

Connecticut Historical Society
museum & library

One Elizabeth Street
Hartford, Connecticut
06105-2292
chs.org
(860) 236-5621
Fax: (860) 236-2664

November 13, 2018

For many of us, Bob Steele was a daily companion, and now, thanks to you, he is well represented in the CHS collection.

Radio station WTIC's most recognized broadcaster, Robert "Bob" Lee Steele, started with the station in 1936 and stayed with WTIC for his entire sixty-six year career, ending with his death on December 6, 2002 at the age of 91.



1990.51.157. CHS Collection.

Steele's show featured musical standards, farm news and prices early in the morning, novelty songs, silly jokes, horrible puns, and a regular "Word of the Day" segment. Despite WTIC's various format changes over the years, and long after WTIC itself had abandoned music for a focus on news and talk, Steele's show remained unchanged throughout its run, making it perhaps the longest-running radio program in history never to have undergone a significant format change.

Born in Kansas City, Missouri on July 13, 1911, Steele worked as a newsboy, salesman, motorcycle messenger, and professional boxer. He was invited to Hartford by a race promoter to announce a motorcycle race. On his last day in town, he walked into WTIC-AM on a whim and asked to audition for a vacant announcer position. He became a junior staff announcer at WTIC in Hartford on October 1, 1936.

For much of his career, Steele also did the evening sports program on WTIC radio and television – no mean feat since he had to be on the air at 5:30 AM. For years, Steele broadcasted six days a week and told the occasional incredulous interviewer that the show was his pastime, not a job.

Founded in 1925 by the Travelers Insurance Company, radio station WTIC boosted its signal from 500 watts to a 50,000 watt transmitter in 1929, making it one of the most powerful radio broadcast stations of the time. The transmitter, referred to as “old number one” was the first 50,000 watt transmitter ever manufactured by RCA and had serial number 001.

Over the decades, many employees made WTIC a top Connecticut station. They created a WTIC Alumni Association to celebrate and document their history, and to host reunions. In 2016, the WTIC Alumni Association donated their archives to the CHS for posterity. The collection includes historical publications, program guides, newsletters, correspondence, staff photographs, and much more.

You continue to help us safeguard and care for the WTIC Alumni Association collection in environmentally controlled conditions, allowing current and future visitors and researchers physical and, eventually, digital access to these historical artifacts.

Please make your gift to the Connecticut Historical Society now. Your contribution helps people explore Connecticut’s and America’s stories and connect them to their own.

Sincerely,



Jody Blankenship
Chief Executive Officer

P.S. Thank you for understanding and valuing the importance of history. You are investing in the preservation of Connecticut’s rich past and future histories!

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It costs the CHS about \$130 a day to provide appropriate environmental conditions to preserve the CHS's collection of Connecticut's important artifacts. Please consider an Annual Fund gift to sponsor a day or more of this critical protection of our collective history.

Yes! I would like to support the CHS and sponsor a day! (Your name or the name for your honoree will be displayed at the CHS Welcome Desk.)

My contribution is for (please specify desired dates, if any):

\$130 for ____ day(s) for a total of \$ _____ for _____ (dates)

\$1,825 (CHS was founded in 1825) for two weeks commencing on _____ (date)

I would like the Welcome Desk signage to read as follows:

I'd like to help with a contribution to the Annual Fund of:

\$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other _____

I want to make a targeted donation to:

Collections Library & Waterman Research Center Education

Exhibitions Connecticut Cultural Heritage Arts Program

In the amount of:

\$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other _____

My check is enclosed and payable to the Connecticut Historical Society.

Please charge my credit card:

Discover MasterCard VISA

Card number: _____

Expiration date _____ CVC: _____ Billing ZIP code: _____

Signature: _____

I expect my gift will be matched by my employer, _____

If you would like to make your gift on-line or in installments, visit chs.org/donate or call the Development Office at 860-236-5621, x227.

Thank you so much for your support and visit us often at chs.org!
Contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

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MEMBERSHIP / DEVELOPMENT OFFICE
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
1 ELIZABETH ST
HARTFORD CT 06105-2292