

WWVA
50
DEDICATED TO THE COMMUNITY
1926-1976

WWVA 1170

CAPITOL
MUSIC HALL

MERLE HAGGARD
JAMBOREE USA 3 SHOWS

HOME OF WORLD FAMOUS JAMBOREE U.S.A. WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA

Fifty Years of
Broadcasting
at
WWVA
WHEELING, W. VA.

**Bringing
Country to the Country
Home of
World Famous Jamboree USA**

A SCREEN GEMS RADIO STATION
SUBSIDIARY OF COLUMBIA PICTURES INDUSTRIES, INC.

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WWVA's first station license, issued December 6, 1926.

CALL LETTERS
W W V A

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Department of Commerce

No. 3 0 0 6

STATION LICENSE

CLASS: BROADCASTING.

John C. Stroebel, Jr., is hereby licensed to operate a radio transmitting station and all apparatus incidental to or used in connection therewith, upon the terms and conditions following:

1. The owner of the station is John C. Stroebel, Jr.,
2. Its location is National Road, Wheeling, West Virginia.
3. The purpose for which said station is licensed is the carrying on of general broadcasting for public information, instruction, amusement or entertainment.
4. The wave length designated by the station as its normal sending wave is 348.6 meters, 860 kilocycles.
5. The hours for which the station is licensed are not limited.
6. The President of the United States in time of war or public peril or disaster may cause the closing of this station and the removal therefrom of all radio apparatus, or may authorize the use or control of the station or apparatus by any department of the Government, upon just compensation to the owners.
7. The operator of the station shall not wilfully or maliciously interfere with any radio communication from another station.
8. All operations of the station shall conform to the laws of the United States, and the provisions of any international treaty or convention to which the United States is a party.
9. This license will continue in force for three months from its date.

This license is issued pursuant to the Act of Congress of August 13, 1912, entitled, "An Act to Regulate Radio Communication," and is subject to the restrictions and regulations therein contained.

Done at Washington, D. C., this 6th day of December, 19 26.

S E A L

A. J. Taylor
Acting Commissioner of Navigation.

HERBERT HOOVER
Secretary of Commerce.

nvc



1926

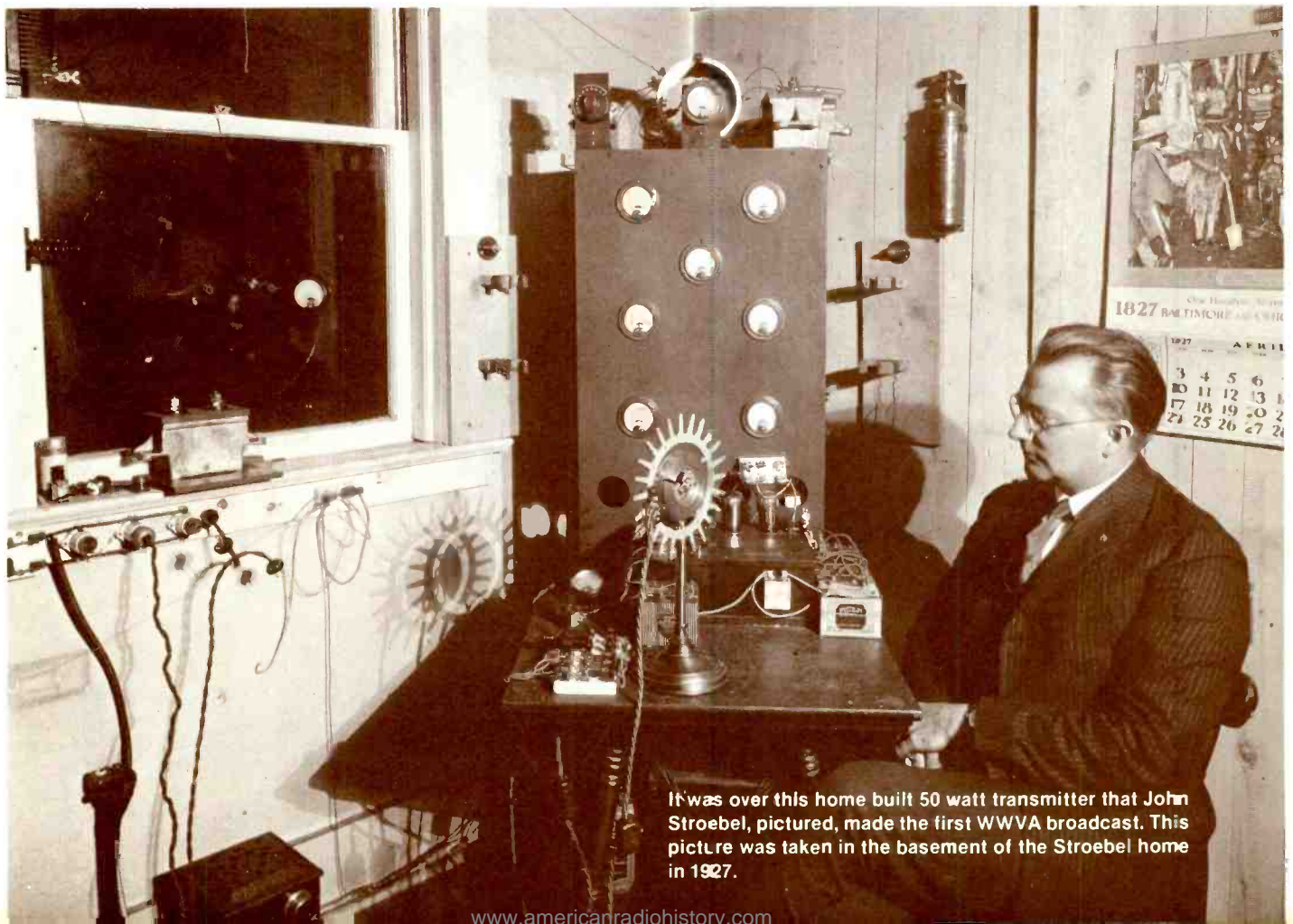
IT WAS 2 A.M. ON a cold and wintry 13th of December in 1926 when electronics wizard John Stroebel threw the switch that sent power surging through the tiny, home-built 50 watt transmitter set up in the basement of his Wheeling, West Virginia home. Upstairs, from the Stroebel parlor, that first WWVA broadcast crackled triumphantly over the air waves, while crystal set owners patiently endured noisy static to listen to that initial history-making radio transmission.

Only one week earlier, on December 6, 1926, the Federal Radio Commission had granted WWVA its first broadcast license on 860 kilocycles. For physics teacher John Stroebel,

this official license to operate was the culmination of several years of persistent experimentation with wireless crystal sets, patient years that saw Stroebel's experiments grow from a wireless telephone, operating on storage batteries, to a more advanced unit with its own direct current generator.

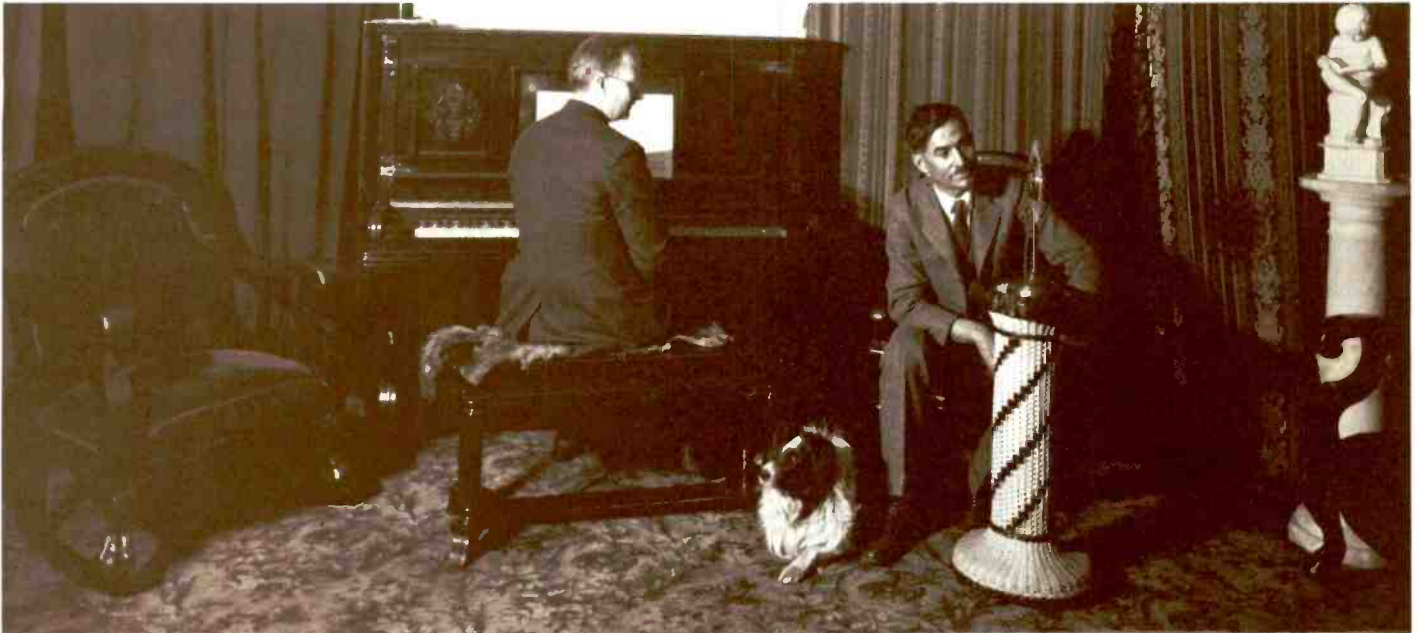
When 50 watt WWVA went on the air for a second broadcast, Stroebel had the assistance of close friend and fellow radio pioneer, Jack (John A.) Supler whose fascination for the wireless voice transmission medium dated back to his high school days.

Until November 1927, those early radio broadcasts con-



It was over this home built 50 watt transmitter that John Stroebel, pictured, made the first WWVA broadcast. This picture was taken in the basement of the Stroebel home in 1927.

John Stroebel, at piano, and George Kossuth are shown in the Stroebel parlor, where the first WWVA radio broadcasts originated in 1926, 1927. Note heavy rugs and draperies hung in background to help reduce noise.



tinued to originate from the Stroebel residence, except for the Saturday night musical programs which were broadcast from the Schenk home (now the Altenheim Residence) on East National Road, Wheeling.

During those blossoming years of WWVA radio, broadcasting hours were 7 A.M. to midnight, with listeners being treated to contemporary (twenties style) music, informal announcements and musical offerings from local amateur groups. George Kossuth, outstanding Wheeling photographer, and Paul M. Neigh of the Wheeling Chamber of Commerce, were announcers during those early years (unpaid ones, at that!) and Kossuth aired a children's program called "The Old Grey Goose."

During 1927, WWVA was granted 2 power increases to 100 watts, then 250 watts, a boost in power that drew mail from a listener in Palisade, Nevada, testifying he had heard the station some 1800 miles away.

On November 1, 1927, power was doubled to 500 watts, making WWVA one of the strongest stations then on the air, operating on 580 kilocycles. By this time, the station had established its first regular broadcasting studios in the Fidelity Investment Building in Wheeling.

On January 15, 1928 WWVA carried its first commercial advertisement; that of Cooley-Bentz Company, a local business that continues today to advertise over the station.

Wireless pioneer John Stroebel was widely recognized as a radio and electronics whiz, his primary scientific interest being in the field of experiment and development. By mid-1928, with WWVA firmly established as a full-fledged and growing radio station, Stroebel 'lost interest' in his brain-child, sold it for \$50,000.00 to the Fidelity Investment Associates of Wheeling and embarked on a tramp steamer journey around the world. At various periods in his life, he settled in Mexico, Brazil and Ger-

many, continually experimenting and building radio stations, as he had done years earlier in Wheeling.

AS THE DECADE OF THE twenties drew to a close, WWVA, on November 25, 1928, moved to 1160 k.c. as assigned by the Federal Radio Commission. A new broadcast license was issued to the station on July 1, 1929 and WWVA increased power to 5000 watts.

Fidelity Investment Associates' ownership of WWVA was short-lived and the station was sold to West Virginia Broadcasting Corporation who, on August 9, 1930, petitioned the Federal Radio Commission for permission to move the studio to



After moving from the Stroebel home in November 1927, WWVA set up its first regular studio here, in the Fidelity Investment Building in downtown Wheeling.



After the winds! The WWVA 225 foot transmitters lie crumpled on the ground at the West Liberty transmitter site, destroyed by 100 mph winds on July 28, 1936.

the Daniel Boone Hotel in Charleston, West Virginia and the transmitter to South Hills, near Charleston. This move was strongly and successfully opposed by Charleston station WOBV, (now WCHS). WWVA remained in its hometown and on March 19, 1931 was bought by Storer Broadcasting Company, originally known as Fort Industry Company, with George B. Storer, President and J. M. Ryan, Vice-President and Treasurer.

On May 29, 1931, WWVA "went network" with CBS radio and dedicated new, modern studio and offices in Wheeling's downtown Hawley Building. Network affiliation enabled WWVA to broaden its broadcasting format, adding national news, afternoon soap operas and popular radio shows to the WWVA daily programming schedule.

On May 20, 1932, the transmitter was moved to Avalon, near West Liberty, the highest spot in Ohio County, W. Va. The Wheeling Gospel Tabernacle broadcast its first program over WWVA on August 27, 1932.

In January, 1933, with George W. Smith managing director of the 5000 watt station, the idea was conceived to program something special for the late night Saturday night listeners. A program of country style music was put together, using local talent, the show was called a "Jamboree" with Howard Donohoe as announcer, and at 11 P.M. that January 7th, direct from the WWVA studios in the Hawley Building, and a little

over 6 years after John Stroebel's first home broadcast, country music history was made when the WWVA Jamboree went on the air for the first time. Listener response to this unique program was overwhelmingly favorable and for 3 months, until the end of March, regular Saturday night Jamboree broadcasts were aired.

In response to the public's demand to see their musical favorites in person, WWVA moved the Jamboree show to the Capitol Theatre, where it opened that first day of April, 1933 to an eager audience of 3,266 people, with still another thousand turned away from the "full house."

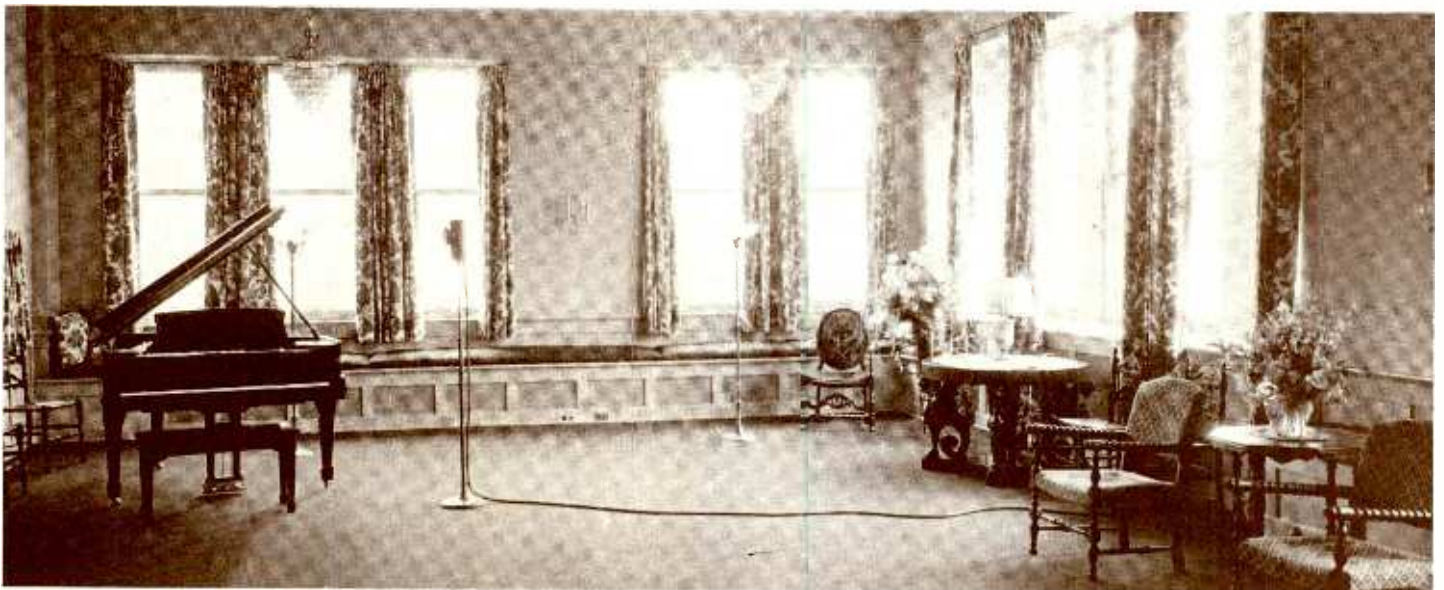
Earlier that year of 1933, in February, 2 steel towers, 225 feet high, were erected at the West Liberty transmitter site, giving WWVA greatly improved listener reception.

The Saturday night Jamboree, with its homespun style of singing and chatting was a welcome diversion to the thousands of depression-weary listeners in the early 30's and in December 1933, the Inquiring Mike, with Paul J. Miller, was added to the Jamboree, giving fans a chance to say "Hi!" to the folks listening back home.

Those Jamboree songs and folksy messages being sent out over WWVA proved to be reaching far beyond national boundaries, when, on June 14, 1934, an English radio fan recorded the Jamboree as he heard it in England and presented the recording to the Station.

On October 13, 1934, the first Jamboree Harvest Home Festival was held in the Capitol Theatre before a capacity audience, while many more were turned away from the crowded theatre.

It was during these mid-30's that the Air Castle Ballroom opened, offering Saturday night dancing to the music of WWVA orchestra featuring Paul Myers and Earl Summer, Jr.



This is Studio A in the Hawley Building, with control room on the left. The condenser microphone, near piano, was one of 3 WWVA used at that time. Each mike cost \$200, the very best available during the early 30's.



These folks made country music history! They're Jamboree entertainers who played on those first Jamboree shows back in the mid-30's.



The Wheeling Steelmakers Orchestra was a popular Sunday afternoon musical treat for WWVA listeners during the thirties. The program was heard over five stations over the Mutual Broadcasting System.



Prior to the opening of the Air Castle, public dances were held at Wheeling Park on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday evenings during the summer months, and it was from here that WWVA aired its first remote broadcast.

It was in response to popular demand to continue the dances throughout the winter months that WWVA opened the Air Castle, a spacious ballroom on the 10th floor of the Hawley Building with a panoramic view of the Ohio River. Before the opening of the Air Castle, a privately managed ballroom had been open, known as "Hawaiian Gardens."

On January 20, 1935, a CBS survey revealed WWVA to be the leading CBS station, drawing more mail than any other network affiliate. Six months later, in June, WWVA added another feature to its expanding radio service with the inauguration of United Press News Service. Also in June, the station broadcast the first Wheeling election under charter plan with the WWVA microphone at counting board headquarters.

Now it was 1936, a 10th anniversary year for WWVA and one that would long be remembered as the year of the great Wheeling flood. At 9 A.M. on Tuesday, March 17, 1936, WWVA received first word of warning from the Wheeling Chamber of Commerce that high water was on its way to Wheeling. Two days later, at 3 P.M. on Thursday, March 19th, an angry avalanche of watery destruction roared down the Ohio River, bringing with it utter devastation to the Wheeling area. A flood level of 54.5 feet was reached, covering an area of approximately 8 square miles of business and residential property.

Through the dark and anguishing hours, WWVA staff, entertainers and engineers responded unselfishly and untiringly, maintaining 92-1/2 hours of continuous broadcasting, sending

out bulletins, flood reports and spirit lifting musical entertainment to residents of the stricken area. All other forms of communication had been destroyed by the swift and destructive waters of the Ohio River.

In recognition of the valuable public service rendered by WWVA to the flood victims, the American Red Cross presented WWVA with a Certificate of Appreciation on April 6, 1936.

1936 was turning out to be a year of unprecedented natural disaster when, on July 28, 100 mile an hour winds destroyed WWVA's twin 225 foot towers at the West Liberty transmitter plant. WWVA engineers responded swiftly and efficiently with emergency repairs and by 11 A.M. the following day, the station returned to the air, broadcasting over a temporary antenna.

September 1936 saw several important radio milestones at WWVA, with the inauguration of the Daily Farm and Home Hour program, the Centennial Jamboree at Wheeling Football Stadium which drew over 5000 people for the first outdoor presentation of the show, and participation in Centennial week with 37-1/2 hours of feature broadcasting.

As WWVA's first decade of broadcasting drew to a close in 1936, a new and unique program was introduced to the listening audience. On November 8, the Wheeling Steel Employee Family Broadcasts went on the air, a Sunday afternoon variety program featuring "The Steelmakers" orchestra led by Earl Summers Sr. This orchestra was comprised of Wheeling Steel employees (or their relatives) and the program soon became one of WWVA's most popular radio features, heard over 5 stations over the Mutual Broadcasting System.

John Stroebel's little 50 watt home-grown radio station was fast growing up and the WWVA sound was being heard and recognized as a broadcasting pioneer far beyond the rolling green hills of the Ohio River Valley.

VIVIAN MILLER



1936

As WWVA embarked upon a second decade of broadcasting, two of its shows were proving to be big hits with the station's listeners. The Saturday night Jamboree and the Sunday afternoon Wheeling Steel Hour, two very diverse styles of musical entertainment, found great appeal with the public.

When 7,087 fans attended the Harvest Home Festival Jamboree in October 1937, the WWVA people knew then they had hit upon a highly successful formula of entertainment. The country music show, with its local talent and down-home singing style, drew fans from all over the WWVA listening area and the lilting organ music of lovely Vivian Miller, WWVA staff organist, was an additional musical treat the Jamboree fans loved.

Sunday programming included several hours of all-faith religious music in addition to the Wheeling Steel Hour musical variety show.

1939 . . . was the year of "Gone With The Wind" and it was also the year the first Jamboree Tour went on the road, visiting 6 cities and drawing 19,464 persons during its April tour.

By October 8, 1939, the Wheeling Steel Hour was being heard coast to coast when the Mutual Network began feeding the program to many of its stations across the country. The musical sounds of Wheeling and WWVA were now reaching a new and broader radio audience.

Moving into the 40's, those pre-war, pre-television years when America was slowly recovering from the dreary misery of the depression, radio was truly America's "Ear To The World" for news and entertainment and WWVA continued to demonstrate leadership in radio programming with its wide variety of local and network programs.

On May 28, 1941, the FCC moved WWVA to its present 1170 spot on the dial and in June the station began full time operation and joined the Blue Network of NBC. Now, the daily broadcast schedule put WWVA on the air from 5:30 A.M. to 1 A.M. with local and national news, afternoon soap operas, dramatic, mystery and adventure serials, variety shows, children's programs and those much-loved 15 minute musical segments featuring favorite Jamboree entertainers.

As that fateful year of 1941 moved into late summer, the



This is "Little WWVA", a mobile unit carrying 2 short wave transmitters that enabled WWVA to broadcast from remote locations. It went into service in October 1937. Engineers Glenn Boundy, in window, Jack Supler, top, and Bill McGlumphy (not pictured) traveled with the unit as it toured the WWVA listening area.

RADIO PROGRAMS

Complete WWVA Program--Daylight Saving Time

THURSDAY, AUGUST 21

A. M.

- 5:30 Slim Carter.
- 6:00 Leary Family.
- 6:30 Grandpa Jones.
- 6:55 News.
- 7:00 L. P. Lehman and Staff.
- 8:00 Morning News Review.
- 8:15 Koo-Koo Clock.
- 8:55 Program Resume.
- 9:00 Silver Yodlin' Bill Jones.
- 9:15 Breakfast Club—NBC.
- 10:00 Radio Buyers Guide.
- 10:15 Big Slim's Gang.
- 10:45 Leary Family.
- 11:00 Mary Lee Taylor.
- 11:15 Grandpa Jones.
- 11:30 Curley Miller.
- 11:45 Safety Cruise.

P. M.

- 12:00 Program Resume.
- 12:05 Bob Douglas—NBC.
- 12:15 Farm and Home Hour.
- 12:30 News.
- 12:45 L. P. Lehman and Staff.
- 1:10 Lamont Chiropractic Offices.
- 1:15 Orphans of Divorce—NBC.
- 1:30 Amanda of Honeymoon Hill—NBC.
- 1:45 John's Other Wife—NBC.
- 2:00 Just Plain Bill—NBC.
- 2:15 Slim Carter.
- 2:30 Ma Perkins.
- 2:45 Lone Journey.
- 3:00 The Guiding Light.
- 3:15 Right to Happiness.
- 3:30 Sunshine Twins.
- 3:45 Chuckwagon Gang.
- 4:00 Jones Boys.
- 4:15 Club Matinee—NBC.
- 4:30 Big Slim.
- 4:45 WWVA Calendar.
- 4:55 News—NBC.
- 5:00 Program Resume.
- 5:05 Shopping Hour.
- 5:30 Adventure Stories—NBC.
- 5:45 Wings on Watch—NBC.
- 6:00 Scattergood Baines.
- 6:15 Radio Gossip.
- 6:20 Defending America.
- 6:25 Sports News.
- 6:30 Don Lindley's Orch.—NBC.
- 6:45 Allen-izing the News.
- 7:00 Easy Aces—NBC.
- 7:15 Mr. Keene—NBC.
- 7:30 Intermezzo—NBC.
- 7:45 News.
- 7:50 Sports Spotlight.
- 8:00 U. S. Army Service.
- 8:15 Open House at Nobles.
- 8:30 Ricardo's Rhapsodies—NBC.
- 9:00 Grant Park Concert—NBC.
- 9:30 News Here and Abroad—NBC.
- 9:45 Ted Steele and Orch.—NBC.
- 9:55 The Nickel Man—NBC.
- 10:00 Wheeling Park Orch. Symphony—NBC.

11:30 Curley Miller.

P. M.

- 11:45 What's Your Opinion?
- 12:00 Program Resume.
- 12:05 Southernaires—NBC.
- 12:15 Farm and Home Hour.
- 12:30 News.
- 12:40 Howard & Shelton.
- 12:45 L. P. Leahman and Staff.
- 1:10 Lamont Chiropractic Offices.
- 1:15 Orphans of Divorce. NBC.
- 1:30 Amanda of Honeymoon Hill. NBC.
- 1:45 John's Other Wife. NBC.
- 2:00 Just Plain Bill. NBC.
- 2:15 Slim Carter.
- 2:30 Ma Perkins.
- 2:45 Lone Journey.
- 3:00 The Guiding Light.
- 3:15 Right to Happiness.
- 3:30 Sunshine Twins.
- 3:45 Chuckwagon Gang.
- 4:00 Jones Boys.
- 4:15 Club Matinee—NBC.
- 4:30 Big Slim.
- 4:45 Hazel Hanley.
- 4:55 News—NBC.
- 5:00 Program Resume.
- 5:05 Shopping Hour.
- 5:30 Adventure Stories—NBC.
- 5:45 Wings on Watch—NBC.
- 6:00 Scattergood Baines.
- 6:15 Radio Gossip.
- 6:20 Defending America.
- 6:25 Sport News.
- 6:30 Songs at Eventide.
- 6:45 Allen-izing the News.
- 7:00 Bridge to Yesterday—NBC.
- 7:15 Private Lives.
- 7:30 Telephone Quiz.
- 7:45 News.
- 7:50 Sports Spotlight.
- 8:00 Barrel of Fun.
- 8:30 Death Valley Days. NBC.
- 9:00 Vox Pop—NBC.
- 9:30 News Here and Abroad—NBC.
- 9:45 Ted Steele—NBC.
- 9:55 Nickel Man—NBC.
- 10:00 Romance and Rhythm—NBC.
- 10:30 Oglebay Park.
- 10:45 Dramas by Olmstead—NBC.
- 11:00 News.
- 11:15 Johnny Long's Orch.—NBC.
- 11:30 Sport News.
- 11:35 Dolly Dawn's Orch.—NBC.
- 12:00 News—NBC.
- 12:05 Benny Goodman's Orch.—NBC.
- 12:30 Kilocycle Klub.
- 12:55 A. P. News—NBC.
- 1:00 Sign Off.

1:00 Sign Off.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 23

A. M.

- 5:30 Slim Carter.
- 6:00 Leary Family.
- 6:30 Grandpa Jones.
- 6:55 News.

- 6:25 Sport News.
- 6:30 International News—NBC.
- 6:35 Jean Cavell—NBC.
- 6:45 Edward Tomlinson—NBC.
- 7:00 Where to Go to Church.
- 7:30 Little Ol' Hollywood—NBC.
- 8:00 Boymeets Band—NBC.
- 8:30 WWVA Jamboree.
- 8:55 News.
- 9:00 Spin and Win—NBC.
- 9:30 Oglebay Park.
- 9:45 NBC Summer Symphony—
- 10:30 Wheeling Park.
- 10:45 Inquiring Mike.
- 11:00 WWVA Jamboree.
- 12:15 Vivian Miller Organais.
- 12:30 Midnight Jamboree.
- 2:00 Sign off.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 24

A. M.

- 7:00 L. P. Lehman and Staff.
- 8:30 Program Resume.
- 8:35 Tone Pictures. NBC.
- 9:00 News From Here and Abroad—NBC.
- 9:15 News Review.
- 9:30 Polish Hour.
- 10:00 Willie Whistle.
- 10:30 L. P. Lehman and Staff.

P. M.

- 12:00 Program Resume.
- 12:05 Oglebay Park.
- 12:30 News.
- 12:35 Radio City Music Hall—NBC.
- 1:30 Headlines and Harmonies.
- 2:00 L. P. Lehman and Staff.
- 4:00 Sunday Serenade.
- 4:30 Music for You.
- 5:00 Moylan Sisters—NBC.
- 5:06 Olivio Santoro—NBC.
- 5:30 Newspaper of the Air.
- 5:45 Miracles in Health.
- 6:00 Natl. Music Camps—NBC.
- 6:20 Program Resume.
- 6:25 Sport News.
- 6:30 Music for Listening—NBC.
- 6:45 Edward Tomlinson—NBC.
- 7:00 News From Europe—NBC.
- 7:30 Drew Pearson and Robert Allen—NBC.
- 7:45 Jean Cavall—NBC.
- 8:00 Star Spangled Theatre—NBC.
- 8:30 Inner Sanctum Mystery. NBC.
- 9:00 John Gunther—NBC.
- 9:15 Parker Family. NBC.
- 9:30 Irene Rich. NBC.
- 9:45 Sport News Reel—NBC.
- 10:00 Good Will Hour—NBC.
- 11:00 News.
- 11:15 Herbie Holmes' Orch.—NBC.
- 11:30 Ray Kinney's Orch.—NBC.
- 12:00 News—NBC.
- 12:05 Benny Goodman—NBC.
- 12:30 Woody Herman's Orch.—NBC.
- 12:55 Associated Press News—NBC.
- 1:00 Sign Off.

MONDAY, AUGUST 25

A. M.

- 12:05 Chuck Foster's Orch.—
- 12:30 Kilocycle Klub.
- 12:55 Associated Press News—
- 1:00 Sign Off.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 26

A. M.

- 5:30 Slim Carter.
- 6:00 Leary Family.
- 6:30 Grandpa Jones.
- 6:55 News.
- 7:00 L. P. Lehman and St.
- 8:00 Morning News Review
- 8:15 Koo-Koo Clock.
- 8:40 Program Resume.
- 8:45 Morning Toastchee NBC.
- 9:00 Silver Yodlin' Bill Jc
- 9:15 Breakfast Club. NBC
- 10:00 Radio Buyers Guide.
- 10:15 Big Slim's Gang.
- 10:45 The Leary Family.
- 11:00 Mary Lee Taylor.
- 11:15 Grandpa Jones.
- 11:30 Curley Miller.
- 11:45 Safety Cruise.

P. M.

- 12:00 Program Resume.
- 12:05 Gwen Williams Sor
- 12:15 Farm and Home F
- 12:30 News.
- 12:45 L. P. Lehman and
- 1:10 Lamont Chiropract
- 1:15 Orphans of Divorc
- 1:30 Amanda of Honey NBC.
- 1:45 John's Other Wif
- 2:00 Just Plain Bill. f
- 2:15 Slim Carter.
- 2:30 Ma Perkins.
- 2:45 Lone Journey.
- 3:00 Guiding Light.
- 3:15 Right to Happir
- 3:30 Sunshine Twins.
- 4:00 Jones Boys.
- 3:45 Chuckwagon Ga
- 4:15 Club Matinee—
- 4:30 Big Slim.
- 4:45 WWVA Calenda
- 4:55 News. NBC.
- 5:00 Program Rsum.
- 5:05 Shopping Hour.
- 5:30 Adventure Stor
- 5:45 Wings on Wat
- 6:00 Scattergood Ba
- 6:15 Radio Gossip.
- 6:20 Defending Am
- 6:25 Sport News.
- 6:30 Jose Bethence
- 6:45 Allen-izing th
- 7:00 Easy Aces. N
- 7:15 Mr. Keene—
- Persons. NBC
- 7:30 Get Goin'—f
- 7:45 News.
- 7:50 Sports Spotl
- 8:00 Gorgon Jenk
- 8:30 Little Theat
- 9:00 Bringing Up
- 9:30 News Here NBC.
- 9:45 Ted Steele
- 9:55 Nickel Mar
- 10:00 Wheeling F
- 10:15 Grant Par
- 10:45 Story Dram
- 11:00 News
- 11:15 Johnny L
- 11:30 Sport Nev
- 11:35 Dolly Dav
- 12:00 News—NF
- 12:05 Will Bra

horizon was looking very bright for WWVA radio; in August the FCC granted WWVA an increase to 50,000 watts. Following an exhaustive survey of broadcasting tests by WWVA engineers in a wide variety of Ohio Valley locations, it was determined that a hilltop site, just east of St. Clairsville, Ohio (about 12 miles west of Wheeling) would be the ideal location for the construction of the new transmitter and, with FCC approval, work was soon begun on the new, ultra-modern facility.

AND THEN . . . Sunday, December the 7th dawned, the unforgettable “. . . day that will live in infamy.” Over the WWVA airwaves crackled the electrifying news that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. The peace Americans had enjoyed for so long was sickeningly shattered that pre-Christmas morning as radio stations from coast to coast bom-

barded listeners with news and details of the sneak attack. WWVA kept Ohio Valley listeners abreast of events as they developed and the station was the primary source of news bulletins concerning the Pacific holocaust. In the months immediately following, WWVA and its entire staff exerted every effort possible in support of the war effort.

Meanwhile, construction continued on the St. Clairsville transmitter site and on October 8, 1942, WWVA aired its first broadcast over the new 50,000 watt transmitter towers. As a result of this expanded facility and power increase, the WWVA signal now reached a vast new range of listeners. Daytime broadcasting now covered an area within a 150-mile radius of Wheeling and reached a nighttime market that encompassed 18 eastern states, from Maine to North Carolina, and north into 6 Canadian provinces.

With announcer Lew Clawson at the mike, the Jamboree cast saluted WWVA's 20th Anniversary in 1946.





During late 1942, as America geared to support the war effort and product shortages began to appear, WWVA suspended all public appearances of the Jamboree due to gas rationing and the last show was held on Saturday, December 5th. The Saturday night radio broadcasts of the Jamboree continued, however, now to a bigger than ever listening audience, and in June 1943, as a salute to our service men, WWVA transcribed the Jamboree for re-broadcasting by the Armed Forces Radio.

From 1943 to 1945, as the war years dragged on, WWVA maintained regular daily programming. Special programs of war news were featured each day and the daily "Immortal Role of Honor" was a WWVA salute to war casualties of the 1170 listening area. Thirty WWVA employees went into the armed services and those at home continued to support the war effort to the fullest.

The year 1946 was a second decade anniversary for WWVA. Now, with the war finally over, WWVA resumed theatre performances of the Jamboree and the first post-war show opened at the Virginia Theatre on July 13th, a gala and happy night for both Jamboree fans and the entertainers as well.

1946 also marked the 10th anniversary of the Tri-State Farm and Home Program, a daily public service program that informed WWVA listeners of the latest news and developments in agriculture and in the home.

December 13, 1946 marked a 20th Anniversary for WWVA radio. In honor of the happy occasion, the station held open house in their studios in the Hawley Building and the public was invited to tour the facilities and view the actual broadcasting of various radio programs throughout the day.

Looking back, WWVA could reflect on 2 decades of outstanding growth and continued upgrading of program entertainment. The Jamboree had become a nationally known Saturday night country music tradition and WWVA's "Friendly Voice From Out of the Hills of West Virginia" was well-established as a leading figure in the Radio World.

Construction begins on the new 50,000 watt transmitter towers at St. Clairsville, Ohio.



1946

WITH THE POWERFUL 50,000 watt 1170 voice being beamed to one of the largest radio listening audiences in the nation, WWVA programmed only the very best in broadcasting entertainment in an all-out effort to please those millions of listeners. New programs were added, many of which were focused on affairs of public interest, such as the Junior Town Meeting of the Air, introduced in the spring of 1947. This award winning radio program, still on the air today after 29 years, proved to be highly successful, based on a unique and innovative formula that gave young people of the area the opportunity to air their views on timely issues, both political and social.

On June 15, 1947, the station re-joined the CBS Network (following 5 years with NBC and 1 year with ABC) and this reuniting of 2 powerful radio voices quickly made WWVA "The Biggest Show in Town." With its strategic tri-state location, the Friendly Voice of WWVA did indeed "Cover the Heart of the Steel and Coal Belt of the Nation" as proudly proclaimed in the publicity and advertising that announced the move back to CBS.

A brief glance at the daily programming log of the late 40's illustrates the wide variety of programs WWVA aired in its dedicated effort to entertain and inform its listeners.

. . . "Report To The Women," Gloria Rogerson's daily chat



The WWVA mike was "on the spot with sports" with a live broadcast from the boat regatta on the Ohio River.

Jamboree entertainers check musical instruments and go over song lists before going on the air. This is the "Talent Room" in the WWVA studios in the Hawley Building.



The World's Original
WWVA JAMBOREE
ONE MILLIONTH
 ADMISSION TICKET
 Saturday, Feb. 8, 1947
 VIRGINIA THEATRE - WHEELING, W. VA.
WWVA - 1170 ON YOUR DIAL
The Friendly Voice from Out The Hills of West Virginia

No 1,000,000
 No 1,000,000

By early 1947, the Jamboree had played to one million people.



The WWVA Mobile News unit, bringing the latest area news direct to WWVA listeners.

The theme song could well be, "We've Come A Long Way Together," as the Jamboree helps WWVA celebrate its 25th Anniversary onstage in the Virginia Theatre.



with women on topics geared to their special interests.

... Give-Away Shows, showers of dollars on lucky WWVA listeners who correctly answered questions asked on the air.

... Eddie Johnston and his West Virginians, with vocalist Paul Myers, a daily musical variety program featuring top tunes of the day.

... Sports, covering local events from the Wheeling Golden Gloves Boxing tournaments, high school games and celebrity interviews with Lew Clawson, to CBS Network national events featuring the "Old Redhead," Red Barber.

... "The Governor's Address," monthly reports from the Ohio and West Virginia governors to residents of the adjoining Ohio Valley states.

... Hunting & Fishing Club; Farm & Home Program.

... WWVA Church Time, a regular Sunday morning religious broadcast from various area churches.

... "Bible Question Bee," conducted by West Liberty College President, Dr. Paul Elbin, featuring area school students.

... Wheeling City Council News, reported immediately following the weekly meetings.

... Weekly Safety Programs, with driving safety tips from the West Virginia State Police.

During these closing years of the 40's, when television was just coming of age, radio was enjoying its peak period as an immediate and influential communication medium, with thousands of faithful daily listeners in whose homes and businesses the friendly 1170 voice was depended upon for news, sports and entertainment. Announcers enjoyed tremendous popularity

Remember these favorites from 1950?



with the listening public, frequently seen and heard in person as they roamed the Tri-State area covering news and sporting events.

On Monday, September 1, 1947, WWVA aired the first FM broadcast in the Wheeling area. Under the direction of Chief Engineer Eddie Keim, a new RCA transmitter was installed in the studios in the Hawley Building and FM broadcasting was transmitted for 6 hours daily, between 3 and 9 P.M. As a new achievement in the science of radio broadcasting, FM practically eliminated static interference, prevented fading and enabled the station to transmit a clear, uninterrupted signal that could not be crowded out by other stations.

As for those much-loved Jamboree entertainers, they 'visited' WWVA homes daily with their tightly scheduled 15 minute programs of music, friendly chatter and persuasive sales pitches. A listener could buy anything from live baby chicks to rose bushes to a home study guitar course from the advertising

sponsors and the Hillbilly singers (as they were called back then) proved to be supersalesmen who pulled thousands of pieces of fan mail and orders from their devoted listeners. Stars like Big Slim, Hawkshaw Hawkins, Reed Dunn, Blaine Smith, the Davis Twins, Doc Williams and many others were the favorites of the day, their singing and selling a vital force in WWVA radio.

Over the CBS Network, nationally known stars like Arthur Godfrey, Art Linkletter, Lum & Abner, Vaughn Monroe, Bob Crosby, Frank Sinatra and others were heard daily over WWVA along with programs like Inner Sanctum, Lux Radio Theatre, Blondie, Sam Spade, Mr. Keene, Helen Trent, Our Gal Sunday, The Thin Man . . . a virtually endless list of variety radio shows and soap operas that still arouse a wave of nostalgia among those who "grew up" on radio back in the 40's and 50's.



WWVA LAUNCHED THE NEW YEAR and the new decade of 1950 with a significant change in programming. On January 2nd, the station began 24 hour operation, its strong nighttime signal now carrying all through the night to the millions of WWVA listeners throughout the Northeast and Canada.

As a service to daytime listeners in the Tri-State area, WWVA covered all significant community, school and charitable events and its diligent efforts earned countless certificates, awards and letters of appreciation from the many groups who benefited from the publicity received over WWVA radio.

The Junior Town Meeting of the Air was broadcast to England on April 30, 1950, and on September 10, the Farm and Home Hour celebrated a 15th anniversary on the air.

1951 was a milestone year for WWVA when, in December,

they happily celebrated their 25th Anniversary. Congratulatory messages poured in from all over the U.S. and cake and candles marked the happy occasion for the powerful Wheeling station, nationally recognized as a true pioneer in the field of radio.

In September 1953, when Dwight D. Eisenhower visited Wheeling, famed newscaster Eric Sevareid covered the event with an on-the-spot report delivered from the WWVA studios.

The Jamboree observed 20 years of consecutive broadcasting in January 1953 and on May 9th, the happy occasion was observed with a special Jamboree show featuring all the Jamboree entertainers. At this time, the show was being held each Saturday in the Virginia Theatre on 12th Street in downtown Wheeling.

The impact of WWVA radio and its outstanding popularity in the Tri-State area was revealed through a PULSE Survey taken in November and December 1955. Results showed that in 43 counties surrounding Wheeling, with 457,400 radio homes therein, WWVA was overwhelmingly chosen as the Outstanding Radio Station in the Big Three Area as well as the Wheeling Metropolitan Retail Market. A total of 10 daytime and evening shows, produced by WWVA, were among the top group of selected programs, all others being CBS Network shows.

Other figures, gathered from a survey of Jamboree fans, indicated that on May 19, 1956, 1,641 people came to Wheeling from 109 counties in 16 states, some as far away as California and Wyoming.

And . . . WWVA continued to make news later in the year when: in a Billboard Magazine poll, Lee Moore placed 13th and Lee Sutton placed 10th among the nation's favorite Country & Western Disc Jockeys.

A continuing favorite with 1170 fans through the years was Vivian Miller, the talented organist whose "Sundown Serenade" was heard each evening over WWVA.

November 24, 1956 marked an important milestone in Jamboree history when the two millionth patron bought a ticket, walked through the doors and into Jamboree history. He was Bernard Welker of Newcomerstown, Ohio and the celebrated fan was presented with many prizes and gifts from Wheeling merchants and the Jamboree in honor of this special night.

The combination of WWVA and CBS was proving to be a high-powered and unbeatable entertainment package. Famous names in comedy, sports, music and drama were heard over 1170 daily and on the local scene, the personable and talented WWVA air personalities and Jamboree stars ranked among the very best in the nation.

With 30 years of continuous growth behind WWVA as December 1956 approached, there was good cause for joyous celebration. Three decades had seen tremendous growth for WWVA, and John Stroebel would have indeed been proud of the broadcasting giant that had grown from his little 50 watt home-built transmitter now gathering dust in a forgotten basement in East Wheeling.



Memories are made of this! The marquee and the crowds say it all, that Saturday night in May, 1958.



1956



WWVA believes what people think is important. Lew Clawson and Jim Whitaker do a little sidewalk interviewing as part of National Radio Week.

DURING ITS 30 YEARS OF BROADCASTING, WWVA consistently maintained a selective, high-standard quality of programming, devoting much air time to community service programs. Its continuing efforts to educate and inform listeners in matters touching their daily lives, earned for WWVA an enviable reputation as one radio station that truly cared about the quality of its programming and the community it served.

In recognition of its efforts in this direction, the Wheeling Community Chest honored WWVA, in January 1957, with a silver plaque commemorating "25 years of distinguished service to our community: 1931-1956." The award was presented to WWVA managing director Paul J. Miller, who, at that time, was observing his 25th anniversary with the Wheeling radio broadcasting industry.

In March 1957, WWVA received 4 first place awards at the annual Wheeling Advertising Club awards dinner. These awards were presented in recognition of WWVA's outstanding excellence in the quality of its locally produced radio programs.

During these years of the mid-50's, oft remembered as the hey-day of network programming with its much-loved and nationally known radio stars, a popular CBS show was being heard over WWVA Saturday from 12:30 to 12:55 P.M. By now, it's rather a forgotten fact in radio history, that "Gun-smoke" first endeared itself to a host of radio fans before making the move to the TV screen. Launched in 1952, this outstanding western featured William Conrad as Matt Dillon and Georgia Ellis as Kitty.

When National Radio Week was observed May 5-11, 1957, WWVA participated with special programs geared to focus attention on the American system of broadcasting and its many advantages as an effective and valuable advertising tool. Announcers Lew Clawson and Jim Whitaker took the WWVA mike to the streets of Wheeling and conducted live, informal interviews with local people as part of the national recognition of the media.

The month of May 1957 saw a number of Jamboree talent groups take to the road with personal appearances and shows. Their travels took them to 8 states and Canada, with 68 personal appearances before 24,248 people. At this time, the

Square dancers swing through the lively steps at the Jamboree Harvest Home Festival in October 1958.



weekly Jamboree shows were being held in the Virginia Theatre. With a number of Jamboree fans arriving in Wheeling early each Saturday, WWVA broadcast a Jamboree Preview show at 3:30 P.M. from the studios and visitors were invited to stop by, watch the broadcast and meet the stars they would be seeing that evening on the Jamboree.

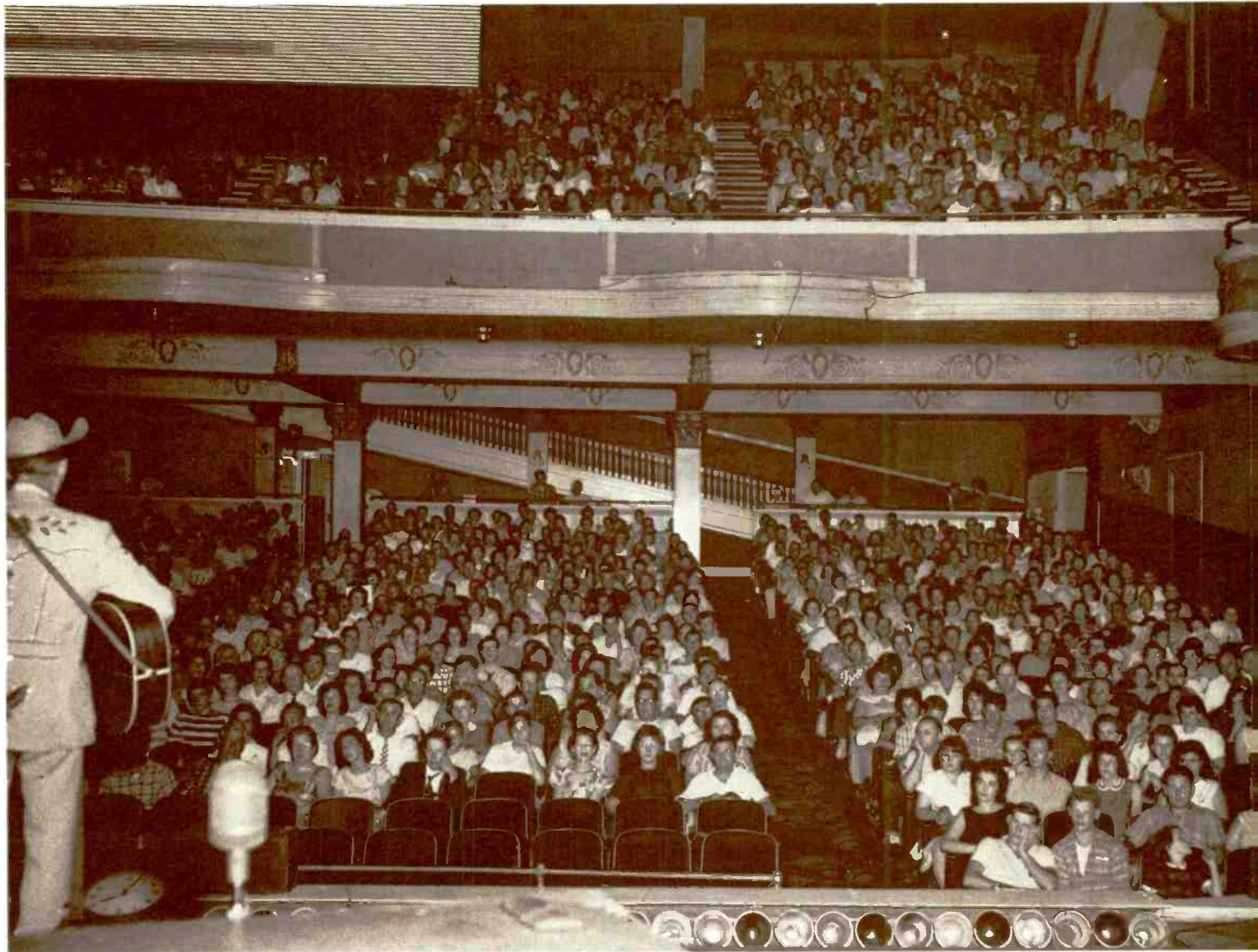
On July 11, 1957, the Storer Broadcasting Company, owners of WWVA radio, celebrated a 30th anniversary of the founding of the company by George B. Storer and J. Harold Ryan.

For over 20 years, since first going on the air in 1936, the "Tri-State Farm and Home Program" ranked as one of WWVA's most popular public service programs. In recognition of the dedication of those who participated in the weekly program, WWVA honored the 7 area county extension specialists with silver plaques in October 1957.

In January 1958, a PULSE survey revealed WWVA to be "... first in every time period from 6 A.M. to midnight, 7 days a week, in the entire 46 county Tri-State area." These surveys, taken periodically, are an important and accurate barometer of the popularity of all radio stations in a given area and a significant indication of the habits of the listening public. Only one month later, on February 26, 1958, WWVA received further prestigious recognition when the Wheeling Advertising Club bestowed 5 awards upon the station. The awards, in various categories, are presented annually to advertisers and media for outstanding contributions in advertising.

A very special anniversary rolled around on May 10, 1958, a Saturday that drew capacity crowds to the Virginia Theatre to share in the occasion of the Jamboree's 25th birthday. Tickets were 90¢ for adults, 50¢ for children; Hardrock Gunter was Jamboree emcee and 30 minutes of the show was heard across

This is how Jamboree fans looked to an entertainer on stage at the Virginia Theatre. It's 8:04 on a Saturday night as Big Slim sings.



the nation that night over the CBS Network. The Jamboree could proudly lay claim to some rather impressive figures gathered in 25 years of performances: 1300 shows had been given before more than 2 million people and West Virginia Governor Cecil Underwood was one of many well-known figures who bestowed praise on the Jamboree as “. . . the most imitated show of its kind in the country . . . an American institution and a listening habit.”

This milestone celebration was followed on October 25, 1958 by the Harvest Home Festival that drew over 3,000 to the Capitol Theatre for the one night performance. Hawkshaw Hawkins was special guest star along with a cast of over 50 Jamboree feature performers.

Between 1958 and 1962, as the years rolled along from one decade into another, WWVA and the Jamboree maintained their usual high standards of broadcasting and entertaining,

keeping pace with public tastes and desires in radio and country music entertainment.

1962 HOWEVER, proved to be an eventful year at the Friendly Voice 1170 station. A change in ownership took place when Storer Broadcasting Company sold WWVA to Basic Communications, Inc., a firm founded by Emil Mogul, owner of a successful New York advertising agency. At that time, BCI, formed in 1960, also owned WYDE in Birmingham, Alabama and WAKE in Atlanta, Georgia.

With the acquisition of WWVA by the new owners, no immediate format changes were made in daily programming. All across the country however, faint stirrings of the ‘modern country’ sound were beginning to be felt and a shift toward a more ‘uptown’ style was emerging. Mr. Mogul, relying on his keen business foresight and acute ability to interpret the trends, soon

One of the WWVA studios in the Hawley Building. Saturday afternoon Jamboree preview shows were aired from here and visitors were invited to stop by and see the live broadcasts.



When the Jamboree opened in its new home at Jamboree Hall on Wheeling Island, Buck Owens and Buckaroo Don Rich were among the many who headlined this big kick-off event which benefited the Heart Fund.



sensed this almost imperceptible shift taking place and took positive steps to investigate this burgeoning prestige and popularity which would soon overtake and re-shape the world of country music.

Meanwhile, in the Virginia Theatre, the Jamboree continued to enjoy a surging popularity with both radio listeners and visiting fans. All the while, however, an unseen "player" was lurking in the wings, a questionable character known as 'PROGRESS', and its appearance spelled doom for the historic 54 year old theatre that had been home for the Jamboree since 1946. The Virginia was doomed for demolition and the Jamboree would be forced to seek a new location.

Thus it was, that on a hot Saturday night in mid-July 1962, the old Virginia Theatre curtain fell for one final time on the Jamboree show, bringing to an end a truly memorable period in Jamboree history. The following week, the Jamboree show opened at the Rex Theatre, only a few blocks from the Virginia.

On October 25, 1962, WWVA moved from the CBS to the ABC radio network, bringing to listeners such well-known radio stars as Don McNeil, Dick Van Dyke and news commentator Paul Harvey, who highlighted the occasion with a live broadcast from the WWVA studios.

BETWEEN 1962 AND 1965, while the Jamboree labored to accommodate the crowds in the uncomfortably small Rex Theatre, a vital and significant analysis of the WWVA Radio programming format was being conducted by BCI and its corporate head, Emil Mogul.

He undertook extensive research into the 'modern country' sound that was quietly penetrating the music industry and devoted months studying national trends on the few radio stations in the industry programming modern country.

Careful analysis and interpretations of the growing movement within the music industry, indicated a complete change in format at WWVA was imperative to insure continued success in this highly competitive field.

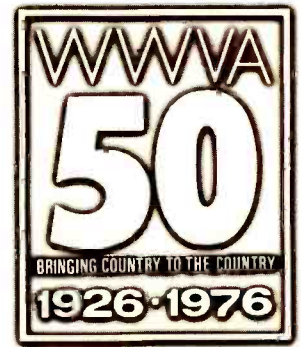
Thus, the decision was made. WWVA would become an "all modern country station" and this move, coupled with the enormous, legendary popularity of the Jamboree, would unite the two in an unprecedented country music promotion and provide all-round exposure in a rapidly growing segment of the music industry which would soon sweep the country.

A cluster of knowledgeable experts were brought in and spent days setting up the completely new format. On November 8, 1965, WWVA went on the air with its new 24 hour all modern country music sound and in an unbelievably short time, ratings zoomed straight to the top.

During these 3 years of contemplative transition at WWVA, the Jamboree, housed in the Rex Theatre, turned away crowds every week, unable to accommodate them in the much too-small theatre. A new home was desperately needed, and eventually found. In January 1966, the Jamboree packed up and moved across the Ohio River to The Wheeling Island Exhibition Hall where it opened on the 15th of January with a big Buck Owens benefit performance Jamboree for the Heart Association. It was a whopping success and netted over \$7,500 for the Heart Fund.

With trends in country music starting to shift from the traditional toward the modern, the Jamboree began to present nationally known country artists each week as an added feature to the regular Jamboree talent line-up. Many of today's super stars, such as Johnny Cash, Marty Robbins, Bill Anderson, Cal Smith and Porter Wagoner sang before Jamboree audiences in the huge Jamboree Hall (formerly known as the Wheeling Island Exhibition Mall) during the late 60's.

Quite obviously, the passing of years was effecting changes in both country music and the Jamboree itself and that uptown beat and modern country sound that had been rumbling in the background since the Rex Theatre days, was beginning to make itself more loudly heard by now. Country music in general was becoming more strongly involved in a transition and, WWVA and the Jamboree were now firmly established as exemplary trend-setters in this exploding country music metamorphosis.



1966

As WWVA AND THE JAMBOREE moved along into the 5th decade in the Golden Anniversary countdown, its growth and expansion into diversified areas of the radio and entertainment field were beginning to take shape . . . and that shape was being molded around the mushrooming popularity of country music that was suddenly sweeping the country.

The years between 1966 and 1969 saw a more uptown, sophisticated, popularly acceptable image begin to settle over the once-twangy, homespun American music folks had long referred to as "Hill-Billy" music.

It was during this period too, under the guidance of Emil Mogul, a concerted effort was made to augment and build the WWVA staff with top-notch, experienced radio personnel, people like J. Ross Felton of Fairmont, West Virginia who joined the WWVA executive staff in 1965. All were expertly qualified individuals who could produce and program the new

modern country sound now giving WWVA an exciting and enviable reputation throughout the radio industry.

Over on Wheeling Island, in the Jamboree Hall, overflow crowds lined up every Saturday night to bask in the sight and sound of the Jamboree stars and special guests who belted out this new 'modern country' sound, while through the week, 24 hours every day, the WWVA "Big Country", with its 'new all country format, successfully rounded out the modern country image.

The future was looking very bright these waning years of the 60's and the outlook for the 70's gave every indication of even surpassing the tremendous strides made thus far. While healthy business growth is always desirable and encouraged, that inevitable companion of success, "growing pains," was being acutely felt by both WWVA and its now 35 year old Jamboree. The huge, barn-like Jamboree Hall that housed the weekly show was not acoustically suited for broadcasting and was also inadequate in meeting the needs for audience comfort and viewing. Broadcasting studios and offices, on the 10th floor of the Hawley Building, were no longer able to accommodate the rapidly expanding equipment and staff of WWVA radio and the need was urgent to consolidate and enlarge the WWVA country music complex.

The perfect solution to these pressing business problems was met in September 1969 when Basic Communications, Inc. purchased the Capitol Theatre building and adjacent premises, conveniently located on Main Street in downtown Wheeling, and plans were made for transforming the entire location into a multi-purpose unit that would house the Jamboree show, WWVA broadcasting studios and business and executive offices. The Capitol Theatre building property also offered the advantage of being large enough to allow room for future growth needs and expansion of WWVA and its facilities.

Architectural designs for massive building renovation and refurbishing of the theatre were drawn up, work was begun and some 3 months later, over a cold December weekend in 1969, all WWVA and Jamboree personnel tackled the immense job of moving the broadcasting facilities and all offices from upstairs in the Hawley Building, down in to the spacious new premises now ready for occupancy.



Walk through these doors and you're in "WWVA Big Country", the home of the biggest modern country sound in all the Northeast and eastern Canada.

While this transfer of WWVA property and equipment was taking place, it was quite necessary that WWVA maintain its regular broadcasting hours without interruption, a responsibility that was capably handled by veteran studio and transmitter engineers Bill McGlumphy and Fred Gardini. Installation of the new downstairs studios and broadcasting equipment was under their expert supervision.

All the while, from the top floor of the Hawley Building, the WWVA country music sound continued to go out over the air, until that very last moment, and then . . . Fred Gardini cut the wires in the old studio that had been home for WWVA since May 1931.

It was literally, "off with the old; on with the new," and so expertly had the technical transfer work been handled that the WWVA voice, now emanating from its new, modern studios, pulsed across the air without so much as an audible pause.

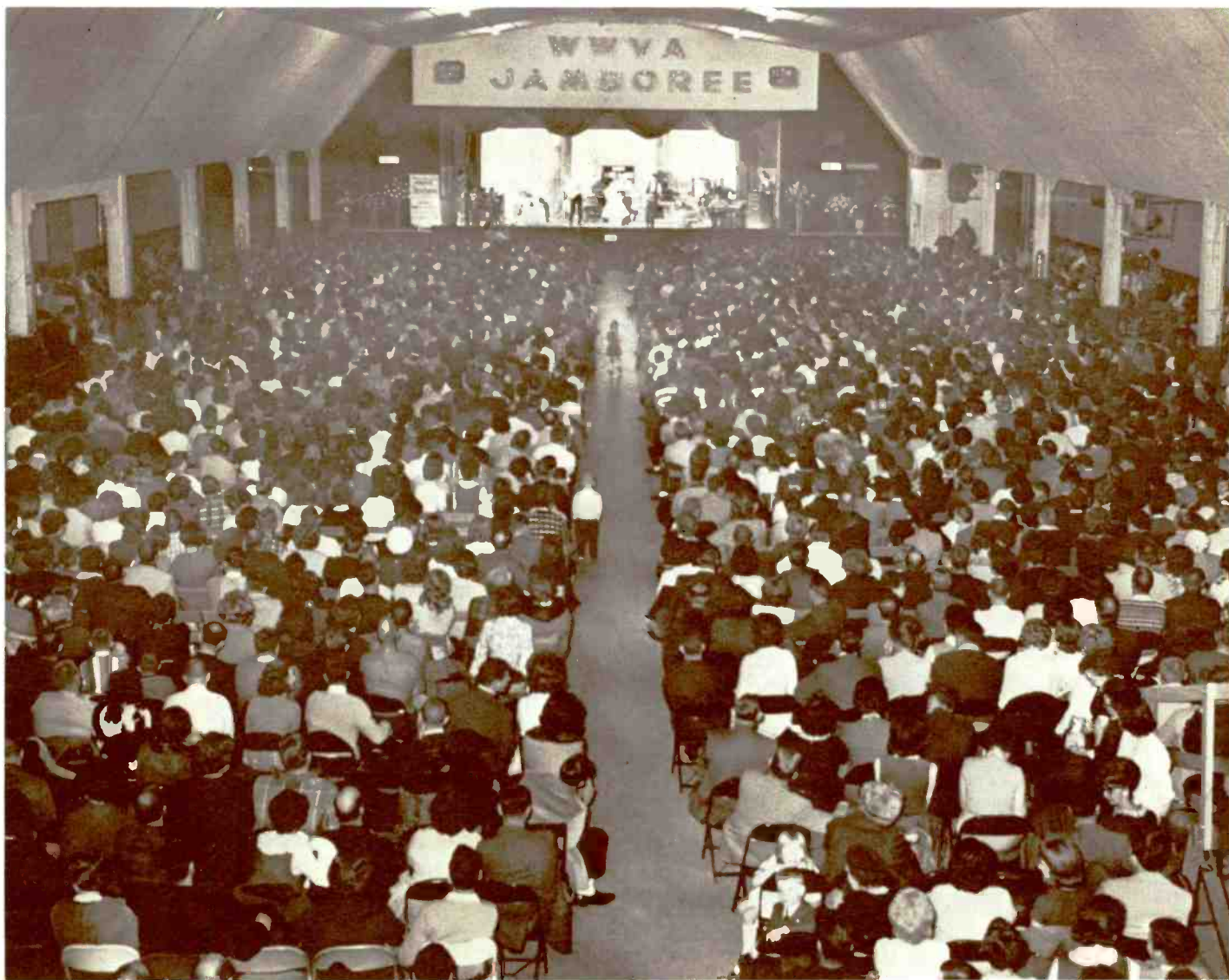
Out in St. Clairsville, at the WWVA transmitter site, a new

Gates 50,000 watt transmitter had been installed, replacing the one that had been in service since October 8, 1942, an improvement that gave WWVA better sound quality.

With the plush new theatre/studio/office complex now ready for occupancy, it was only fitting that the proud occasion be celebrated in true glittery show business tradition, a climactic event that called for a gala open house and homecoming for the WWVA Jamboree.

On December 6, 1969, the Jamboree played a final performance in the Jamboree Hall on Wheeling Island. One week later, on a chilly December 13th, with thousands of loyal fans on hand to share the memorable moment, the Jamboree climaxed 36 years of Saturday night broadcasting with a sentimental and triumphant return to the Capitol Theatre. The theatre, renamed the Capitol Music Hall, is the largest and most beautiful theatre in the state of West Virginia.

Under the white arc of a giant searchlight sweeping the night



Jamboree Hall, Wheeling Island.

December 13, 1969 — a night to celebrate as WWVA and the Jamboree officially opened their new 'home' in the Capitol Music Hall.

Jo Walker, (right) Executive Director of the Country Music Association, presents a plaque to Mr. & Mrs. Emil Mogul following opening of the Capitol Music Hall in December 1969.



sky, fans and celebrities alike reveled in the dazzling evening of song and laughter, memories and ceremonies, tinkling ice, tempting food, country music and fluttering ribbons that climaxed this truly incomparable event in WWVA and Jamboree history.

With golden scissors in hand, Wheeling Mayor William Rogers snipped the ribbon marking the official opening of the Capitol Music Hall and to Emil Mogul, who had the courage and foresight to transform vision into reality, he presented a great golden key . . . the key to the city of Wheeling.

Following the ribbon-cutting ceremony, more than 4,000 fans streamed through the door for the Jamboree, while invited guests enjoyed a cocktail hour and open house in the sparkling new station facilities. Orchestra and balcony were filled to capacity for a show that featured Bill Anderson, Jan Howard, Connie Smith, Nat Stuckey, Jimmy Gately and The Po Boys, Les Seevers, Doc and Chickie Williams, Karen McKenzie, The Blue Ridge Quartet, Mary Lou Turner, Junior Norman, Kay Kemmer, Jimmy Stephens, David Rogers and Gus Thomas.

The glittering evening concluded with a gala buffet dinner at the McLure House in downtown Wheeling, where more than 200 guests celebrated the occasion. An inscribed plaque was presented to Mr. & Mrs. Mogul, citing their outstanding efforts and achievements in promoting WWVA, the Jamboree and country music.

It was, undeniably, a night of mixed emotions. It had been 43 years to the very day, since John Stroebel's little 50 watt, home-based radio station had gone on the air, an anniversary that ad-

ded poignant significance to this momentous occasion at which a crossroads in time had been reached. A golden era had ended; a new decade, a new country music age was now at hand.

THE SPLASHY OPENING of the Capitol Music Hall launched an exciting new decade as well as a new dimension in diversified entertainment. Country music and the Jamboree continued as the mainstay in radio programming and live shows, but a new chapter in total entertainment was now at



In July 1969, when the new 50,000 watt transmitter was installed at the WWVA St. Clairsville transmitter site, it took men and machines to handle the big job.

hand, one that would bring the best of Broadway road shows, concerts, plays, musicals, comedies, etc., to theatre-goers of Wheeling and the Ohio Valley.

In January 1970, the Capitol Music Hall presented "Cabaret," the first of many hit shows that would be brought to Wheeling in the months to come, supplying the community with entertainment never before available.

With WWVA programming an all-country format that reached a night-time audience as far away as Canada, Wheeling and the Jamboree were fast becoming the new byword in country music entertainment.

In March 1970, the Jamboree, featuring Buck Owens and The Buckaroos, played to an unprecedented 3 sell-out performances at the Capitol Music Hall for well over 7,000 fans.

On July 28, 1970, a group of Jamboree artists traveled to Montreal, Canada to star in a show at the "Man and His World Expo." On August 27th, Jamboree stars were in Canada again, this time at the Canadian National Exhibition for a tourism promotion tour for the state of West Virginia.

October 1970 saw another 'first', when WWVA and the Jamboree welcomed 152 country music fans from Great Britain. The foreign visitors were WWVA guests at a reception and tour of broadcasting studios and treated to a performance of the Jamboree.

While the impact of WWVA and the Jamboree on the coun-

try music scene was drawing significant attention from all areas of the industry, one cannot overlook other features of WWVA programming; those special programs that contributed toward making WWVA one of the most vital and dependable all-round radio stations in the industry.

In the area of public service, WWVA continued to broadcast the Farm Show, a popular feature for early morning (5:30 A.M.) listeners that has been carried for many years. Gospel and religious programs, an early evening feature, continue to be a favorite with the listeners and an important part of 1170 programming. In the late 60's, WWVA began airing documentaries, those specially prepared features that scrutinize and expose the frequently hidden facts behind crucial and controversial news topics. Keenly aware of its responsibility to keep listeners accurately and currently informed, the WWVA News and Public Affairs Dept. continued to upgrade and expand its news services and local coverage, and featured on-the-spot reporting from remote points in the WWVA listening area.

The multi-phased entertainment complex that had been built around WWVA was enjoying great success during 1971 and 1972, attracting large numbers of people to the stage shows and Jamboree at the Capitol Music Hall. They came to see shows like "Hair"; "George M"; "40 Carats"; Al Hirt, Guy Lombardo, "Carousel" (starring John Raitt); "Jesus Christ, Superstar"; "Butterflies Are Free"; Fred Waring; "Promises,



Some of the awards won by WWVA for outstanding contributions in the field of radio broadcasting.



With Gov. Arch Moore (left) and J. Ross Felton (center) looking on, Mr. & Mrs. Emil Mogul cut into a cake as part of the 2nd anniversary celebration of the opening of the Capitol Music Hall.

Promises"; also rock music concerts featuring contemporary headliners on the rock music scene.

Closed circuit TV was another entertainment attraction the Capitol Music Hall offered and sports fans filled the theatre to see the Muhammed Ali heavyweight title fights.

In the spring of 1971, the Jamboree opened its own full service, 8 track recording studio, a modern, fully equipped facility offering recording services, tape duplication, custom record manufacturing, 8 track and cartridge tape services. Known as Jamboree USA Recording Studio, it also enables studio engineers to handle broadcasting for the Saturday night Jamboree. The studio is located in the Capitol Music Hall.

True to tradition, Saturday night continued as country music night of the week and the Jamboree, now in its 38th year, drew fans by the thousands. Guest artists, like Bill Anderson, Charley Pride, Jerry Reed, Johnny Cash and June Carter appeared regularly in company with the Jamboree stars. During

these years, under the direction of Glenn Reeves, the Jamboree moved boldly ahead with tours and special shows.

In December 1971, a live Christmas Jamboree was broadcast from within the walls of the West Virginia State Penitentiary at Moundsville, bringing country music to 600 inmates.

This was also the month for the 45th birthday of the station and the 2nd anniversary of the Capitol Music Hall opening as the new home for the Jamboree. West Virginia Governor Arch Moore was among the many guests invited to celebrate the occasion.

In April 1972, a group of Jamboree artists embarked on an Air/Sea Tour to the Bahamas with more than 100 Jamboree fans, enjoying country music, sea and sun for five fun-filled days.

The first Homecoming Jamboree, a reunion of Jamboree entertainers of years gone by, was held May 20, 1972, attracting thousands of sentimental fans who shared memories and music with their favorite Jamboree artists from years past. Grandpa Jones, Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper, Doc and Chickie Williams and Crazy Elmer headlined this first-of-its-kind show which proved so successful, it was decided to make it an annual Jamboree tradition.

In September 1972, the Jamboree scored again with another big 'first', when Director Glenn Reeves, a talented showman with creative, bold-thinking and aggressive ideas, put together



As an entertainment center, the Capitol Music Hall, with its first-rate stage productions, draws large crowds who enjoy a night of live theatre.

the first Truckdrivers Jamboree, a musical salute to the men of the road. Dick Curless, Red Sovine, Red Simpson, Dave Dudley and Patti Powell sang for the thousands of truckdrivers and their families who came for the show. Its outstanding success assured it of becoming another annual event in the Jamboree country music calendar.

WHILE THE JAMBOREE and the Capitol Music Hall, with their headline stage attractions, continued to gain favor with the public as a lively entertainment center, WWVA radio was gathering more than a few honors of its own. During 1971 and 1972, the station won 7 major national awards in broadcasting journalism, prestigious recognition indeed for a radio station generally recognized as the most listened-to country music station in the Northeast and Canada. Then, to top their well-earned national honors, WWVA was also named (in 1972) recipient of the highest honor in broadcasting, the Peabody Award, which was presented to WWVA for its 26 year old radio lesson in democracy, "Junior Town Meeting of the Air." In the field of public affairs programming, WWVA had earned the highest of accolades.

September, 1972. It had been 10 years since Basic Communications, Inc. bought radio station WWVA, a decade that had seen the successful fulfillment of the ambitious goals Mr. Mogul outlined when he first explored the quietly expanding modern country sound back in the early 60's. WWVA, the Jamboree and the Capitol Music Hall had experienced dynamic growth and expansion, enviable development that attracted recognition from competitive giants in the radio and country music field.

On September 1, 1972, ownership of the WWVA radio complex changed hands once again when Mr. Mogul sold the station to Screen Gems Radio Stations, Inc., a division of Columbia Pictures of New York. Mr. Mogul was appointed Executive Vice-President of Screen Gems and continued to exercise the same influence in the business affairs of the station.

In view of the enormous progress and expansion WWVA had enjoyed under Emil Mogul's shrewd guidance and Ross

Felton's capable management, Screen Gems found it unnecessary to make any major policy changes in the operation of WWVA and its related entertainment enterprises, but continued to follow the successful formula that had been established.

The Jamboree, under the guidance of director Glenn Reeves, continued to set new attendance records and, as a leading country music attraction, enjoyed a prestige it had never before known. Throughout the year, nationally known country music artists, such as Merle Haggard, Tanya Tucker, Charlie Rich, Loretta Lynn, Tom T. Hall, Charley Pride, Glen Campbell, Marty Robbins and Tammy Wynette joined top talent Jamboree regulars and in November 1975, Johnny Cash set an all-time Jamboree record with 6 shows in 3 days before close to 15,000 people.

The annual Truckdrivers Jamboree has become a nationally recognized country music event, rating coverage in leading magazines and attracting the attention of major trucking manufacturers and related industries. Responsibility for this focus of attention on truckdrivers and their country music is due, in part, to the immense popularity of Buddy Ray, a jovial, loquacious southerner from Harlan County, Kentucky, who acts as Jamboree host each Saturday night and handles the increasingly popular WWVA All-Night Show, sending out country music, traffic and weather bulletins for travelers, and chatter geared to those who travel the highways through the lonely hours of the night. As an outstanding radio personality and truckers favorite deejay, Ray is in great demand for personal appearances at trucking centers all over the country, where he broadcasts his famous All-Night Show and meets the men who hear him over 1170 as they cover the miles through the Northeast and Canada. He has been a guest on several major TV network shows and in January 1976, was a featured personality, along with The Heckels of the Jamboree, on the NBC Today Show.

Increasing demand for personal appearances by Jamboree artists has led to the arranging of package shows featuring Jamboree stars. These groups, booked through the Jamboree, are available for fairs, parks, mall openings, conventions, exhibitions, shopping centers, etc.

In January 1974, the Jamboree Tour Service was inaugurated; a Jamboree enterprise that serves as a clearing house for tour organizers and tour brokers to buy all the services they need for tour groups coming to Wheeling for a Jamboree week-end. It is not at all unusual for the Jamboree Tour Service to make arrangements for as many as 2 to 3 thousand tour visitors a month. Our country music neighbors in Canada, faithful Jamboree fans for many years, comprise a significant percentage of Jamboree visitors who take advantage of the special services and hospitality available through this organization.

Since the Jamboree Recording Studio was opened in 1971, several major improvements have been made. The studio was completely remodeled in 1975 and a new custom designed con-



Jamboree USA Recording Studio.

Just like in the old Jamboree days . . . well, not exactly, but a lot of familiar faces show up each year for the annual Jamboree Homecoming Reunion show. In May 1976, the group gathered onstage at the opening of the show to sing once again the old Jamboree theme song.



sole, new custom wiring and monitoring system was installed. This improvement now gives the studio expansion capabilities for a 24 track recording system. In early 1975, a complete new sound system was installed, allowing the engineer to have totally independent control over the sound within the theatre, quite separate from the sound broadcast over the air. The superb facilities of the Jamboree Recording Studio are used extensively by artists and musicians, as well as a wide variety of commercial businesses.

The Capitol Music Hall, which has been the Jamboree's new and beautiful home since December 1969, is rapidly gaining an envied reputation as an entertainment mecca for thousands of people who enjoy a tasteful, pleasing, current variety of live shows. Only the brightest and best of touring Broadway road shows are presented along with a variety of local well-known programs, such as the Wheeling Symphony Orchestra, minstrels, dance programs and recitals.

In mid-1974, a major renovation of the theatre's stage lighting and sound system was begun. The audio system was increased from 300 to 1400 watts and a complete and modern Kleigl Brothers lighting system was installed. This allows handling of all local and televised stage productions and will provide the stage director with thousands of possible lighting combinations.

The Capitol Music Hall will continue to present only the finest in contemporary stage productions, high-quality en-



Buddy Ray

Left to right: Buddy Ray, Host of Jamboree and All-Night Show; Marty Robbins; Virginia Alderman, WWVA writer; Glenn Reeves, Executive Director Jamboree USA.



THE WWVA "Big Country" sound begins here, in this broadcasting studio off the lobby of the Capitol Music Hall. The big picture window gives visitors a chance to watch the WWVA dee-jays 'in action'.

tainment that will please the most discriminating theatre-goers in the Wheeling metropolitan area.

The need for additional WWVA office space was met in December 1974 with the completion of a renovating project on the lower floor of the Capitol Music Hall Building. Eight new, modern offices and a large conference room were added to accommodate the Jamboree Director, Jamboree Tour Service, Promotion and Publicity Dept., and Sales Staff.

Throughout this 11 year (1965-1976) period of growth and expansion for the Jamboree and the Capitol Music Hall, WWVA Radio remained the nucleus around which this lively entertainment complex evolved, even though the famous Wheeling station and the Jamboree continued to be synonymous in the minds of many thousands of country music fans. In truth, each is an integral part of the other, both being built on the business of "Bringing Country to the Country," an effort that has earned front-rank status for both in the country music industry.

While widely recognized primarily as a country music station, WWVA is equally proud to serve as one radio station that is wholeheartedly committed to public service, community involvement and accurate news reporting. Dedication to the medium and to the audience, has since 1972, brought WWVA more than 29 major national awards in programming and documentaries. Never in the history of broadcasting has one station done so much to serve its audience.

Now it is 1976, the year of America's Bi-Centennial, the year of WWVA's Golden Anniversary.

Fifty years have passed since Paul M. Neigh spoke the first words over John Stroebel's little 50 watt radio station and through these 50 years, a passing parade of people, many gone and forgotten with time, have left their mark, helped shape, contributed and labored in some measure toward making WWVA the radio giant it is today.

Fifty years is a long time.

It has been half a century of serving and entertaining a faithful audience.

It has been 5 decades of steady, sturdy growth that would have been impossible without the support of millions of dedicated listeners.

It has been one-fourth of America's bi-centennial history.

It has been a proud achievement through the efforts of many.

For WWVA Radio, a 50 year observance is only a pause at a Golden milestone, where looking back is done with pride, and looking ahead bristles with challenges certain to be met, sure to be conquered.

1971 - 1975

WWVA RADIO AWARDS

**ROBERT F. KENNEDY
JOURNALISM AWARD 1975, 1976**

1975 — *"Back to Bloody Harlan"* — Documentary
1976 — *"Care and Feeding of America"* — Documentary

GABRIEL AWARD

1975 — *"Back to Bloody Harlan"*
1974 — *"Junior Town Meeting of the Air"*
1973 — *"And They Watch by Night"*
1972 — *"Time Out"*

**WEST VIRGINIA
ASSOCIATED PRESS AWARD 1975**

"Coal Report '74" — Documentary

**AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION
GAVEL AWARD 1975**

"Tony Boyle Trial Coverage" — Continual news coverage

NATIONAL HEADLINER AWARD

1975 — *Overall excellence in News and Public Affairs*
1974 — *"Death in the Mines"*
1972 — *Outstanding Editorials*

**AMERICAN TRIAL LAWYERS
REGIONAL AWARD**

1975 — *"Tony Boyle Trial Coverage"* — Continual news coverage
1971 — *"Anarchy Threatens the Kingdom of Coal"*

**BILLBOARD INTERNATIONAL
RADIO FORUM 1975**

"Back to Bloody Harlan"

OHIO ASSOCIATED PRESS AWARD

1975 — *"Our Children Are Crying"* — Documentary
1975 — *"Coal Report '74"* — Documentary

GOLDEN MIKE AWARD 1974-1973

"Junior Town Meeting of the Air" — Programming

**COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
MAJOR ARMSTRONG AWARD, 1972**

"House of Death" — Documentary

NATIONAL ASSOCIATED PRESS

1976 — *"Our Children Are Crying"* — Second Place — Documentary

**AMERICAN TRIAL LAWYERS
ASSOCIATION NATIONAL AWARD
OF MERIT 1972**

"Anarchy Threatens the Kingdom of Coal" — Documentary

OHIO STATE AWARD 1972

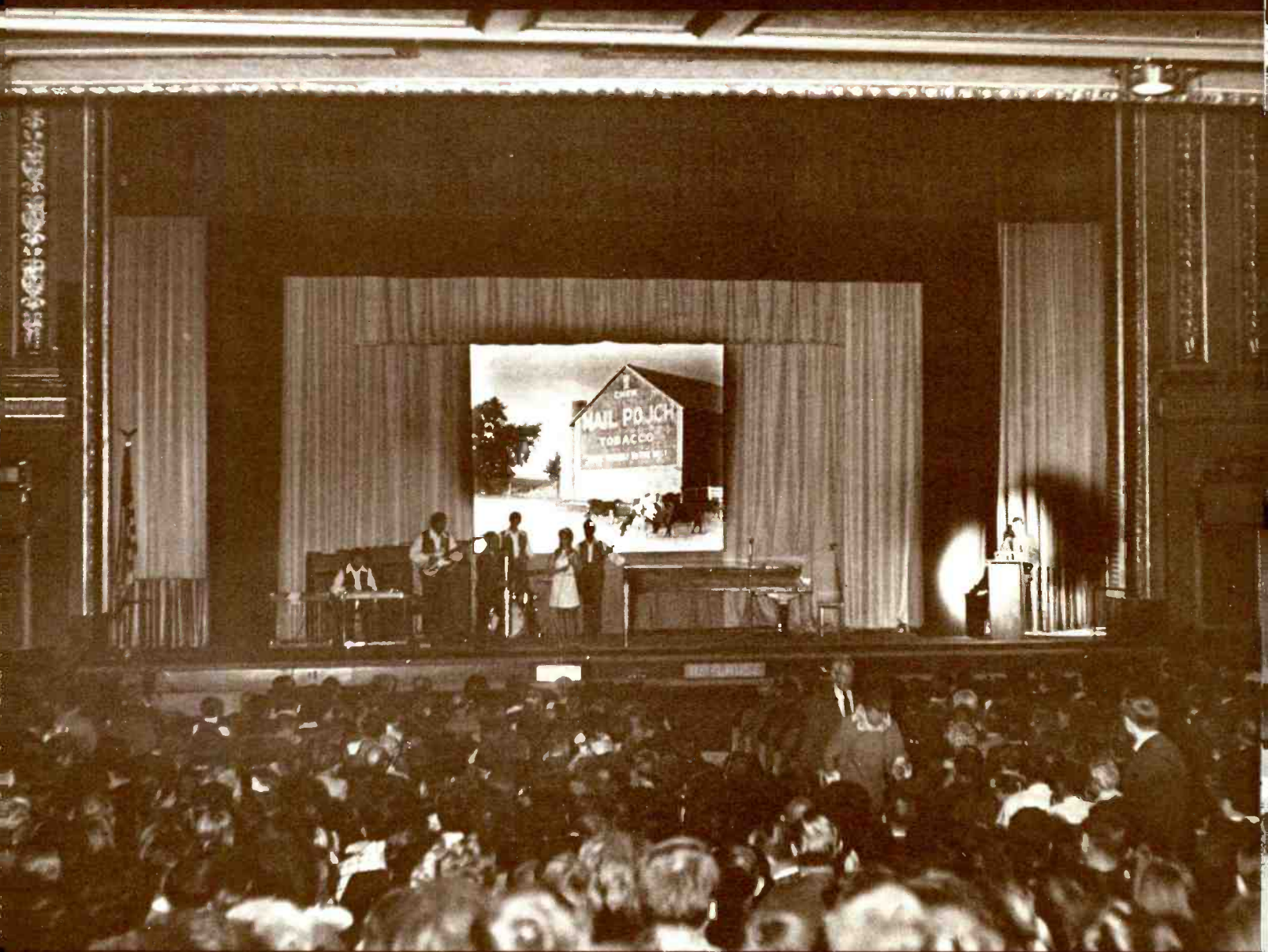
"Anarchy Threatens the Kingdom of Coal" — Documentary

GEORGE F. PEABODY AWARD 1972

"Junior Town Meeting of the Air" — Programming

RADIO-TV NEWS DIRECTOR'S AWARD 1972

"Anarchy Threatens the Kingdom of Coal" — Documentary



JAMBOREE USA and WWVA . . .

together they're

'Bringing Country to the Country.'

Emil Mogul
Executive Vice President
Screen Gems Radio Stations, Inc.



Wynn Alby
Vice President
Screen Gems Radio Stations, Inc.



Ross Felton
General Manager
of WWVA Radio Complex



Richard Howard
Station Manager
WWVA Radio



F. Glenn Reeves
Executive Director
Jamboree USA &
General Manager Jamboree USA, Inc.



**COMBINED YEARS OF SERVICE TO WWVA
54 YEARS**

Martha Donoghue
Administrative Secretary



Jean Miller
Head Bookkeeper

Sales Department
L to R: Ray Couture;
Fred Gardini, Sales Manager;
Ted Lavelle; Lemoine Klug;
Carter Darwish.



Announcers (Programming Staff)
L to R: Jerry Howell; Al Zeidman
Bill Hughes; Bob Barwick
Charlie Cook, Program Director
Buddy Ray; Bill Berg.



News Department:
L to R: Bob Cain, News Director,
Lisa Favish, Jerry Kelanic



Engineers:
Hank Bendel and
Carl Miller, Chief Operator



Promotions Department:
Kathy Howell; Cathy Gurley,
Director of Promotion
and Public Affairs.



Clerical Staff: L to R:
Ginny Mudge; Nora Williams
Mary Porko; Joan Paglialunga;
Wanda Agnew; Ann Glave
Charlotte Knapp; Cathy Gross (seated).



Jamboree USA Staff: L to R:
Gus Thomas,
Director of Jamboree Attractions;
Stan Hutto, Manager Jamboree
Recording Studio;
Rick Erickson,
Director of Recording Studio;
Freddy Carr,
Jamboree Tour Service
Director (front).





WWVA 1170
CAPITOL MUSIC HALL
5TH ANNUAL HOMECOMING JAMBOREE USA SAT



PEOPLE AND SCENES FROM WWVA
 WWVA IS MORE THAN A RADIO STATION. IT IS PEOPLE, PLACES AND HAPPENINGS. HERE AND ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE ARE A FEW OF THE SCENES FROM WWVA (From left to right). Ross Felton, General Manager, welcomes Mayor James Haranzo to WWVA 49th Anniversary Festivities; The Capitol Music Hall, home of WWVA Radio and Jamboree USA; Terry Bradshaw signing >





autographs following Jamboree appearance; Jamboree Stage Manager and Buddy Ray, Jamboree Emcee, watch Jamboree performer from backstage; Katherine Jones keeping the WWVA offices clean; Leo Bowers and Jim Catlett getting stage ready for Capitol Music Hall performance; WWVA's Call For Action answering over 5,000 calls per year, (l to r): Vaughn Miller, Anne McGeary and Anne Jones; Star Hutto in the Jamboree Recording Studio.





Virginia Alderman is a resident of St. Clairsville, Ohio, and a devoted fan of WWVA Radio and Jamboree USA. For the past 12 months, she has searched diligently to piece together the mammoth history of WWVA's 50 years. This is the third history-souvenir book she has compiled for WWVA and Jamboree USA. She also writes feature reports for the Martins Ferry Times-Leader and several national music trade publications.

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We also wish to thank the following people for their time and energy in recapturing the people and events that helped mold WWVA's great history over the past 50 years.

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Vivian Miller
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Harry Holbert
Andy Lloyd

AUTOGRAPHS

