



The roster of regulars on WLW's 20-year-old "Midwestern Hayride," produced by Avco Broadcasting and seen weekly in color on its WLW television stations in Cincinnati, Dayton and Columbus, Ohio; Indianapolis, and San Antonio, as well as in 41 additional markets in which the show is syndicated. In its appearance at the Ohio State Fair, Columbus, Aug. 27, "Midwestern Hayride" played to a record-breaking grandstand crowd of 45,000, including some 22,000 standees. Included in the photo above are such "Hayride" stalwarts as Kenny Price and the Hometowners, Charlie Gore, Dean Richards and the Lucky Pennies, Helen and Billy Scott, Zeke and Bill, Bonnie Lou, and the Midwesterners.

Red and Lige Turner, the Delmore Brothers and Grandpa Jones. So at that time, there were two successful shows originating in Cincinnati over WLW, the Nation's Station.

Then in 1939, John Lair fulfilled a dream of many years standing and with Red Foley and the Duke of Paducah established his "Renfro Valley Barn Dance" at Renfro Valley, Ky.

In the meantime, George Biggar scored another 10 strike and brought Lulu Belle and Scotty, the great box-office attraction from WLS, Chicago, to join the "Boone County Jamboree." Yours truly joined WLW to head up the WLW Artist Bureau covering the searching for and hiring new talent and expand the personal appearances of WLW talent over the vast area covered by this 50,000 clear-channel giant of the airwaves.

With the talent which then and later included such well-known personalities as Hal O'Halloran formerly WLS, Bradley Kincaid the perennial favorite, Hugh Cross and His Radio Pals, the Girls of the Golden West, the Lucky Pennies, Captain Stubby and the Buccaneers, Natchee the Indian, Rome Johnstone and the Trailblazers, Curly Fox and Texas Ruby, Hank Penny and His Band, Dean Richards and Judy Perkins, Little

Jimmy Dickens, Chet Atkins, and Homer and Jethro.

In 1945, we changed the name of the "Jamboree" to "WLW Midwestern Hayride" changed the format somewhat as we wanted a higher type corn, "Twenty Gallons to the Acre."

It was then that one of the greatest natural performers and still the sweetheart of the "Hayride" joined the show and therein lies an interesting story of how Bonnie Lou came to WLW. In December 1944, Bill Sachs of Billboard and yours truly from WLW, were on our way on the afternoon train to Chicago to cover the International Showman's Convention at the Sherman.

Bill and I were in the club car having a light refreshment or two when we fell into conversation with a young salesman from Kansas City and naturally we exchanged information regarding our respective occupations. This gentleman proceeded to rave about a young teen-age country and western singer named Sally Carson who in his opinion was the best in the business and was heard over KMBC, Kansas City.

We asked him to get Sally Carson to send a transcription of various songs and pictures. She did and then we asked her to send another recording singing "Freight Train Blues," a

number made famous by our old friend Red Foley. She did, we hired her at WLW, changed her name to Bonnie Lou and today, 20 some years later, she is still riding the top waves of popularity on the "Midwestern Hayride."

So you see a star was born because two guys got thirsty on a train trip to Chicago.

No town or spot was too small for these shows to appear, all we required was a theater, auditorium, grandstand or tent big enough to seat the public as they would flock from all over to see and meet their favorites of the airwaves.

Then came television, and WLW, through its Cincinnati outlet WLW-T, officially went commercial Tuesday, Feb. 9, 1948, if my memory serves me correct and the "Midwestern Hayride" became a commercial television operation the following Saturday, Feb. 13, has continued to be a weekly television must and down through the years has never gone on the air unsponsored making it to my knowledge the oldest uninterrupted TV commercial show in the country.

It is now syndicated on 41 TV stations throughout the country plus the five Avco stations in Cincinnati, Dayton, Columbus, Indianapolis and San Antonio.