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WGN Family Letter

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RARE!

Volume I

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No. 2

OUR OPPORTUNITY

This WGN family letter is the first of a series to acquaint everyone of our family members with operation of WGN. For some time our department managers have felt that our fellow workers should have more information about our station and its management problems. Ed Kobak has used a similar information letter in his Mutual organization since taking over the direction of the network and I am sure we can benefit by stealing a page from the book of a man we all know as one of the outstanding radio operators of the country.

We are anxious that everyone participate in the progress of WGN. We feel that we have the outstanding station of the country, but with radio competition as it is, we cannot stand still. As one of 22 stations in the United States operating without any other stations on its channel, we have a "Clear Channel Station."

Through Carl Meyers' foresight several years ago, WGN acquired the 720 kc. wavelength, which means that we are almost at the center of the radio spectrum--a tremendous advantage to us. The carrying power of the transmitter which Mr. Meyers and his boys built gives us an audible signal in almost every state of the Union, as well as in many of the Canadian provinces. Because of this tremendous technical advantage and the ability of the WGN staff which has been built over a period of years, I am sure all of us have one of radio's greatest opportunities in extending WGN's service.

FRANK P. SCHREIBER

WHO'S NEWS

Busiest buzzing around the studios this week came from Forrest Lewis and Curley Bradley, who accompanied Announcer Hal Lansing on a hunting jaunt to his cabin in northern Minnesota. Lansing and Lewis just went along for the ride, while Curley dropped a 160-pound doe... Marion Schroeder was a last-minute substitution on "The Northerners" Wednesday (Nov. 13), when June Browne suddenly took ill.... Estelle Barnes, WGNB program director, gave a piano recital on Nov. 4 at the Glenview Country Club.... Latest member of the WGN orchestra to join the grandpappy ranks is Adolph Hoffmann. Carl Carlucci with two grand children and Frank Crisafulli with one are old timers.... Three WGN transmitter engineers are driving new cars: Woody Crane (Chev.), Henry Janssen (Ford), and Kenneth Olson (Chev.). Another proud owner of a new Ford is Charles McConnell of the Music Department.... Lewis James, WGNB production manager for the past two years, is returning to the WGN staff in the music department, where he will be in charge of all musical auditions for both stations. John Barclay has taken Lew's place as production manager.... Hal Totten's 19-year-old son, John, is playing guard for the School of Aviation Medicine team at Randolph Field, Texas.... Ella-Merien Manopoli, of the WGNB staff, sang at a joint recital at Dania, a Scandanavian club, Nov. 10.... The announcers got together and presented Traffic Manager Milt Newton with a beautiful new wristwatch in appreciation of past services.... A wave of ambition has overtaken WGNB staff members: Eloise Keeler is taking a course in advertising layout, Marie Grace is studying interior decoration, and Barbara Buckingham is looking over art school catalogues.

WEDDING BELLS.... Paul Benzaquin, Continuity Dept., was married Oct. 25 to Barbara Vansteel of Quincy, Ill., who is with the Schwimmer & Scott ad agency.... Another beautiful sparkler is being flashed around WGN by Marilyn Jayne, of the Public Relations Dept. The lucky man is Warren Lassen of Oak Park, a pre-med student at the University of Chicago. Wedding bells will ring in March, according to tentative plans.

CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES.... Herman Godfrey Ashbacher, supervisor of Sound Effects, and his wife Lou will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary on Nov. 25. They were married in Bluffton, Ind., and have one daughter, Madelyn, who is director of music at the Sandwich, Ind., public schools.... The Jim Hanlons are celebrating their tenth wedding anniversary on Nov. 23.

HELLO & WELCOME TO.... Rhoda Topel, Ruth Atkins, Barbara Wright and Sam Morris. The three girls are working in the Script Department, and Sam is on part time as a messenger. He's a sophomore at De Paul, goes to classes mornings.... No newcomer to WGN but a hello and welcome also goes to Dorothy Holle Norcott, secretary to Carl Meyers. A WGNer for six years, Dorothy took six months off to play mother to her baby.... Another returnee is Betty Blanton, former page girl, who left to attend school but discovered it would be March before she could get in. Until that time she will be giving the girls in Irene Dahm's office a hand.

DO YOU KNOW...

...that Elden Bengé, member of the WGN orchestra, is the manufacturer of the famous Bengé trumpet that is used by all major symphony orchestras in the country?

...that within the past 13 months WGN office staff employes have received more than a thirty per cent raise?

...that a new Diesel powered generator has been permanently installed for emergency power in case of public service failure at the WGN transmitter?

...that in most Chicago business offices employes are required to work a full forty hours per week, get only 30 or 45 minutes for lunch? At WGN we have a 38 3/4 hour work week and a full hour for lunch.

...that a group of students from Indiana State Teachers College voted WGN "the station they'd most like to work for" after a radio tour of Chicago last month?

...that very few firms give their employes a \$1,000 insurance policy free, such as is received by all members of the WGN family who qualify under the employes benefit plan?

...that there are three proud daddies in the WGN orchestra boasting twin offspring? They are Elden Bengé, who has twin sons age 13; Carl Racine, with 7-year-old twin daughters; and Bob Quick with 7-year-old twin sons. Bob also has a 10-year-old son.

...that Fred Meincken, music librarian, is going to have a 14 lb. turkey on Thanksgiving for just himself and his wife?

...that there are only 28 more days to go to the WGN Christmas party?

KNOW YOUR ANNOUNCER---HARRY BURGE

Like all radio announcers, Harry Burge likes to talk--he was once oratorical champion of Michigan--but his unhappy fate schedules Harry on shows in which the people on the other side of the microphone do most of the talking.

Harry figures he's held the mike in front of 28,000 civilians and servicemen in the four years he's been with WGN on the Service Center Canteen, Man on the Street and Chicago At Night shows. The Chicago Theater lobby, where the Chicago At Night show now originates, is always filled with people anxious to talk to Harry and the WGN audience.

Born in Nevada, schooled in Texas, Michigan and Georgia, he's also seen a large portion of the world as a merchant seaman--a far cry from his education for the ministry. An ordained Methodist minister, Harry left that call to go on the stage (because actors don't call each other "brothers") and graduated from stock company roles to radio acting and thence to announcing--on WJR, Detroit.

The fringed sleeved leather jacket which Harry wears a lot of the time is evidence of his western background, his love of hunting and fishing and dogs--he owns a beagle and a Chesapeake Bay retriever.

Other members of the Burge menage, include Mrs. Burge, Judy, who is 9; Harry, Jr., 7; and two-year old Michael.

LET'S GIVE A HAND to Louise Sasso. When a listener called to get the title of a selection he'd heard on another network, Louise gave him the info he had failed to get from the station carrying the program!

YOUR MUTUAL FRIEND - GIL McCLELLAND

Midwest Mutual's ever smiling sales promotion boss claims to be the first baby born in his home town hospital. The event occurred on May 28, 1903, and in the intervening 43 years Gilbert William McClelland has been a busy fellow indeed. Gil attended Wabash College in his home town of Crawfordsville, Indiana, graduating in 1926. During college he took a year off to become a reporter on the Miami (Florida) Herald, saved his dollars and upon graduating put his A.B. degree aside to tour Europe in the summer of '26. He says he didn't see Emily Kimbrough, but he did cover Paris and London fairly thoroughly. That fall he returned to the United States and turned insurance salesman with headquarters in Chicago. The United Press hired Gil a short time later and by the time he left them, in 1928, he was manager of the Columbus, Ohio, bureau. For the next four years Gil did publicity for the Illinois Commission on Public Utilities Information, the Gary Railroad and the South Shore Line. In 1932, the Michigan City News had a new advertising salesman, Gilbert McClelland. The next year the Century of Progress opened in Chicago with this same McClelland in the promotion department. In 1934, Gil entered radio as a publicity writer for NBC. He stayed there for six years, becoming assistant sales promotion manager before he left in 1943 to become sales promotion manager for Mutual's midwest division.

During his Michigan City stay, Gil met Mary Alice Jackson, and for the next three years he commuted for his dates, until 1935 when they were married. The McClellands now have two children, James, 3, and Anne, 1, who share their 18 E. Chestnut apartment.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS TO Marie Gunderson, secretary to Jim Mahoney, Mutual station relations, (Dec. 5)... Emmy Lou Stekoll, secretary to Mutual salesman Wally Holden, (Dec. 7)... Mary Figard, Auditing Dept. (Dec. 10)... Mary Ellen Maher, Program Dept. (Dec. 12)... Rose Brewer Allen, Sales Dept. (Dec. 12)... Inger Marie Johnson, Sales Dept. (Dec. 18)... Frank Korch, Sports Dept. (Dec. 20)... Lily Mauer, Script Dept. (Dec. 20)... Virginia Rogers, Public Relations Dept. (Dec. 20)... Morrison Wood, Production Dept. (Dec. 20)... Ed Gerkin, New York Sales Office (Dec. 21)... Clyde Diderich, Engineer (Dec. 21)... E. LeRoy Olliger, Sound Effects Technician (Dec. 24)... Ruth Adams, secretary to Milt Newton (Dec. 26)... Margaret Healy, Duplicating Dept. (Dec. 26)... Thomas Elvadge, Continuity Dept. (Dec. 21).

BOWLING BLURBS.....The news in the past has been bad, but now we can change that a bit. This time it's worse. Captain Olliger's team of sound and news room men is still at the bottom of the heap; and the two girls' teams are fighting for 4th and 5th place in a six-team league.

Perhaps they are taking lessons from Katherine Roche (June Baker). A couple of weeks ago Miss Roche bowled her first game and wound up with some kind of a record. Not one pin down in ten frames... and that's plenty tough to do!

KNOW YOUR ENGINEERS

When WGN engineer Bob Baird indulges in his hobby, he takes a busman's holiday, because his favorite indoor sport is operating his own amateur radio station W9NN for which he's had a license ever since 1919. Bob, now Studio Supervisor of WGN's Engineering Department, started his radio career at the age of 13 as a "ham" radio enthusiast back in Dayton, Ohio, his hometown.

After graduation in Roosevelt High School, he went to work in the Dayton Power and Light Company - his job was to hop into an emergency truck every time there was a fire and dash to the scene to cut the electric service lines before the fire department arrived. In 1926 he joined the Crosley Radio Corporation in Cincinnati, coming to WGN in 1935 to become a member of the engineering staff. Bob has fond memories of those days when he did six strip shows a day, dashing from a tear-choked episode of "Painted Dreams" right into the troubles of "Bachelor's Children" and ending up the day hanging from a cliff with "Little Orphan Annie."

Highlight of his engineering experience was the stormy night back in September of 1929 when Bob put Hitler on WGN as Der Fuhrer delivered his hysterical Poland invasion speech. It was 3:00 a.m., but WGN was on the air with one of history's most exciting and eventful moments.

Altho Bob's amateur station is temporarily off the air in his home at 411 N. Oak Park Avenue in Oak Park, he still has his operating license and plans to continue putting W9NN on the air in the future.

MUTUAL PERSONALITY NOTES

Virginia Aherne is leaving Mutual's traffic department to become a mother and to manage the Aherne's pride and joy - a newly acquired apartment...Myrtle Goulet, MBS midwest traffic manager, had a houseful of Mutual gals for a shower in Virginia's honor...During the recent Queen for a Day Minneapolis appearance, Dee Mower, MBS Chicago sales manager, had a birthday. M.C. Jack Bailey and the Queen gang showered Dee with baby rattles, etc., as a joke. But the joke's on them because Dee will be called papa soon after Christmas.....Chuck Wiley, of Mutual's publicity department, was in the "dog house" with his five year old Judith recently. Judith was spending the day in the hospital getting rid of her tonsils, and Chuck forgot to pick her up after work. He made the trip back again from Wilmette and brought Judith home, quite miffed.

SYMPATHY TO --

Everett Blackman, engineer at the WGN transmitter, whose father died recently at Eagle Grove, Ia.

Jane Harrington Hibbard, whose father, Charles Bradshaw, died at Mercy Hospital, Chicago, Nov. 13.

Paul C. Brines, whose mother, Mrs. Margaret Jones Brines, died Oct. 29 at Rushville, Ill.

SWAP IT...Two pair practically new Johnson ice skates, sizes 4 and 7. Call Dorothy McKnight (7s) and Queenie Heidrich (4s) in the Public Relations office...Small water heater, with 30-gal. tank. See Leroy Olliger.

FLOWERS FROM WGN

The flowers on stage for Chicago Theater of the Air performances each Saturday night are enjoyed not only by those present at Medinah Temple, but also by a group of **youngsters** whose Theater of the Air listening is done by radio -- the patients at the Shriners' Hospital for Crippled Children, 2211 North Oak Park Avenue.

In a letter to Mr. Schreiber, Helen E. Young, superintendent of the hospital, expressed the youngsters' appreciation.

"Flowers do make the wards so bright and cheerful, and the children enjoy them a great deal. Many, many thanks for remembering them this way," Miss Young wrote.

A BOUCQUET FROM MR. KOBAK

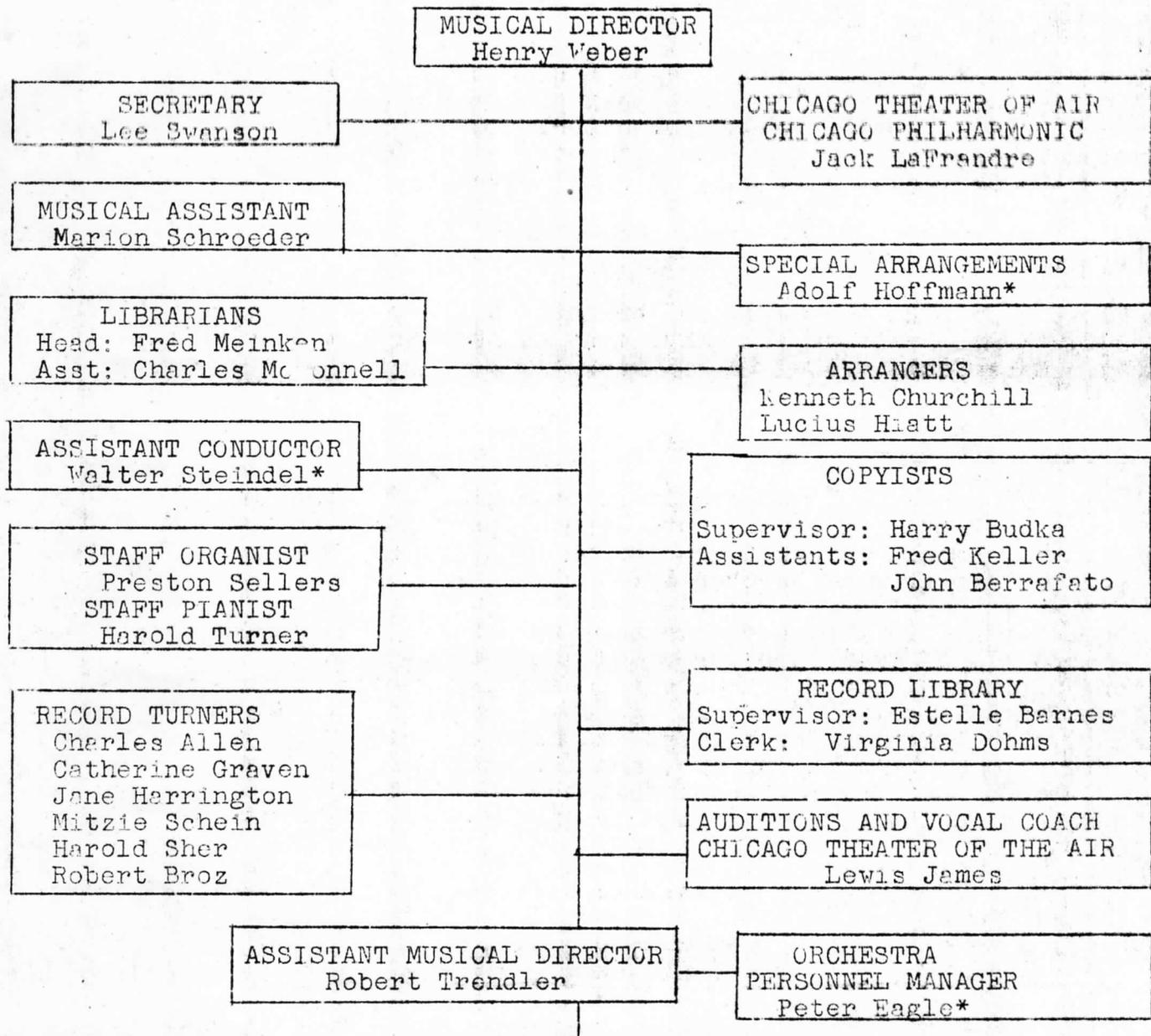
On his closed circuit broadcast of October 25, Mr. Kobak, President of the Mutual Broadcasting System, made the following remarks concerning The Chicago Theater of the Air program of October 19:

"On Saturday we took our directors to see The Chicago Theater of the Air and all of them were surprised and astonished at this production. None of them, I found, had ever seen this program put on in the Medinah Temple where 5000 people go every Saturday evening to see this show. It is really the biggest and most important and most expensive sustaining program on the air, and I wanted our directors to see how it is done and pay a special tribute to the boys at WGN in the way they handled the audience, the program, in fact, everything that had to do with it."

Colonel McCormick's annual reception for Tribune and WGN employees is scheduled to be held on Sunday, December 29, in WGN's building and Tribune Tower. WGN will be called upon as usual to provide FM music in the lobby and a concert in Studio 1 by the WGN orchestra.

During the coming holiday season, the work schedule for WGN will be the same as for the Tribune organization, i.e., Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day off, and on the day before Christmas we will close at 1:00 P.M.

MUSIC DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION



- ORCHESTRA MEMBERS
- | | | |
|------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Elden Benge | Samuel Jordan | Carl Racine |
| Gilbert Boerema | Phillip Kauffman | Cecil Read |
| Emmerson Both | Frank Kieca | Armand Roth |
| Carl Carlucci | Lee Knight | Edwin Schultz |
| Frank Crisafulli | Ernest Liegl | Joseph Sciacchitano |
| Robert Delacey | Ray McKinstry | Raphael Spiro |
| Peter Di Lecce | James McMullin | Walter Steindel* |
| Peter Eagle | Rudolph Mangold | Harry Sturm |
| Laniel Gay | Edward Mumm | Arthur Tabachnick |
| Roy Graham | George Palermo | Harold Thiell |
| Adolf Hoffmann | Robert Quick | Nevan White |

*Two Positions

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

