspended KRLA morning man, Bob Hudson in a "Lohman and Hudson" experiment. Both men were "funny men" from the two most famous Los Angeles radio teams "Lohman and Barkley" and "Hudson and Landry" and it was quite a pleasure to hear two legendary talents team up. Even though both were "funny men" and never had been "straight men" before, the experiment was quite good with some legendary comedy spots about avocados and other classic bits.

Also at this time Harvey Miller left KRLA to go to Seattle and was replaced by Mike Wagner, calling himself "Midday Mike" now, and now in a shortened 10-to-Noon show, so Wagner could have more time on management duties off the air.

However, a change at KRLA's FM sister station KBZT caused a short end to the "Lohman and Hudson" experiment. Charlie Tuna had been the morning man at KBZT (earlier KHTZ) in a "lite rock/less talk" format. When KBZT changed over in the fall of 1986 to KLSX playing "Classic Rock" (early progressive), a much more heavy style music, being classic album oriented rock, it was decided since Charlie Tuna had been under contract already, to move Tuna over to KRLA "down the hall."

Tuna was better suited for KRLA, and it was rumored that he would be ending up at KRLA sooner or later. Charlie Tuna was the strong morning man that KRLA needed at this point after all the changes to the morning show. A brief rundown now on the history of Charlie Tuna in Los Angeles radios.

Art Ferguson had originally used the name "Charlie Tunah" back East but when joining KHJ as a Boss Jock in November 1967, it was shortened to just "Charlie Tuna." The earlier spelling was to prevent any problems with Starkist which had a cartoon fish spokesman "Charlie the Tuna" as a long running feature on television for many, many years.

At several times in Tuna's career in Los Angeles Tuna toyed with the idea of using his real name "Art Ferguson" but never gave up the "Charlie Tuna" name which was now quite legendary. Shortly after Tuna was signed to the morning show on KRLA, in October 1986 Tuna did an excellent remote broadcast personal appearance at Larry Parker's Diner in Beverly Hills, where a variety of "Tuna Omelettes" were sold at the restaurant for only \$1.10.

We were present at that personal appearance, and at one point, Tuna interviewed us over the KRLA airwaves about the legendary 80-page thesis we had written about KRLA in 1969 and the array of KRLA memorabilia in the Research Archives morgue. Again we enjoyed talking over the KRLA airwaves live as "Bill Earl, the Official KRLA Historian." Tuna that day even autographed our own Starkist Charlie the Tuna rubber character doll.

Tuna had been heard on various radio stations in Los Angeles from KHJ to KCBQ, Santee, then in 1972 to KROQ (the old KBLA) to KKDJ to KIIS, back to KHJ, then to KTNQ, KHTZ, KBZT and now KRLA, nine different call letter combinations in the Southland. Charlie Tuna as the new KRLA morning man became highly popular with his loyal fans following him over to Eleven-Ten.

So with Charlie Tuna now in the mornings KRLA had a good, big name draw and Tuna, while even though not a comedic personality, still does have a presence and professionalism and is one of the better morning men in KRLA's history. Now the KRLA lineup in September 1986 was Charlie Tuna 5 to 10, Midday Mike 10 to noon, Johnny Hayes noon to 4, Don Steele 4 to 8, Wolfman Jack from his home 8 to midnight live, and with Gary Marshall, Art Laboe, Harvey Miller returning to KRLA, and also Manny Pacheco who had really never left KRLA.

Manny Pacheco, who was last heard on KRLA in the Art Laboe era while continuing promotion work and as a community link to the Latin community at Mexican fairs (such as in El Monte every September), Pacheco also did some air shifts at this time on his own, or substituted for Laboe back in 1985, and was Laboe's producer in Summer 1985.

Pacheco would also host the Sunday morning drive 6 to 8 a.m. "KRLA Connection" public affairs call-in show in the years ahead.

However, by the end of 1986, a big, big era in KRLA's history was about to come to an end. During the Fall of 1986, the new KRLA transmitter building and five big towers in Irwindale was finally being completed, and for a while some of the programming would be sent out over the Irwindale towers for testing purposes and others from South El Monte many times on the same day.

By the end of 1986, in December, the transmitter in South El Monte would be shut off forever as right before the first of January 1987, all KRLA transmissions would come out of Irwindale. We recall driving by the KRLA South El Monte transmitter site in January 1987 seeing the seven big towers now silenced and standing almost like tombstones, and seeing the KRLA transmitter building empty and abandoned, as KRLA was now 24 hours a day from Irwindale, California.

The KRLA of the past was now gone forever, as the station no longer was at the Huntington Hotel, and now the real heart of KRLA was silenced from South El Monte. However, the new 50,000-watt signal from Irwindale made the station come in much clearer and was a technical improvement.

As of this writing in Spring 1989, no live programming has yet been broadcast out of the Irwindale state-of-the-art studio in the transmitter building, but the possibility does remain on an emergency basis.

Then one day in January 1987, the end of the old KRLA really hit home. A group of trucks were spotted in the horse pasture underneath the KRLA towers, as workmen started to dismantle the now silent giant towers one by one.

One day there was seven, then five, then two, and then one, until finally one day in January 1987 all towers were gone from the field, and the only sign that towers were ever there are the concrete stumps to the tower's bases, reminiscent of the stumps of giant trees that were cut down for "progress." Two of the oldest towers at the Western edge of the field were not even dismantled, but actually the guy wires were cut where the towers crashed down to the field in a tangled mess of broken metal, twisted past memories and faded dreams.

The caretaker of the pasture, Bob Navarro, allowed us to go out into the field where the twisted wreckage of towers were in a mangled pile and where a clean tower metal bar off the oldest KRLA tower was given to us as a prized memento by one of the workmen. We have this excellent condition cast-iron bar in the Research Archives office and, now cleaned up and painted, is a sad memory of what KRLA was. But it is a piece of KRLA -- great sounds came from that piece of metal. For that it is very, very special.

During the time that the KRLA towers in South El Monte were being demolished, not one TV station, camera crew, or reporter came out to the pasture to watch or record the end of KRLA, the "Station Of The Stars." A truck came and took all the unsalvageable broken twisted former towers away, and the field was now clear.

No towers reaching up to Princess Blue Sky. The pasture had an eerie silence that something once great, maybe even supernatural, was in the air. The spirit of Eleven-Ten was still in those South El Monte breezes. Princess Blue Sky would still be overhead. She knew what was once below.

Navarro also allowed us to have one last walk-through in the now abandoned dream-house, the KRLA transmitter building at 825 North Lexington-Gallatin Road, where we took a series of photographs for Research Archives before the building was torn up from the insides, water-cooled transmitter consoles removed and the building possibly to be demolished. We'll discuss those plans toward the end of this chapter.

Walking through the empty transmitter building, seeing the once mighty water-cooled transmitter consoles now silenced and dry, was a sad sight. The old KRLA had gone. The era of South El Monte had ended. The transmitter building was just a shell of its past greatness.

When that building was built in April of 1955 it was state-of-the-art. Now 31 years later it was just an empty, abandoned building. We walked through the rooms and sat in the kitchen where the UPI news machine now covered with dust once gave news over the wire every minute. We looked out the window into the pasture in back. No more towers. Just concrete stumps. The old KRLA really, really was gone. The dream-house was just empty walls.

We drove off hearing an old aircheck of Johnnie Darin on our car tape deck. KRLA was now coming to all of Southern California from at the base of the foothills in Irwindale. It would take some getting used to.

KRLA was about to enter another year 1987. No more Pasadena. No more South El Monte. Irwindale was now where the heart and soul of KRLA was proudly beating.

In 1987 KRLA would continue its oldies format in a pretty much steady direction as it had the year before with just the minor cosmetic changes above. KRLA as a promotion came out with a record by Dick Dale called "One Double One, Oh!" that would salute the KRLA lineup and also on the back of the LP-size cover would feature nice pictures of the KRLA "Eleven-Ten Men" in the center of record discs. This is an example of a nice KRLA collectible from the current era. The song mentions the names of the weekday "Eleven-Ten Men."

The only real change to the KRLA lineup at this time in 1987 was Manny Pacheco taking over the evening show with his producer, Victor Corral ("Vic Slick"), and gearing KRLA more toward a mix of salsa, oldies, and now even some selected currents and programming popular to the Hispanic audience. At that time the "All Oldies" logo was changed to just "Oldies - KRLA 1110 AM" on the stickers and "Oldies but Goodies" on its new jingles. This experiment of adding currents to the night-time show did not last too long, as the station eventually went back to an "all oldies" format.

Also in 1987 the Johnny Hayes show was enlarged to 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. live, Don Steele would now be 3 to 7 p.m., and later in the year Harvey Miller would once again return to KRLA in the 7 to midnight show. (Mike Wagner would drop off the midmorning show for more management duties). And KRLA would feature Val Valentine rejoining the KRLA lineup in a midnight to 5 a.m. show "live" geared toward the Mexican-American audience. This was the first all-live programming on KRLA in the all-night hours for the first time since 1972!

One other show of merit on KRLA in 1987 was in November. Charlie Tuna had a 20th anniversary show of the 20-year anniversary of his first show in Los Angeles, as he originally started in Los Angeles in November 1967 at 93/KHJ. We missed the broadcast, but we heard it was one of Tuna's best. Also KRLA took out newspaper ads commending Tuna for being in Southern California (L.A. and San Diego) for 20 years, and the month before an ad was taken out in the Los Angeles Times commending Tuna on the professional way he handled the programming the morning in October 1987 during the Whittier Narrows Earthquake. (The epicenter was just blocks away from the old KRLA transmitter site in South El Monte!).

As KRLA moved into 1988, on April 1, 1988 KRLA did probably its best piece of programming in many years. For it was this "April Fool's" Day, 1988 (April 1st) that KRLA would become "A Thing Of The Past." On Charlie Tuna's morning drive show that morning, Tuna interviewed live over-the-air former KRLA alumni over the phone, Dave Hull, Casey Kasem, Charlie O'Donnell, current KRLA legend Johnny Hayes and also on that broadcast Tuna talked to us on the phone over the air, "Bill Earl - The Official KRLA Historian." Tuna asked us when our book was going to be published. We didn't know then, but as they say, what a difference a year makes!

The reason Tuna interviewed all those various KRLA alumni was that from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. that day, KRLA really did become a "thing of the past." From 9 to noon KRLA became KFWB April 1, 1958 with the old jingles and the return of Ted Quillin. KRLA pretended it was the old KFWB of April 1958! This was just like what KMET had done back in 1972. Suddenly you heard three hours of KFWB again, with all the music of April 1st, 1958.

Quillin never sounded better with the "echo" effect, and his "doubles" were as good as ever, too.

(Quillin: "Honey, I've got a present for you, (pause) but I don't know how to wrap it!"). The jingles that KRLA used of the old KFWB were in mint air quality shape, right from the master tape, and were a sheer delight to hear. This was even a better job than when Ted Quillin re-created KFWB back in November 1972 on KMET. (And Quillin was "live"!).

From 12 noon to 3 p.m. Johnny Hayes re-created the KRLA of 1963, loaded with references to all the old "Eleven-Ten Men" of that era. And to top even that from 3 to 7 p.m., Don Steele re-created 93/KHJ and "Boss Radio" from April 1, 1968! Steele sounded exactly the same as he did then; his timing was perfect, and it was great to hear those classic 1965 Johnny Mann "93/KHJ" jingles.

This was a great day in KRLA's recent programming! At the end of the broadcast at 7:00 p.m., KRLA announced that of those three channels, only KRLA remains in a music format, with KFWB now all news and KHJ no more (now called KRTH-AM). These programs were so highly critically praised, that the "best" of Quillin's and Steele's shows were played on a Saturday morning a few weeks later. (How about re-creating KRLA 1970 with Johnnie Darin or 1971 with Tom Murphy?) That day, April 1st, 1988 was truly the high mark of KRLA's programming for 1988.

In the summer of 1988 it was announced that legendary KRLA air talent from the past (1961 to 1969) Dick Moreland had died of cancer. Even though it had been almost 20 years since Moreland had been a member of the "Eleven-Ten Men"

(he did return in November 1981 coming "home for the holidays"), Hayes saluted this KRLA great by dedicating a "Countdown" show that summer to Moreland as a tribute to him, playing old airchecks from the 1981 reunion and old promos from before, and telephone salutes from others who knew Dick Moreland. We were in New York at the time but heard an aircheck of this show, and Hayes should be commended by saluting one of KRLA's greater personalities that had so much of an influence on KRLA for so many important mid-Sixties years.

Hayes was becoming quite known as an "Elder Statesman" of L.A. radio. The year before on local television Johnny Hayes was shown on camera hosting several weeknight shows on early rock and roll. Hayes looked very good on camera and, of course, has a tremendous track record at KRLA for so many, many years. During every year from 1965 to today, Johnny Hayes was heard on KRLA during each year 1965 through 1989. That's a record KRLA can be proud of.

As KRLA moved further in 1988, KRLA broadcast a pre-recorded two hours by Bob Hudson on late Sunday nights called "The Emperor's Gold," where Hudson "paid for" the show with commercials for "playing cards" Hudson made up for the California lottery Lotto game, with various Zodiac signs on the back of the decks, where you would order your own "sign" and then deal yourself six cards with hopefully lucky numbers. This show reminded us of a pre-recorded show that Hudson did on XEPRS back in late 1981 and early 1982 in another "commercial" show for record albums at that time.

In November 1988 Charlie Tuna had one of his more memorable remote shows where he was broadcasting live from a Mayflower moving van in November 1988 in Monrovia (about a mile away from the new KRLA transmitter towers) for Thanksgiving 1988, doing a show "On the Mayflower." It was a classic live broadcast.

Shortly after that Tuna had another classic show where on New Year's Day, Charlie Tuna would do his show "live" from a Rose Parade float! It was neat to see Charlie Tuna on television from the float doing his show on KRLA, but even more special how Tuna was talking to Channel 5's, and former KRLA great, Bob Eubanks, the parade's TV host and how the two reminisced about KRLA and how this year KRLA will turn 30! Shortly after that broadcast we decided it was time to do this book. As a historian we did have a story to tell. And the timing was right.

As KRLA shifted into 1989 the lineup was again quite steady with Charlie Tuna 5 to 10 a.m., Johnny Hayes 10 to 3, Don Steele 3 to 7, Harvey Miller 7 to midnight and Val Valentine midnight to 5. All live programming during the week. Weekends were a combination of pre-recorded and live shows with Art Laboe, Gary Marshall and Dick Hugg.

The most notable change on KRLA in early 1989 was the new slick production of the Johnny Hayes "Countdown" show, where not only would Hayes count down the top records of that day in a designated year, but new jingles were added ("Number One!"), ("Extra!"), etc., and Hayes now pretended he actually was there on that date with present tense references to KRLA "Eleven-Ten Men," and actual promos, jingles and even some old airchecks were used. The "Countdown" show never sounded better and pretending it's all happening in the present tense gave the show a great illusion. And the "news" on that show (from the past) was from KRLA (and former KFXM) news legend Adam J. DeMaris. A classic voice! DeMaris has one of the best news deliveries in the business. A real pro that they don't make anymore.

In February 1989 KRLA featured an entire weekend of Beatles music to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Beatles landing on the shores of the United States. As the Beatles played such an enormous influence on KRLA in its halcyon days, it was a pleasure to turn on KRLA that weekend and hear the never-get-old sounds of the Fab Four!

In 1989, Charlie Tuna continued to do excellent shows in his important morning drive-time hours, 5 to 10 a.m. Even though Tuna did not use his memorable "This Date In History" from the '70's (one of our favorites), Tuna did use his famous features over the years "Breakfast Serial" (comedy LP cuts) and "Wake Up Story," where he liked to use KRLA fellow staff members as characters.

However Tuna was always at his best with interviewing. In February 1989 Tuna had, as an in-studio guest, Stan Freberg, the man responsible for the Sonny Bono wig promos on KRLA back in late 1966 that we discussed earlier in this book. Freberg had his autobiography out at that time and gave some rare interviews to promote it. Tuna always had very good talents as an interviewer and was at his best with his various phone interviews with authors and people in the news.

However Tuna was never better than on this in-studio interview with Stan Freberg, who is an absolute genius and who we've quoted many times in this book. Hearing Tuna and Freberg that morning in February 1989 was a classic broadcast, especially when Tuna and Freberg discussed Freberg's consultant contributions to KRLA from the past, and it was a real pleasure to hear those "Mr. Hardrock" promos again on KRLA after all those years.

By March 1989, the beautiful horse pasture in South El Monte at Santa Anita and the Pomona Freeway and the old KRLA transmitter building at 825 North Lexington-Gallatin Road was still standing, now used as living quarters for some of the caretakers of the horses in the pasture. After all, the building is equipped with a full kitchen, tiled shower and toilet that was state-of-the-art in 1955. Only an old banner of "KRLA 1110 AM" blows in the wind in the front parking area of the building. Since KRLA left in December 1986, there has been no development on the pasture where the towers proudly stood. Just a pasture. But a special one still under Princess Blue Sky.

However in March 1989 that pasture was suddenly back in the news. It was announced in most of the major newspapers that that 21-acre site in South El Monte might be transformed into something else. Here's what was reported from a synopsis of those articles in March 1989.

In a variety of newspaper articles on March 22, it was announced that the City of South El Monte had annexed the private property 21 acres that was the former site of the KRLA transmitter towers that had been used since December 1986 as a pasture for horses.

What the city wanted to do is pave over the 21-acre pasture and also seven additional acres on the northeast end of the field next to the Pomona Freeway that was county property, and build an "auto mall car park" on that site as the city needed the tax dollars from that site.

In the 1970's there was a popular song by Joni Mitchell called "Big Yellow Taxi" which talked about the idea of someone paving over Paradise and putting in, of all things, a parking lot! KRLA in the 1970's played this song, and the hit single by the Neighborhood. Little did we know then, that that might very well be coming true in 1989. Paving the former site of the KRLA towers with asphalt and putting in on those 21 acres - car dealers!

In one of the newspaper articles it was mentioned that the "21-acre parcel that was annexed has been used for radio transmitter by station KXLA. But the station has removed the towers and its parent company, Pacific Broadcasting, has said it is willing to sell the parcel." (Herald Examiner).

If this goes through, the old transmitter building standing proudly since 1955 would be demolished, and most of all, the land that was always a pasture would be paved. In Chapter 1 we talk about how the KPAS towers were put in farmland that had never ever had any structures ever. Since time began. All those years ago.

But since the land is privately owned, the city does want to "pave Paradise" and put in its parking lot for an auto mall car park. The current owners of KRLA have nothing more to do with this property. But as a historian we do. And that is why we are sharing with you what just might happen to the beautiful pasture, once the home of the giant KRLA, the soundtrack to a generation.

At the time this book goes to press, those 21 acres are still a pasture. The concrete stumps of the towers still remain. But next time you have a chance to listen to that Joni Mitchell song, think of Princess Blue Sky. And think over your life and how KRLA was so special. And maybe drive by the pasture for maybe one last look and a time for reflection.

There's one more line in that song, paraphrased, into that people don't realize how special, how important something is, until it's too late -- and it's gone. Sometimes we don't know what we have got -- until it is too late -- and it is no more. We just heard the Ronettes rare classic "Paradise." We have a lot to think about. We hope you do, too.

At about the same time as these articles, it was also announced on March 28, 1989 that demolition began on tearing down the Huntington Hotel in Pasadena, the beautiful landmark in which the old KRLA were part of its grounds in the adjacent "carriage house" annex. The building that the old KPAS/KXLA/KRLA studios would not be demolished, but the picturesque hotel main building would be. The same building that we had lunch with Bert West and Jack Roth in 1981.

The building in October 1985 was declared unsafe as far as withstanding an earthquake. A "replica" of the building would be built as soon as the old one would be demolished.

It is ironic that the very time we finish this book that both the Huntington Hotel, the home for the KRLA studios, and the pasture in South El Monte which was the home of the "sound" of KRLA, would be in a state of change. We think maybe there was a special reason from Princess Blue Sky that this book comes out in the Summer of 1989, which seems to be a time of the "passing of the torch" and past catches up to present -- whatever the consequences.

During the writing of this book we visited the site of the old KRLA studios in the annex of the Huntington Hotel. The window in the lobby was still there. The shutters put up in 1970 were closed. The "man in the sun" surface was still on the lobby floor, installed in 1970, a reminder of past glories.

We had not visited the old KRLA site since the last day in March 1985. The old KRLA offices had not been leased. We opened the door to where the disc jockey booth was. Debris. And one big room, as the control room and booth had been ripped out, and all that remained was the window where so many watched the "Eleven-Ten Men" for all those years.

Electrical wires fell loosely from the ceiling. No sign that a radio station ever was there. But we knew. And you can't change history. Before this book went to press we wanted to have one last look at the Pasadena "dream-house." We're happy that we did and could share it with you here.

On Saturday, April 1st, 1989, KRLA repeated its "stunt" of last year and once again became a "thing of the past." But instead of all day like last year, KRLA would be "a thing of the past" for only three hours 9 to noon.

At a few minutes before 9:00 a.m., the voice of P.D. Mike Wagner was heard giving the introduction of what we were going to be hearing. From 9:00 to 10:00 would be special guest D.J. Bill Ballance, who was one of the original "Color Radio" Seven Swingin' Gentlemen, re-creating KFNB from April 1, 1959. Following Ballance from 10 to 11 would be Dave Hull, re-creating KRLA from April 1, 1964, 25 years ago that date. As you recall from an earlier chapter, Dave Hull was number one in April 1964 during the heart of the Beatle Invasion. And then from 11 to noon, two actual airchecks, unscoped, would be played of "Humble Harv," Harvey Miller, from 93/KHJ.

Bill Ballance from 9 to 10 in his pre-recorded hour did a great job bringing back KFNB memories. Ballance has always had a great command of the English language and still, after all these years, Ballance proved he was the ultimate pro and sounded as if KFNB had never left. Old aircheck spots were used during this hour from our associate Bob Maslen who supplied KRLA with most of the airchecks used for this special programming.

But when 10:00 a.m. arrived, hearing Dave Hull again was a dream come true. If anyone ever had a doubt as to the greatness of Dave Hull, this hour really summed up Hull's legendary status. Hull hadn't sounded this good in years, even during the 1981-1985 era; this time, Hull really broke loose.

The highlight of Hull's pre-recorded hour was when Hull's colleague from his old KGBS, Lynwood days who used to make hilarious calls to him on the old "Dial a Date," "called" Hull up to discuss the worst-tasting breakfast cereals in the world! It was hilarious, with Hull just breaking up in stitches!

An old "Music Man" aircheck was used, and the night this show was recorded, Mike Wagner and Hull had called us at home to play the part of the contestant, but unfortunately we were out and a substitute was used for us instead. We talked to Hull and Wagner and said we'd love a raincheck for the "30th" festivities in September!

At the end of Hull's hour, Hull's friend Richard Beebe, former KRLA newsman and now KMNY, Pomona newsman, did a news broadcast. Hull's hour was the highlight of the special, and we only wished Hull could have been on for three or four more hours, as Hull did radio as it should sound! Nobody did it better!

An interesting treat from 11 to noon. Instead of Harvey Miller "re-creating" KHJ from 1969, KRLA used two actual "Humble Harv" airchecks from June 1969, when Miller was doing afternoon drive when Don Steele was away in the now-famous contract dispute along with Robert W. Morgan. These were two actual airchecks KRLA purchased from our associate, Bob Maslen, and the only change was adding in a re-created newscast from former 93/KHJ newsman J. Paul Huddleston, now in the financial business in Texas, and some new commercials in place of some of the old.

These last three hours were an example of excellent radio that had to be heard to be believed. Also during these hours, references were made to KRLA's 30th anniversary in September! As this book will be available by then, we hope Dream-House and KRLA's programming will go hand-in-hand on preserving the special memories of a great radio station! Saturday, April 1, 1989 from 9 to noon was great radio that we couldn't have missed!

On Friday, March 31, the day right before the Saturday re-creation, we were given a tour of the KRLA transmitter building in Irwindale. We had not been inside this "broadcast city" since it was built in Summer '86, so it was a real pleasure to see how beautiful and state-of-the-art it actually was.

Right inside the door is a small foyer which is the engineer's office to the left with several desks. But all the way to the left in the northwest corner of the building through a white door is one of the most beautiful "disc jockey booths" we've seen. All brand new turntables, cart machines, several wood-grain overhead speakers make this booth as modern as it could be. All that's lacking is a picture window in front of the "board" where the disc jockey could look out at the impressive nearby foothills, but for security reasons no window exists. (But what a view it could be!).

As of this date the Irwindale disc jockey booth has not been used yet, but as Chief Engineer David Ping and Transmitter Supervisor Chris Hayes told us, in case of fire or earthquake at the regular Wilshire Boulevard facility, the Irwindale booth could be used instantly if need be for the "Eleven-Ten Men."

Chief Engineer David Ping is probably best known from a recent article in a Los Angeles newspaper where Ping, in order to repair the KLSX transmitter and to gain access after a storm, had to hike the road all the way to the top of Flint Peak! A feat in itself.

As you look forward from the front door is the large transmitter room itself with state-of-the-art consoles all along the north and east walls. On the south wall is a stove and refrigerator so the engineers (or air talent) can fix meals.

The only visible holdover from the old South El Monte transmitter building is a rust brown "Lazy Boy" style chair where the engineer can sit and see in front of him the real "heart and soul" of KRLA.

We thank David Ping and Chris Hayes for our V.I.P. treatment! These two gentlemen are two behind-the-scenes people who bring us all the great sounds of KRLA today. For that they deserve a big "Thank you!" from all us listeners in the Land of Eleven-Ten.

In mid-April 1989 for the all-night show, 12 midnight to 5 a.m. while Val Valentine was vacationing in El Paso, KRLA brought in a new "Eleven-Ten Man," Rick Diego. Diego was a strong link to the Hispanic audience and was the latest member of the "Eleven-Ten Men."

As this book goes to press in Spring 1989, KRLA continued to have consistent programming from its new transmitter site in Irwindale. References are slowly being made on the air to KRLA's 30-year birthday party on Labor Day weekend 1989 and we, like all the listeners in the Land of Eleven-Ten, hope some of those memories of the past 30 years that we've tried to highlight in this book can be once again shared by KRLA. We hope some of our favorites will be heard once again on Eleven-Ten, and we hope this book Dream-House can serve as sort of a "visual program" to the 30-year festivities and bring back some happy memories.

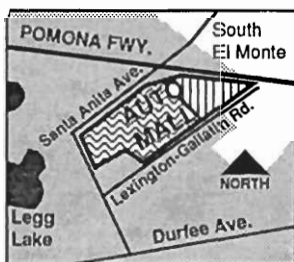
But besides looking back, we hope KRLA will continue to look forward and have great programming ahead as always. Irwindale is now the "heart" of KRLA today. We hope that off those "Steele towers" at the base of the foothills, that KRLA can continue to touch the hearts, the souls, the minds, and the spirits that maybe may let another listener and another historian tell the tales of KRLA in its future.




We hope we've been like King Arthur in Camelot as we told the history of this once-and-future mighty station and "dream-house" to future generations. That's why this book was written. Because KRLA was the soundtrack to so many lives of thirtysomething and fortysomething people and that one of those special memories from the past 30 years has come alive in this book. The dream-house is now on Longden Avenue in Irwindale. The "Steele towers from Irwindale" stand tall! Long may they stand.

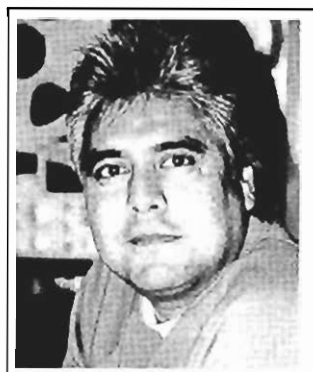


**Mike Wagner**

The Beginning



-  **Army Corps of Engineers**
-  **Core Capital Corp.**
-  **Whittier Narrows Recreation Area**



**Val Valentine**



JOHNNY HAYES



DAVE HULL

## AFTERWORD

### "A STATION THAT'S STILL THERE"

"How many things in life were there for you when you were a kid, and they're still there for you when you're an adult? Here's a station that's still there. It's like Good and Plenty."

KRLA program director Mike Wagner told us this in March 1989 as we had the privilege of discussing this book and KRLA's 30-year festivities coming up. It is true. KRLA is still standing, standing tall in the foothills of Irwindale, and standing tall at Eleven-Ten on your radios. You have just read the as-complete-as-its-ever-gonna-get history of a major radio station on the West Coast.

As you have read, there have been many eras and lives to KRLA's history. Many names have been discussed and over the years ahead, there will be many more. But KRLA has stood tall and has always been there. For those who grew up with the station and who now listen to KRLA on their ways to work, or home, or all over "The Land of Eleven-Ten."

We have just spent the last umpteen number of pages sharing with you the history of probably the most important radio station in Los Angeles history. We realize that not everything has been covered, for example all the newscasters or sports personnel over the years or the many, many people behind the scenes, and we apologize for that.

But the core of KRLA has always been in its air personalities and its music programming. And that's what this book was all about. It's difficult to chronicle a radio station for even one year, yet alone thirty. Or for that matter, a radio frequency for 48 years, which we've done here.



But we feel that this is the definitive volume of KRLA and probably will never be equalled. We welcome suggestions or corrections. Almost all facts you've read have been verified by at least two sources where possible, which gives it a high accuracy level.

But memories are fading, and this book should keep what we remember about KRLA in focus. We hope you've enjoyed what you've read and found a special memory in these pages. And we also hope you learned new things about KRLA and realized that there really was once-upon-a-time a dream-house in the Land of Eleven-Ten that touched so many lives and was truly the soundtrack to a generation.

KRLA is 30 years old this year. Let's say a prayer, whatever your religion or beliefs, to the spirit of Princess Blue Sky, maybe now over the towers in Irwindale at the base of the beautiful foothills standing tall. And let's pray that KRLA, the dream-house, will continue to grow and continue to serve the community -- the Land of Eleven-Ten. Pray that KRLA will not just be a nostalgia station with a 30-year-old past, but another 30 years or more of a wonderful future.

Thirty years is still awfully young. KRLA has a big life ahead. Let's pray for blue skies and green lights for the mighty towers in Irwindale and for KRLA's future ahead. And hope that the next historian, like the boy at the end of "Camelot", can pick up where we someday will have to leave off and tell the tale of a special dream-house that really did exist.

We pray for greater days ahead for the Dream-House, KRLA, in the Land of Eleven-Ten. KRLA is still standing. Radio Eleven-Ten still exists. KFWB is now all news (with the voice of Jay Stevens doing promos - a former "Eleven-Ten Man"), KHJ is now KRTH-AM, 1500 AM where KBLA was, is now a "vacant" frequency. KGBS is now all-Spanish. But KRLA still exists. It may now be from Irwindale but the spot on your dials is still there! That's saying a lot. New memories can still be made every day just by listening. KRLA was the station of our childhood, the station of our adolescence, and now KRLA is the station of our life today.

We conclude our prayer.

KRL-Amen.

NOW THAT YOU'VE READ THE BOOK ....  
HEAR KRLA, THE DREAM-HOUSE, AGAIN  
FROM YOUR FAVORITE ERA!

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