Home of Channel 3

Broadcast House, the first building to be completed on Hartford's Constitution Plaza, is the home of WTIC television, Channel 3, as well as WTIC radio. Channel 3 moved to its new headquarters in September 1961, four years after the station went on the air.

FCC's Awarding of Channel 3 to WTIC Climaxed Four-Year, Bitter Local Battle

By HENRY McNULTY

When WTIC-TV went on the air Sept. 23, 1957, it was the climax of a long and bitter battle that had begun more than four years earlier.

As early as 1952, television cameras began arriving at the studios of WTIC radio. A spokesman said they would be used for training but operation of a WTIC television station was still far in the future.

The Federal Communication Commission (FCC) later allotted one frequency, Channel 3, for use as a Hartford-based VHF (Very High Frequency) TV station. From 1954 to 1956, WTIC fought a group known as Hartford Telecasting for the right to broadcast on that channel.

Testimony at the FCC's Washington, D. C., headquarters dragged on for a year and a half, with each group trying to prove it was more worthy to use Channel 3. In the meantime Hartford was without a VHF station.

The one Hartford television station, Channel 18, operated on the ultra-high frequency (UHF). A but many of the early TV sets were unable to pick up those frequencies.

The break came May 31, 1955, an ultra-high frequency (UHF), formally awarded Channel 3. The first broadcast featured then Gov. Abraham A. Ribicoff, various religious and education leaders, actor Ed Begley (himself a Hartford native), composer Robert Maxwell, and WTIC's own Bob Steele, who had been on radio 20 years at that time.

Typically, Steele joked about the new medium, saying he couldn't figure out what to do with his hands.

Under the leadership of Paul W. Morency, who headed WTIC radio and television from 1929 to 1967, Channel 3 became well known for its many public service activities. When Morency retired, Leonard J. Patricelli became president of the corporation.

In 1958, Channel 3 became an affiliate of the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS), and began broadcasting starting at 7:15 a.m. Previously, it had gone on the air at 2 p.m.

There were several proposals in the late 1960s and early 1960s to "delete" Channel 3 from Hartford and move it to Rhode Island, assigning WTIC a UHF channel. That never happened.

The station moved to Broadcast House, the first building to be completed on Constitution Plaza, in 1961. Broadcasts had been made from the Travelers Insurance Co. building on Main Street.

Smut Boom Opened Up New Variety of Jobs

By DICK WEST

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Authorities in New York and some other cities are trying to close down pornographic bookstores and movie houses that flourish in downtown areas.

From a sociological standpoint, this may be a desirable move. But it is an economic setback.

For regardless of what your attitude toward obscenity might be, you will have to concede that the smut boom has opened up new employment opportunities for people with the right kind of talent.

Not long ago, for example, I was introduced to a chap who identified himself as a professional breather.

Tyrone Gaspaire (to use his screen name) explained that he earned his living by breathing on sound tracks for X-rated skin flicks.

Something Peculiar

"If you have ever seen any of these films, you may have noticed something peculiar about the love scenes—the lovers never speak to each other," Gaspaire said.

I said, "Mere words are inexpressive in moments like that."

"And also expensive," Gaspaire said. "Sound cameras and crews cost a lot of money. So we shoot the scenes mute and then dub in the audibles.

"The typical skin flick sound track is a mixture of progressive jazz and heavy breathing. I can't play a note but I'm one of the heaviest breathers in show biz."

I said, "How does a professional breather go about preparing for a skin flick role?"

Techniques Vary

"Techniques vary. My personal method is to lay off all forms of exercise for at least six weeks. Then, just before we start recording the sound track, I run up a short flight of stairs."

"Couldn't the producer get the same effect by taking a tape recorder into the emphysema ward of a nearby hospital?"

'Just Lucky'

"That would be artistically dishonest," Gaspaire replied. "Maximum dramatic impact can only be achieved by matching the breathing with the action on the screen."

I said, "How did you happen to acquire this talent? Was it God given, or something you had to work at?"

"I was just lucky, I guess," Gaspaire said. "I had a lot of asthma attacks when I was a child.

"That, plus a bad case of swollen adenoids, got me into the habit of breathing through my mouth, which is one of the requisites of skin flick respiration.

"The little refinements came later. Like starting to smoke at an early age and developing a chronic sinus condition.

"But to give credit where credit is due, it was air pollution that made me a star."

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Travelers Selling WTIC

(Continued From Page 1)

management and staffing to operate the facility.

250 Employees

However, it is certain that some of WTIC's employees will be affected directly by the sale.

The same staff serves the television and radio stations and it is unlikely that different owners will share a staff.

Why is Travelers selling WTIC, an operation that has always been profitable? In the WTIC stations contributed $2 million in after-tax profits to Travelers overall net profit of $121.7 million, and five cents of $2.42 earning per share.

Dr. Eli Shapiro, chairman of the Finance Committee at Travelers, gave every indication in an interview Monday that the offer to buy Channel 3 was just too good to turn down.

'Outstanding Record'

The official position of Travelers, offered by Roger C. Wilkins, chairman, was that the Travelers decision to sell its broadcasting facilities was based on the long-term corporate objectives of the insurance and financial services firm. "It is our belief," he said, "that the best interests of the community and WTIC-TV will be served by its associations with the Post-Newsweek Stations, a company whose primary business is in the field of communications, and which has an outstanding record in broadcasting."

Shapiro said the first interest in buying WTIC was shown several months ago and a definite offer was made two months ago.

He said assurances of the Post Company that it intended to use local management and would protect benefit's accrued by WTIC employees were instrumental in influencing Travelers to agree to sell.

The one thing that could kill the sale is the inability of the Post Company to obtain a transfer of the Channel 3 license in 18 months.

The Washington Post Company will finance the purchase of WTIC-TV through a combination of available funds and borrowings from one or more institutional lenders. Travelers will not participate in the financing, Shapiro said.

Road Brings 20th Century

NAZKO, B.C. (AP) — Progress is only a few miles away from the isolated Nazko Indian people of the Chilcotin district, about 400 miles north of Vancouver.

A two lane gravel road from Quesnel is to replace the barely passable dirt trail that is the only link with the outside world for the Nazkos and the even more remote Kluskus Indians.

Brendan Kennedy, 25, a community development worker for the British Columbia Union of Indian Chiefs, has been monitoring the roadbuilding project and says there is not much time left to prepare the Indians to meet the 20th century.

Kennedy said the Nazko and Kluskus people, mostly hunters, fishermen and trappers, have led isolated and unchanged lives in their hilly jackpine country since before 1900.

The largest community in Nazko, about 65 miles from Quesnel, with a population of 100. It's the only place with running water — cold.

Many are on welfare and have inadequate diets, health and housing standards, said Kennedy. Total population of the Nazko and Kluskus is 230 in a 400-square-mile area. Supplies are brought in twice a week to Nazko by truck over the dirt road.

Kennedy was hired by the union last May to help the Indians organize. He had been living and working among them for five years, supporting himself by odd jobs and through the hospitality of the Indians.

The kids, who go away to school, are the major carriers of information and communication, and many of the parents live vicariously through their kids."

Kennedy says the area is to be opened up, first for logging and then for tourism, and he hopes the Indian people will be able to cash in without having to pay too high a price.

The largest outdoor saddle horse show in America is the Lexington, Ky., Junior League Horse Show.

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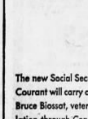

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