IMAGINE PLEASE

Early Radio Broadcasting in British Columbia

Dennis J. Duffy

SOUND HERITAGE SERIES Number 38

Five Free Radio Sets

For the Five Best Essays (Answering the following Questions) We Will Give Absolutely

FREE

First Prize — **RADIOLA III** (Westinghouse) — Complete with batteries, headphones, aerial, tubes, etc. **This set will be installed FREE in the home of the person winning this PRIZE.**

Second Prize **RADIOLA III** (Westinghouse) — Complete with batteries, headphones, aerial tubes, etc. There is nothing more to buy, this is all ready to instal.

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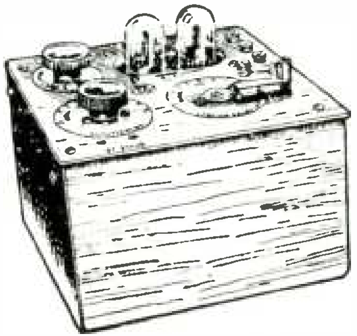

RULES OF CONTEST

1. This contest is open to any person, young or old, residing in New Westminster, Burnaby or the Fraser Valley.

2. No Essay should be longer than One Thousand Words.

3. Essays must be written in ink and on one side of the paper only. Neatness will count.

4. Give your name, age and address plainly.

5. All Essays must be in by Dec. 31, 1924, and sent to

RADIO CONTEST MANAGER,
Hume & Rumble, Limited,
New Westminster, B.C.

THE JUDGES OF THIS CONTEST ARE:

HIS WORSHIP MAYOR F. S. ANNANDALE
SENATOR J. D. TAYLOR
ALD. FRED J. HUME

Whose decision shall be final. List of Prize-winners will be given in the daily papers by January 15, 1925.

The following is a List of the questions to be answered, making a short story of each:

1. **WHAT IS RADIO ?**
2. **WHAT DOES RADIO MEAN TO THE HOME ?**
3. **WHAT DOES RADIO MEAN TO COMMERCE?**
4. **WHAT IS THE VALUE OF RADIO AS A MEANS OF EDUCATION ?**
5. **WHAT DOES RADIO MEAN TO THE AVERAGE CITIZEN ?**
6. **WHAT IS THE VALUE OF RADIO TO THE FARMER?**
7. **GIVE ANY SUGGESTIONS WHICH YOU THINK WOULD IMPROVE THE PRESENT METHOD OF BROADCASTING.**

For any further information see

Hume & Rumble, Limited

647 Columbia St., New Westminster, B. C.

Headquarters for RADIO in New Westminster and the Fraser Valley.

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CHARLES LILLARD, Editor

DEREK REIMER, Head, Sound and Moving Image Division

Published by the SOUND AND MOVING IMAGE DIVISION

Province of British Columbia

Ministry of
Provincial Secretary and
Government Services
PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES

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Victoria, British Columbia

To my parents
Bill and Ilene Duffy

Cover: The CNRV Players, a Vancouver group that presented some of Canada's earliest radio drama, emote for a 1929 publicity photograph. (Dominion Photo Co.; PABC no. 95571)

Inside Front Cover: Ad from the Vancouver Daily Province, *1924. Hume and Rumble Ltd. operated pioneer station CFXC.*

Overleaf: This rather futuristically posed photograph was taken in the control room of CKFC in the Vancouver Stock Exchange Building, ca. 1937. From left to right, the staff members shown are Gordon Hodgson, Jeff Davis, Laurie Irvine and Earl Beresford.

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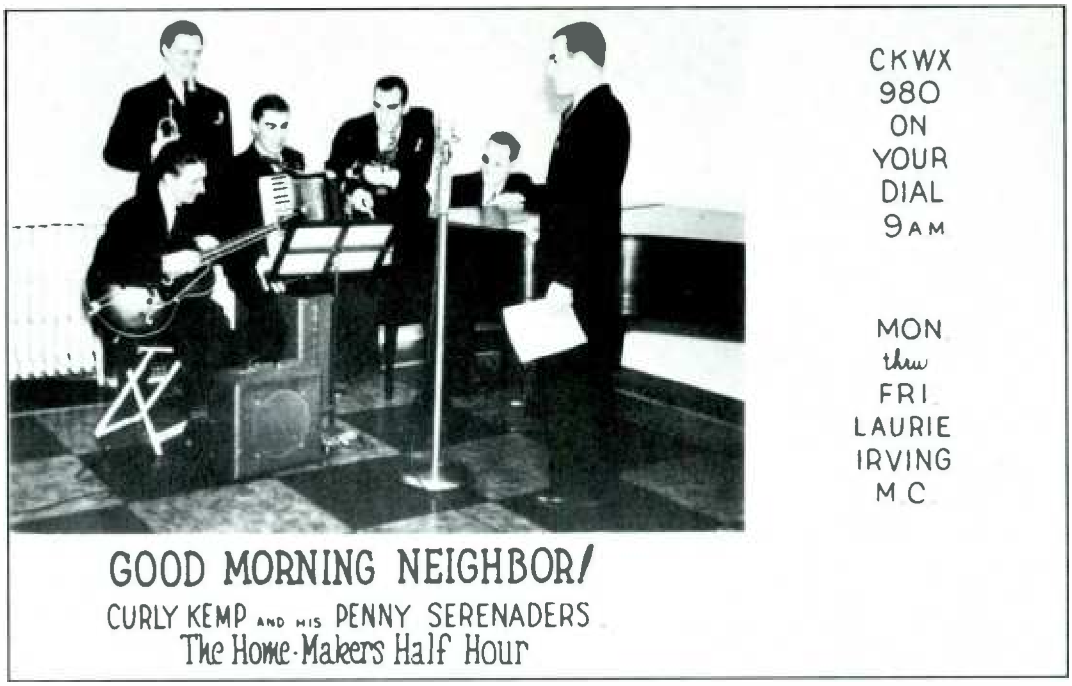


The musicians in this 1942 photo are Ray Norris (guitar), Chuck Barbour (trumpet), Curly Kemp (accordion), Sonny Richardson (violin). The pianist is unidentified. Announcer Laurie Irvine used the surname "Irving" on the air.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the people whose resources and efforts I have drawn on in completing this book.

Emmanuel Ronse recorded several of the interviews for his radio documentary on early broadcasting in Vancouver, which was aired on CFRO-FM in 1979. His donation of this material to the Provincial Archives of British Columbia provided an impetus for further research into the history of radio in the province. More recently, he graciously allowed me to refer to his research notes and new interviews.

Tom Hood also provided valuable recordings, notes and background material on early Vancouver radio.

I am grateful for the foresight of Kenneth Bambrick, a professor in the School of Journalism at the University of Western Ontario, who recorded a number of the interviews in 1976. The Public Archives of Canada provided copies of the relevant tapes and transcripts. Some of these interviews also appear, in a different form, in Bill McNeil and Morris Wolfe's *Signing On* (Doubleday, 1982).

John Peter Shinnick loaned interviews recorded by him for his published history of CKOV Kelowna. Bill Coombes of CHWK Chilliwack and Jamie Browne of CKOV Kelowna provided material on the history of their stations. Gene Kern of CKWX helped in identifying potential interviewees. Myrna Cobb assisted in the checking and correction of transcripts.

Most of all, thanks are due to the broadcasters whose words appear in these pages. They gave generously of their time so that their recollections could be recorded. Some of them also loaned or donated personal papers, photographs and memorabilia.

Finally, I want to thank the close friends and colleagues whose encouragement helped me to finish this project.—DJD

PREFACE

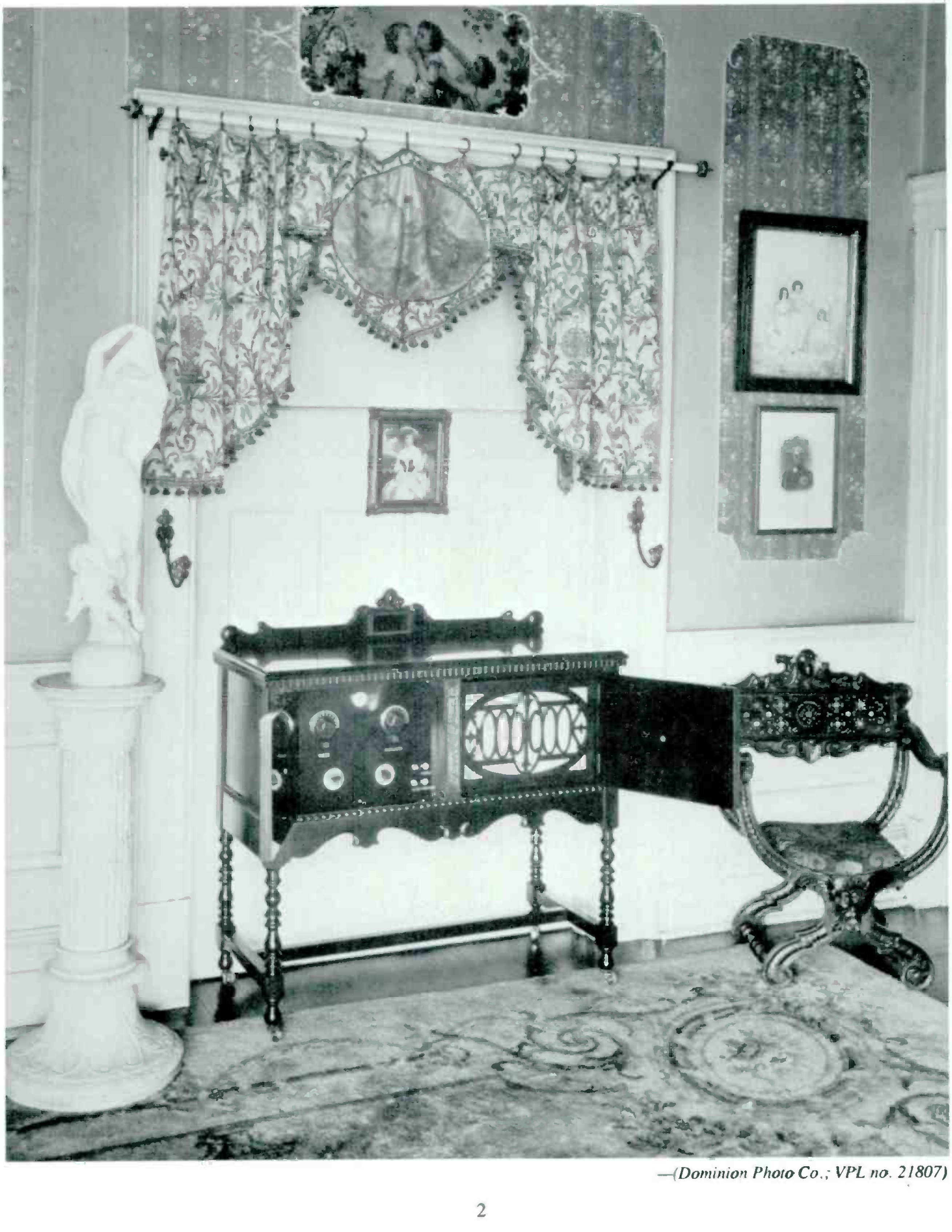
Within two or three years of the first radio broadcasts in North America, British Columbians were listening to local radio stations. During 1922, the first year of British Columbia broadcasting, seven stations were licensed in the province. In three decades, broadcasting grew from a popular hobby to an established industry. Many broadcasters of that period are still alive, and researchers have been able to record personal reminiscences of some of the earliest days of Canadian broadcasting.

Imagine Please focuses on the development of private and public broadcasting in British Columbia, revealed through the tape-recordings of the people who made that history. It also draws on other reference material—government documents, city directories, newspapers and unpublished manuscripts. The main sources, however, are the broadcasters themselves. This book also reflects the goal of the Provincial Archives of British Columbia to collect, preserve and make available for research the historical records of broadcasting, both private and public, in British Columbia.

Imagine Please takes its title from a dramatic series produced by Fletcher Markle for CKWX in 1940 and 1941. It underscores one of the main themes of this book—that before the coming of television, radio broadcasting was a vehicle of imagination as well as information.

Derek Reimer
Sound and Moving Image Division,
Provincial Archives of British Columbia

A giant radio receiver was displayed in Vancouver's Victory Square in December 1931 to promote radio sales. (Stuart Thomson photo; CVA no. 99-2446)



—*(Dominion Photo Co.; VPL no. 21807)*

SOMEHOW MAGIC

The beginnings of radio broadcasting in British Columbia are difficult to unravel. Early broadcasters often went on the air without licences or fanfare, and operated irregularly at best. Some stations weathered frequent changes of ownership or designation. Some became well-known and prosperous; others operated only briefly and left little record of their existence.

British Columbia broadcasting did not, of course, develop in isolation. It was very strongly influenced by external events and by other, earlier applications of radio technology. One event more than any other brought radio to world attention.

CASEY WELLS: To actually go back to my beginning interest in radio, I have to go back to the sinking of the *Titanic* in 1912. It seemed very wonderful to me that these big rescue ships could be called from many miles away through no connection with wires whatever, but just a little spark going through the air.

The *Titanic* disaster demonstrated the value of radio in marine navigation. But the Canadian government, to its own credit, had already seen that potential. The Department of Marine and Fisheries began building a network of coastal wireless stations in 1907. The first five stations were established in British Columbia at Gonzales Hill (Victoria), Point Grey (Vancouver), Cape Lazo (Comox), and Pachena Point and Estevan Point on Vancouver Island's west coast. By 1912, there were also stations at Dead Tree Point and Ikeda Head on the Queen Charlottes, Digby Island near Prince Rupert, and Triangle Island off the northern tip of Vancouver Island.

Many British Columbians were interested in nautical matters, and the coastal stations added to their awareness of radio. Other factors contributed to this awareness. As a seaport, Vancouver was a natural focal point for regional interest in radio's applications. In 1910, Dr. Lee De Forest, the inventor of the grid audion vacuum tube, carried out a demonstration of radiotelephony (voice transmission) in the city. By 1920, the provincial Forest Service was using radiotelephone communication in its coastal patrol work out of Vancouver, and the Sprott-Shaw School was teaching the skills necessary to obtain a shipboard radio operator's licence.

In a climate of such activity, fueled by amateur radio magazines and clubs, it's not surprising that radio caught the imagination of the general public. Many British Columbia broadcasters began their careers as enthusiastic listeners and hobbyists.

ROSS MACINTYRE: I became involved as an amateur as early as 1919, I guess. I was delivering newspapers, and on my paper route was a chap with an amateur station, a spark transmitter. I went in to take a look at that; never *did* finish delivering the papers. That was the end of paper routes, as far as I was concerned! I ran the gamut of crystal receivers and Ford coil spark transmitters. We used to work possibly five, ten miles with a Ford coil and a crystal receiver. That was pretty good in those days. Of course, this was all using Morse; it was strictly code.

Earle Connor: In 1919, we were living on Second Avenue down in Kitsilano in Vancouver. I was nine years old at the time. One day I noticed a chap across the lane putting up a piece of wire from his house out to a pole at the back. It wasn't a clothesline; it was too high. So I walked over to find out what he was doing. He was putting up an antenna—they called it an aerial in those days. So I said, "What's this for?" He says, "Wireless." He'd collected a few bits and pieces: a Ford spark coil, an old windshield with tinfoil over it for a capacitor. He made a little spark gap out of zinc rods from batteries. So I got a little interested.

Casey Wells: With me, one incident stands out. When I was attending university [UBC], I had my radio receiver with me. While listening to ships in the harbour, I heard one ship out in the Gulf of Georgia playing music—"God Save the King." This was a most amazing thing, to hear music coming through the headphones.

Ship-to-shore and amateur radio were relatively esoteric interests; popular enthusiasm for radio really began with the emergence of broadcasting. In 1919, both KDKA in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and XWA (now CFCF) in Montreal were broadcasting on an occasional basis. XWA is credited with originating the first scheduled radio broadcast on May 20, 1920. The first broadcasts to be received in British Columbia, however, were American in origin.

Ian Clark: Radio really caught on, and it caught the fancy of a lot of young people. It was a new discovery. You know, in those days we didn't have all the great developments we have today. People were really, really amazed at such a miracle as radio—sending sounds through the air, and at the speed of light. I think it attracted a lot of young fellows because it was a new venture altogether.

I remember very well [when I first heard a radio]. This was at Grand Forks. There was a chap that put up a tall wooden tower, I would think 150 feet, with a wire running down the side of it. I think he was perhaps about the second or third that had a radio in Grand Forks. He invited me into his place, and gosh, he had at least a dozen dials on this thing. You'd put on the earphones, and you'd get all the squeaks and the heterodynes and so on. Then all of a sudden you'd hear somebody way off in the distance saying, "This is KPO in San Francisco," or "This is KNX in Los Angeles." KSL [Salt Lake City] just came on the air at that time, too. This chap kept working on the thing. Eventually, he got it so that you could hear these stations quite audibly in the earphones. Then he got a glass bowl, and he would put the earphones in the centre of it. The bowl would have a tendency to magnify [the sound], so that if everybody sat there with one hand cupping their ear, they could hear what was going on. It was pretty crude, but it was the start.

I remember very well, coming out of his place one night—the moon was in the sky, a beautiful clear night—and looking up and wondering, how could this be? The man said the reception I was listening to in the earphones—that I could hear it first, in Grand Forks, before a fellow sitting across the table from the man that was doing the talking in Los Angeles. It just left you with an odd feeling: how could such a miracle occur?

John Avison: The man next door had the first speaker that I remember. Until that time, the only way to have more than one person listening was to put the headphones in a glass dish, preferably crystal. But this man had one of these peculiar, almost snake-shaped speakers, which was a tremendous advance. The quality, of course, was abysmal, but we didn't know the difference.

I made my first radio. I would have been about eight or nine years of age. It was a crystal set, made around a salt container wound with wire. You had a galena crystal and a small, thin piece of wire called a "cat's whisker," which you manipulated until you found the right spot on the crystal.

My father put up a huge aerial. For some reason or other, it was presumed that dirt on the aerial would diminish the amount of signal you received. So it was arranged that you could lower the aerial on a pulley, and every Saturday my father would be out there with emery paper, polishing the copper wire. It really made no difference at all, but that was the sense of the thing.

Barney Potts: Everybody was playing with [crystal sets]. It was great. You could make them up from practically nothing. We used to go down and buy all the parts at a 15-cent store and make our own radio sets. With the airwaves the way they were, my gosh, you could pick up live broadcasts from Chicago and Los Angeles. Some kids would say, "I got Hong Kong last night" or "I got London." I don't doubt it at all, because you could pick everything up.

Cyril Trott: All radio receivers in the very early days were made by experimenters who made their own unit, and would make receivers for other people. They were called listeners—"DX listeners."* They would log the stations [they heard] all over the world. In those days, with a single-tube [set], you could hear all the stations across the continent on a regular basis, as long as you had a good antenna and were in a reasonable location.

John Avison: People used to send to the stations for cards [confirming reception of the station at a given time]. They were greatly elated when they were able to get KGO Oakland or KSL Salt Lake. These were the far-away stations.

John Baldwin: Radio receivers were big then—great cumbersome things, all filled with tubes. A small receiver then was as big as your portable television set is today. And they were an awful price.

Alan Ramsden: I think the home radio was probably [a fairly major investment]. Anybody who really spent a fair amount of time by the radio set probably spent $400 or $500 on a console with elegant woodwork, and probably quite a few tubes. There would be what they called a four-tube set, which was a standard in the late twenties and early thirties—a regenerative set, which means that they [were] tuned by varying the oscillator in the set. It would disturb the neighbour's radio set because, as you tuned it, it radiated this frequency until you locked onto the station and got into synchronization with it. You'd get this "wooooooo" sort of sound as somebody tuned the band. When the superheterodyne set came along, it eliminated that problem and increased the sensitivity of the sets, and also the power output, which made for better fidelity. The super-het made a big difference.

Ian Clark: I would think in the early thirties it became very apparent that broadcasting was going to become a very useful and powerful tool. At first, people were slow to adopt radios. But it wasn't very long—in fact, I guess by 1932 every home in America had a radio.

John Baldwin: In small towns on a summery day, when the screen doors were on and the windows were open, you could start down the street, walking slowly, and you could listen to a broadcast all the way down the street. People had their radios on all the way down the street, and it was the same station, because there wasn't a multiplicity of stations in a small town, particularly at that time.

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* DX is the Morse Code abbreviation for distance.

ALAN RAMSDEN: People today have come to accept radio. In those days, I think, everybody thought that the little black box was somehow magic.

This attitude was reflected in the newspapers and popular magazines of the era. One ideal that the publications shared with their readers was the belief that radio would alleviate urban congestion and social problems by making rural life more bearable. An example of these sentiments is found in the published comments of Rev. A. D. McKinnon, a Presbyterian mission superintendent in the Cariboo.

> ". . . It is a safe forecast, if this wireless communication of important news, worthwhile concerts, thought-provoking addresses, inspiring operas and ennobling and uplifting sermons can be supplied to dwellers in the remote plains and interior belts of British Columbia, that people can be numbered in the hundreds of thousands in a few years, where we now can find only a few hundreds. The world is on the eve of great advances which portend the end of discontent and the ushering in of a longer and brighter day of peace."
>
> —The *Vancouver Daily Province*, March 15, 1922

Radio did not fulfill these worthy but utopian hopes, in British Columbia or anywhere else. Nevertheless, the new medium of radio broadcasting had an undeniable effect on the social fabric of the province. It brought the outside world to the small towns of the interior, and its popularity in Vancouver reflected the city's growing metropolitan stature.

It is difficult today to assess the role that radio played during the first half of this century. During the Depression, it was the primary source of entertainment for millions of people. It made stars of the entertainers of the day and brought them into everyone's living room. As the medium matured, it also enabled audiences for the first time to hear important events as they were taking place. Among these were the destruction of the airship *Hindenburg*; J. Frank Willis' marathon coverage of the rescue efforts at the 1936 Moose River Mine cave-in; the abdication speech of Edward VIII; and the daily progress of the Second World War. Long before these events, however, British Columbians were also listening to stations in their own region.

When the Canadian government began to license broadcasting stations, the Department of Marine and Fisheries held the licensing authority along with its regulatory and operational responsibilities in marine communications. The Radiotelegraph Regulations provided for various types of licences, including categories for "Private Commercial Broadcasting Stations," "Amateur Broadcasting Stations," "Experimental Stations" and "Technical or Training School Stations."

There was also a category for home receivers. Until 1953, anyone in Canada owning a radio receiver was required by law to purchase a licence annually. The receiver licensing figures reflect the popularity of radio in British Columbia during the twenties, particularly in Vancouver. In September 1922, for instance, there were 103 licensed receivers in Vancouver to Toronto's 110. By April 1931 the Vancouver licences numbered 20,922.

During the same period, at least 20 radio stations were licensed to operate in British Columbia. Development really began in 1922 and 1923, when there was a surge in the licensing of stations all across Canada. Many stations were started by hardware stores or radio suppliers who sought to popularize the new medium and increase their sales. Some were fostered by churches in the hope of enlarging their congregations. A few were the offspring of newspapers who saw radio as a novel extension of their own publications. The concept of radio broadcasting as a separate commercial enterprise took time to develop.

THE PIONEER STATIONS

In March 1922, British Columbia's earliest licensed broadcasting stations commenced operation in Vancouver. Ironically, all three stations were products of the competition among the city's main daily newspapers—the *Province*, the *Sun* and the *World*. The *Sun* was the first to announce its plans for a radio station. It made the announcement on March 7, and throughout the following week referred daily to the importance of radio and the value of the forthcoming "wireless service." It must have been quite a shock to the *Sun* when the *Province* went on the air first on March 13, announcing its triumph the following day. The *Sun*, not to be cheated out of a milestone, stated on March 15 that its own station had been operating "for several days." A full week later, the *World* went on the air with Vancouver's "First Real Radio Service."

Each of the three papers claimed to be operating the first and only radio station in the city, blithely ignoring the existence of the other two. For a time, both the *Sun* and the *World* offered eight hours of programming per day. The demands of such ambitious schedules were apparently too much for them, however. By the end of 1922, the *Province*—with its much more modest broadcast schedule—was the only Vancouver newspaper in the radio field.

CJCE, CFCQ and CKMO Vancouver

The *Vancouver Sun* radio station was designated CJCE and operated by Vancouver Sun Radio Phones Ltd. This company was created in conjunction with the Sprott-Shaw School of Commerce, which was offering courses in radio and wireless telegraphy. Wireless instructor Bruce Arundel and president R. J. Sprott were key figures in establishing the station. The transmitter was located on one of the upper floors of the Tower Building—later known as the Bekins Building and still later as the Sun Tower—at the corner of Beatty and Pender in downtown Vancouver. There are indications that the Sprott-Shaw School was broadcasting on a casual basis even earlier than 1922. Albert Carrick remembers studying with Bruce Arundel prior to that time.

ALBERT CARRICK: The Vancouver School Board had night classes [in radio]. Bruce Arundel of Sprott-Shaw ran the class; that's how we got to know him. There was only a few of us, so we did it right in CJCE. We used to stay [after class] and help Bruce at CJCE. We used to play around with different tests and stuff like that. Bruce showed us different things. It didn't cost Sprott-Shaw anything, 'cause we were learning from it anyhow.

I put in time there for about three years. It wasn't a high-powered station; it was approximately ten watts. But do you know, we got across the Rockies to Calgary regular[ly], and we got down as far as 'Frisco on that ten-watter. There was no set time for broadcasts. It was just as we or Bruce saw fit.

> We put on the first live program in Vancouver. They got a piano up there, and a lady, and a man played the piano for the lady. I don't know how they got the piano way up in there, but that was the first real live show in Vancouver.

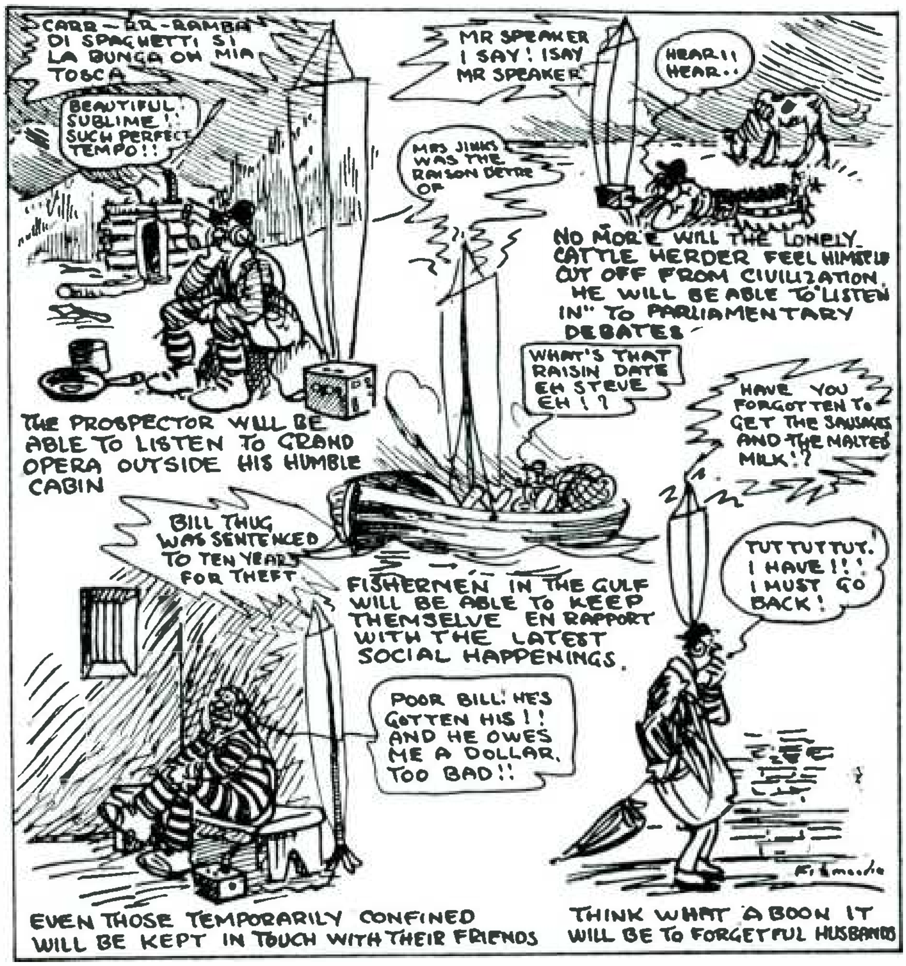
Mr. Carrick may be referring to the *Sun* broadcast of March 22, 1922, which featured two acts from the Pantages Theatre. Miss Emma Heit sang "Maytime" with piano accompaniment, and the "syncopated orchestra" of G. Wesley Johnson played "The Sheik." The *Sun*, ever eager to claim a "first," said that Miss Heit was "the first artist in Canada to sing into the radiophone."

On March 25, the *Sun* rose to new heights of self-adulation by publishing a telegram from Prime Minister W. L. Mackenzie King. The message congratulated the *Sun* on starting "the first radiophone service in Canada [sic]."

A new transmitter was put into service in mid-April. At around the same time, the responsibility of operating the station was assumed by the Sprott-Shaw Radio Company. Though the *Sun* continued to sponsor daily programming, it probably recognized that the radio school, with its student body as manpower, was in a much better position to run a broadcasting operation.

This cartoon appeared on the front page of the Vancouver Daily Province *on March 15, 1922—two days after the* Province *itself started broadcasting.*

FILLING A LONG-FELT WANT


CARR—RR-RAMBA DI SPAGHETTI SI LA BUNGA OH MIA TOSCA
BEAUTIFUL SUBLIME! SUCH PERFECT TEMPO!!
MR SPEAKER I SAY! I SAY MR SPEAKER
HEAR!! HEAR..
MRS JINKS WAS THE RAISON DETRE OF
NO MORE WILL THE LONELY CATTLE HERDER FEEL HIMSELF CUT OFF FROM CIVILIZATION. HE WILL BE ABLE TO "LISTEN IN" TO PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
WHAT'S THAT RAISIN DATE EH STEVE EH!?
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN TO GET THE SAUSAGES AND THE MALTED MILK!?
THE PROSPECTOR WILL BE ABLE TO LISTEN TO GRAND OPERA OUTSIDE HIS HUMBLE CABIN
BILL THUG WAS SENTENCED TO TEN YEARS FOR THEFT
FISHERMEN IN THE GULF WILL BE ABLE TO KEEP THEMSELVE EN RAPPORT WITH THE LATEST SOCIAL HAPPENINGS.
TUT TUT TUT. I HAVE!!! I MUST GO BACK!
POOR BILL! HES GOTTEN HIS!! AND HE OWES ME A DOLLAR. TOO BAD!!
EVEN THOSE TEMPORARILY CONFINED WILL BE KEPT IN TOUCH WITH THEIR FRIENDS
THINK WHAT A BOON IT WILL BE TO FORGETFUL HUSBANDS

By mid-1923, another station was broadcasting from the premises of Radio Specialties Ltd. on Dunsmuir Street, one of the first firms in Vancouver to stock radio components. It was owned by Major J. C. Dufresne, who hired young Milton Stark as his helper.

MILTON STARK: [Major Dufresne] had an elementary knowledge, gained through reading a book or something, and he was buying components from the trade magazines he bought, or maybe from Seattle. He was somewhat retired. He was taking life very leisurely and was definitely a sweetheart, but he wasn't out to [do anything] other than to keep himself occupied. He thought of me as a wizard because of the little things that I would get done.

The occasional customer was the chap that abashedly said that his son had sent him in; they didn't want to admit that they were playing around with this new fad, you see. There was a man named Roy Brown whose [knowledge of] radio was deep from instinctive technical abilities or gained through some work from Seattle. He noticed that I was working on something that was a little extraordinary to the regular run of the business. I told him I was building a transmitter. "How powerful?" I said, "Well, I can't spend too much money, and the Major isn't that excited about it; a ten-watt transmitter." I [took] a record player with a horn, and I took a microphone and put it in front of the horn and gave music to the audience that was listening.

Radio Specialties Ltd. was licensed in 1923 to broadcast as CFCQ on a 40-watt transmitter. Despite the discrepancy in transmitter outputs, it seems likely that CFCQ was Stark's station. Both CJCE and CFCQ were operated by their respective owners into 1924. At some point, however, the Sprott-Shaw School stopped broadcasting as CJCE and assumed the call letters issued to Dufresne's store.

ROSS MACINTYRE: They had two or three licences in there [at the school] in a very short time. They closed the station down, sent their licence back, and then decided to start it again.

CYRIL TROTT: Major Dufresne was the owner and operator of CFCQ. He was down on the corner of Howe and Dunsmuir in his radio parts store. CFCQ was his licence call, and I have the feeling that [station] moved from there to the Sprott-Shaw School under Bruce Arundel.

CFCQ became CKMO in 1928. The station enjoyed something of a symbiotic relationship with the Sprott-Shaw School, providing operational experience for the eager students who functioned as unpaid personnel.

DON HORNE: Sprott-Shaw ran a wireless telegraphy school and a so-called broadcasting school. To get into the broadcasting group, you had to get your second-class wireless certificate first. They gave you this great technical course to become a wireless operator, and you eventually took the government exams. The broadcast course included the opportunity to operate their transmitter and to do some studio work in announcing—unpaid, of course. But anyway, it was a tremendous thrill.

ERNIE ROSE: The school owned CKMO as sort of a—it wasn't a sideline, really, I guess. I never could figure out which made the most money to keep the other one going.

EARLE CONNOR: I was introduced to broadcasting [through] CKMO. I was hired as an announcer. Within three weeks, I was chief engineer, because the chap who had been engineer decided he could make more money if he went back as a wireless operator on the rumrunners. I stayed with them for about a year. [The pay was] $45 a month—when I got it. Occasionally the Sprotts would go off on their yacht in the summertime, and we'd work three months before they'd come back and sign the cheques.

Don Horne: Since at small stations in those days, everybody had to be on the air, [the school] tried very hard with some of us. They had a voice coach and they went through the "How now brown cow?" routine and all that stuff. I suppose some of the fellows did turn out to be pretty good announcers; I know I didn't. But you had a good chance to be on the air.

CKMO had studios on Robson Street, not far off Granville. They were above Welch's candy store where they made the candy. On a hot summer evening, you opened the control room door and this almost nauseating smell of sweet chocolate came pouring out. The other place I worked was their transmitter, which was on top of the Bekins Building. When you started out with this experience business, they put you on a request program from midnight till two in the morning [at the transmitter]. That was a lot of fun, of course; people would phone in and yak and what not. But the people that owned the building wouldn't let us use the elevators, so we had to walk up 17 flights to work before midnight, and walk down 17 after. Which was fine at the time, but when I was about 19, a little bit after that, one lung collapsed when I was walking home from work. The doctor said that probably it was the 17 floors up and down every night that did it in.

CKMO was connected with the Sprott-Shaw School until 1955, when it was sold and became CFUN. During the 1960s, it operated briefly as CKVN with an all-news format.

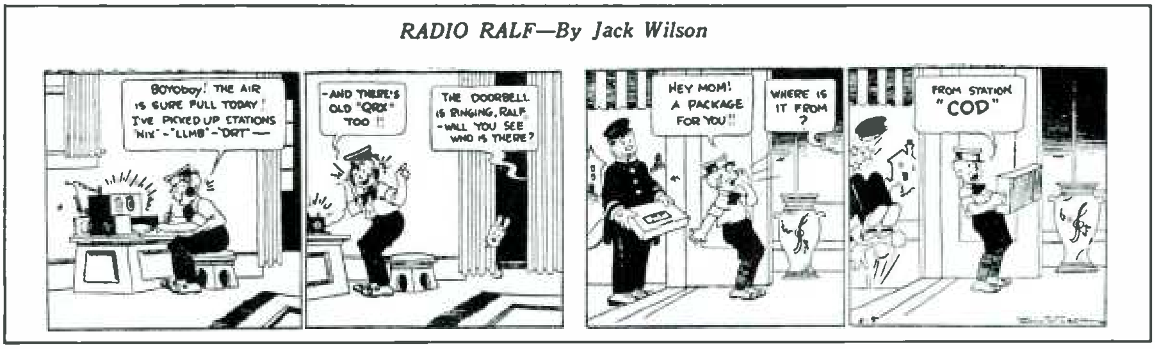
CKCD and CHLS Vancouver

The *Vancouver Daily Province* made its inaugural broadcast of news and music on the evening of March 13, 1922. The original transmitter, referred to as "Station FE," was provided by the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of Canada and housed at the Merchant's Exchange in the Metropolitan Building at 815 West Hastings. The location, the designation, and the unusually low frequency used suggest that "Station FE" was someone else's transmitter, pressed into service by the *Province*.

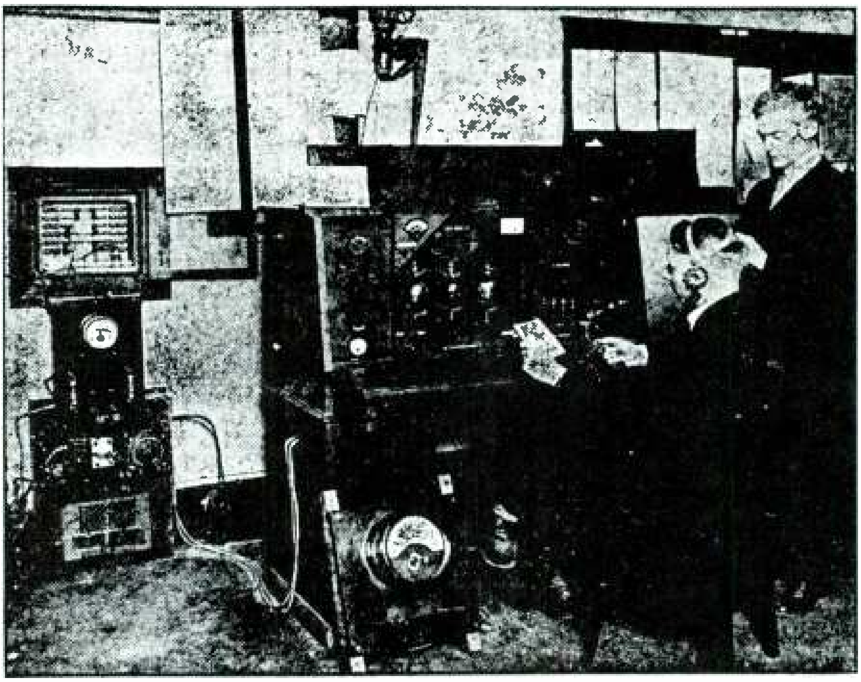
Ross MacIntyre: They were operating on roughly 2,000 metres.* It was an old World War I transmitter that had been used as a base station for communication in the Signal Corps. I believe that it was a so-called "portable," and I suppose you could call it portable; it had handles on it. But it was about the size of an average upright piano, so even in those days we got quite a laugh when they said it was portable.

* Most contemporary stations were broadcasting at 400 to 500 metres, a much higher frequency range.

Radio Ralf *was one of a number of radio-oriented comic strips syndicated to newspapers in the early 1920s.*


RADIO RALF—By Jack Wilson
BOYOboy! THE AIR IS SURE FULL TODAY! I'VE PICKED UP STATIONS "NIX"-"LLMB"-"DRT"—
-AND THERE'S OLD "QRX" TOO !!
THE DOORBELL IS RINGING, RALF -WILL YOU SEE WHO IS THERE?
HEY MOM! A PACKAGE FOR YOU!!
WHERE IS IT FROM ?
FROM STATION "COD"

SENDING NEWS BY WIRELESS TELEPHONE



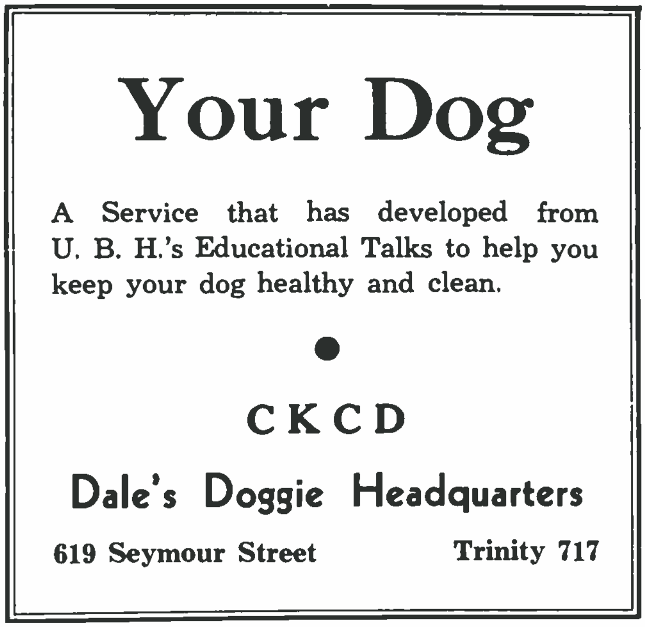
THIS is The Daily Province Merchants Exchange radiophone sending set which broadcasts news and music each night to all points in British Columbia. The set works on a 2000-metre wave-length and cost $7000 to install. High River, Alberta, 600 miles away, and with mountain barriers intervening, has picked up messages from this apparatus. Mr. W. Tricker is the operator who sends forth the news.

With the success of its trial broadcasts, the station was licensed in June as CKCD. A week later, a new transmitter went into service at the *Province* offices on Hastings, and the frequency and call letters were changed. For a year, the station operated as CFCB—a licence which was officially held by the Marconi Company. In June 1923, the call letters reverted to CKCD, reflecting another change in frequency. It would appear that the *Province* had some arrangement with the Marconi Company in order to make use of the most favourable frequency.

The *Province* moved to larger quarters at Cambie and Hastings in 1924. With studios on the second floor of the building, CKCD settled into a schedule of hour-long evening broadcasts that featured local musical talent and popular recordings, as well as nightly newscasts. In the late twenties, another station was licensed to share their facilities—an accepted practise in radio's formative years. The new station, CHLS, took over the entertainment function while the newscasts continued on CKCD.

JOHN AVISON: CHLS was exactly the identical station to the *Province*-owned CKCD—in the same building, using the same studios, on the same frequency. It was called a "phantom" station. All the commercial programs were on CHLS. CKCD only entered the picture for news from Earle Kelly, a very famous news announcer of the day.

CHLS was operated by W. G. Hassell, who was known as "Uncle Billy." He told dog stories, raised dogs, and sold dog food. My position at the station was music director, for the sum of $25 a month, and on Saturday mornings I had to go around to various stores and count the cans of Dale's Doggie Dinner on the shelves as a kind of inventory.



Your Dog

A Service that has developed from U. B. H.'s Educational Talks to help you keep your dog healthy and clean.

●

CKCD

Dale's Doggie Headquarters

619 Seymour Street Trinity 717

W. G. "Uncle Billy" Hassell, manager of CHLS and CKCD, used the station to promote his dog-breeding interests, as this 1934 ad indicates.

[Hassell was] a great, bluff sort of happy fellow. He was a very forceful character, very convincing, and he became very popular with Vancouver audiences. The only thing is that sometimes, in the middle of a public broadcast from the Broadway Theatre, he would insist on telling stories about collie dogs, with the idea of selling dogs and dog food. He also gave singing lessons in the studio in the daytime. I don't know what his background was, vocally. We had quite a number of very young kids who were working [on CHLS], primarily because Hassell was very careful with a buck. He got as many free children [on the air] as he could.

LAURIE IRVINE: There were two *Vancouver Daily Province* call letters. CKCD was the news station, and when they came on the air the first thing that came on was old Earle Kelly, [who] did a 15-minute newscast. At the end of his newscast, they signed off and paused 30 seconds and introduced the same transmitter with new call letters. Then they proceeded to do live music programming for the next couple of hours with a wonderful music outfit called the Calangis family—George Calangis and a bunch of his sisters—and John Avison, who played the organ and piano. The others played mandolins and violins. They'd do a half-hour show as "the Gypsy violins." John Avison would do a half-hour organ recital while they had a rest, and they'd come back and play some other instruments as a completely new ensemble. It was fabulous.

JOHN AVISON: I played the piano, played an organ which we brought out of the old Maple Leaf Theatre, and the vibraphone. As a matter of fact, that was how I first met my wife [Angelina Calangis]. The piece was a stirring number for violin and vibraphone called "Indian Love Call." That must have stirred, possibly, our first acquaintanceship.

The whole [Calangis] family doubled on various instruments and provided an orchestra. Their father died when they were all very young, and my mother-in-law was left with six children. Her brother took over the family, and he thought that they might be usefully employed and making money. They purchased mandolins, violins and a cello, and they were formed into an act. Because of the economic situation of the family, one girl would take lessons on violin and teach all the rest of the family violin.

George would take mandolin, and he would teach the rest of the family mandolin; I think he also got the bulk of the banjo lessons. Geneva, the eldest of the family, was the official pianist, and she taught them all piano.

They got the idea of going down to Hollywood, and they did very well down there. They were a staff group on KNX in Hollywood and they played all over California. But [the U.S. government] brought in a law which had something to do with immigration, and I think they were given as short a time as 48 hours to leave California. They came back to Vancouver and they found this job as a group at CHLS with Hassell. They played everything. As a matter of fact, they were extremely popular and they were very, very gifted; no doubt about it.

We [also] had George Boyd and Myrtle Thompson; they sang all Scottish songs. Another fellow, by the name of Murphy, sang Irish songs. The Merrymakers provided the western music. We had a male quartet, and [Jack Ammon] and his mother had a comedy routine called "Millie and Lizzie, the Cockney Charladies."

[My job] required *so* many things. You had to be the music director and play the piano for the singers. The programs were never timed, so that if you were short at the end of the program, the announcer would lie by saying that some dear old lady from White Rock had just phoned up and wanted George Boyd to sing the song he had sung first on the program. In between, I was leaping up on a chair. We had a German chiming clock on the wall, and I used to put the hands up to the chiming position on the hour. The chimes would ring out, and following that I would leap back down to the microphone and say, "Golden chimes measure the passing hours, courtesy of Shores Jewellers."

Bill Buckingham was in a series called "Marston of the Mounties." I used to announce that show. I also used to do the opening of the show—an imitation of horses' hooves, which you did by pounding on your [chest]. That was a long-running series. I don't remember who wrote it. I don't think anybody would admit it; it was pretty dreary!

ESTHER ROUGHTON: A woman named Nora Shell wrote "Marston of the Mounties," and that was a great hit with all the kids, of course. [My husband] Alan was on that all the time. He and Bill Buckingham and Alan Young all did different parts. Alan would take three parts, and Alan Young—who did very well down in America*—he took two or three parts. If they needed anybody to scream, they used to take my daughter along; she was a good screamer.

JOHN AVISON: Christmas time was a really exciting time at CKCD because we were raising money for poor families, and everybody contributed to this. They would bid certain amounts of money—like the modern telethon—but for somebody to do something: for the mayor of the city to sing a song, or something of the sort. Quite a bit of money was raised for this Christmas fund. I think they bought hampers with the money and distributed it to poor people. There were a lot of unemployed; it was the beginning of very, very bad times.

In 1933, the granting of phantom licences was discontinued, and the commercial programming on CHLS became part of CKCD's schedule. The Pacific Broadcasting Company took over the operation of CKCD the following year with W. G. Hassell as manager. The station remained popular throughout the thirties.

When the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, in its regulatory capacity, decided to reduce the number of stations in Vancouver, CKCD was asked to relinquish its licence. The station ceased operation in February 1940.

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* Young starred in NBC radio's "The Alan Young Show" and television's "Mr. Ed."

CFYC Vancouver

In some respects, CFYC is the most interesting and unusual of the early Vancouver radio stations. Its six-year lifespan was quite eventful and ended in an important controversy. The station started broadcasting under the sponsorship of the *Vancouver Daily World* on March 23, 1922. The *World's* front page offered tips on setting up home receivers, which the paper could also provide at nominal cost. The receivers were supplied by Trans-Canada Radiovox Ltd., the company that built and operated the station for the *World*. The licence was in fact issued to the head of the radio company, Brigadier-General Victor Wentworth Odlum.* The transmitter was on the top floor of the David Spencer Ltd. department store, and Spencer's music department provided records for daily phonograph concerts.

One might well assume that, with the support of three businesses, CFYC was destined to endure. But in little more than a month, the station's daily schedules vanished from the pages of the *World*. Odlum retained the licence, however. In 1924 his offices were in the Mercantile Building on Homer Street, which was officially listed as the location of CFYC. It was probably at this time that the station was taken over by Roy R. Brown. An enigmatic figure, Brown seems to have been very active in early Vancouver radio. In 1924 he was president of Commercial Radio Ltd., which also had offices in the Mercantile Building.

In April 1924, a CFYC transmitter was set up in the First Congregational Church at Thurlow and Pendrell in the West End. According to Dr. A. E. Cooke's unpublished memoir on church broadcasting, Roy Brown installed the equipment to broadcast a concert and offered to carry Cooke's Sunday sermons as well. The *Province* church pages show that the the April 13 services at First Congregational were broadcast "courtesy of the Radio Corporation of Vancouver," yet another radio company. By that time, Milton Stark had been hired by Roy Brown to build radio sets for sale, and the station became one of his responsibilities.

Milton Stark: There was a 25-watt transmitter, purchased from Northern Electric, and I found the church on Pendrell Street amenable to letting me put the transmitter into a closet they had and use the salon for a broadcasting element. I operated the station, announced, played records most the time, and got the dictionary so I could pronounce "andante cantabile" correctly. I picked popular music and I picked classical music. I don't recall whether we bought the records or if they were loaned to us, but I must have done some chiselling that way.

I could leave my station on the air so there was a squeal they [the listeners] could pick up on their sets and wait for something to happen. To make things happen, I got a [telephone] line into the Alexandra Dancing Academy [later the Alexandra Ballroom] on Robson Street [at Hornby]; it was a peppy place. I put two microphones [there], set them up with a remote control amplifier, and left the station on the air and announced [from the Academy]. I hoped everybody was listening; until I got back to the station, I couldn't tell. Len Chamberlain and his orchestra used to come in after about 11 or 12 o'clock to broadcast over the air.

I made acquaintanceship on the air with CFCN in Calgary. There was a chap at CFCN [named] Bert Lake. After midnight I used to use our station to talk to him. My girlfriend was living in Calgary; [Lake] would relay messages to her, and she'd relay messages back to me. I'd call her "Jack Benjamin," and I never thought anybody would recognize I was romancing. We got letters from all over the continent, asking how the romance was coming along and so forth. That was fun. And the minister [Dr. Cooke] was absolutely astounded because of the monies that were coming in from the people that were listening to the services.

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* Odlum was a prominent Vancouver businessman—former part-owner of the *World* and later owner of the *Vancouver Star*. He served a term as MLA for Vancouver and was a member of the CBC's original Board of Governors.

The success of the religious services on CFYC led the First Congregational Church to establish its own radio station, CKFC. While the small CFYC transmitter was serving the church, the station was also being used by a Washington logging company that was operating in British Columbia. George Moore of the Merrill and Ring Lumber Company apparently used a large transmitter licensed to CFYC to communicate with the firm's logging camps. This transmitter was originally installed at Brown's offices in the Mercantile Building, but another location was eventually chosen.

Milton Stark: Merrill and Ring got keen, real keen. Moore financed Brown to build a 500-watt station. We mounted it, with a huge wooden post for the antenna, in Burnaby near the Interurban [Railway] track. I got up many a morning to meet Mr. Moore around 6 o'clock at the station. And he would relay messages; he couldn't get any response back, but he could tell by the action that they were hearing him, you see. So he was able to assist them constantly.

Ross MacIntyre: Roy Brown also built a couple of transmitters for Merrill and Ring. One of them was located at Duncan Bay, which is [near] Campbell River on [Vancouver] Island; the other, at Theodosia Arm on the mainland side of the channel up that way. So CFYC used to be used, part-time, for point-to-point communications. We did all this in the broadcast band, of course. Try and get away with it these days! But that was actually done.

On October 21, 1924, CFYC carried what was probably the first political broadcast in Canada. It was a speech made at the Denman Arena by Prime Minister Mackenzie King, during a tour of the west.

Milton Stark: Mary Ellen Smith [of the B.C. Liberal Party] heard something about [CFYC]. She was on the newspaper route which I was running at the same time. She wasn't seriously interested, just curious. I said, "Mackenzie King is coming and he'll be at the [Denman] Arena. How about broadcasting him?" She said, "Oh, I wouldn't like to lose any audience." But I said, "It'll only cost the $100 that the [telephone company] would charge for putting a line into the arena." She thought it over and said, "I'll go for the $100, but until you get a signal from me, don't put it on the air."

By the time this photo was taken in 1926, First Congregational Church in Vancouver's West End had become Central Presbyterian. The Church housed, in turn, two of Vancouver's earliest stations—CFYC and CKFC. The building was demolished in 1977. (VPL no. 6564)

I had a younger brother in short pants and we set up at the arena, leaving the station on the air at Pendrell Street. People just listened; they waited for something to be broadcast. For a microphone [stand], we borrowed a flower stand from the florist across the street from the arena and stuck that close to the podium. The place was crowded, so [Mary Ellen Smith] gave me a signal to go on the air.

It was a bloody nuisance. [King] didn't stay at the podium; he came over to the mike, because it was closer to the audience, and emphasized his points by hitting the mike—ping, ping! So I sent a little note to Mary Ellen Smith: "Please ask him to stand further away." Then he stood *too* far away, so I sent another note: "Move closer." After he was through, he looked for us with real anger, and she followed him and whispered in his ear. When he came over to us, he just patted our heads and said, "Better luck next time." And I *almost* screamed, "You won't even be in Parliament unless you pay attention to what's going on!"

In the *Evening Sun* the next day, an item credited the broadcast to the Radio Corporation of Vancouver, and said that it was "acknowledged by experts to be one of the most successful broadcasting feats essayed in the Canadian West."

In 1925 or 1926, CFYC entered the final phase of its life under the International Bible Students Association, which later became the Jehovah's Witnesses. As a boy, John Avison played the piano for Bible Students' programs at a studio on Hastings Street.

John Avison: I used to be amused by the fact that the manager of the station was a man with, I think, not a suitable name for a radio station manager: his name was W. J. Tinney.* They had a group called "The Choir of a Million Voices." Of course, they couldn't accommodate a million voices, but this was premised on the fact that they sold the hymn books. They assumed that everybody who bought a hymn book, all across the country, would be joining in. I played the piano for the choir and played solos. The religious part, outside of playing for the choir, was not part of my knowledge of the station at all.

CFYC moved out of the building on Hastings Street to a very large house on Kingsway near Central Park [in Burnaby]. I think that was just about the end of the operation of the station.

In addition to CFYC, the International Bible Students Association was also operating radio stations in Edmonton and Saskatoon and two stations in Toronto. These stations were the focus of a dispute that had a profound effect on the future of Canadian broadcasting. In 1928, the Department of Marine and Fisheries refused to renew the licences of the IBSA stations on the grounds that the Bible Students were using the airwaves to attack other religious groups. Although the government was acting in response to complaints from the public, the number and credibility of the complaints received were questionable. The only significant case of defamatory broadcasting involved two anti-Catholic lectures by a Ku Klux Klan spokesman who had purchased time on the Saskatoon IBSA station. Nevertheless, the licences were not renewed. CFYC Vancouver and its sister stations went off the air in March 1928.

The whole issue was vigorously debated in Parliament and in the press. The government was accused of religious discrimination in the matter, and received a tide of letters and petitions in support of the Bible Students. The controversy led, in the same year, to the creation of a royal commission on Canadian broadcasting led by Sir John Aird. The Aird Commission's recommendations pointed the way to the establishment of the CBC some years later.

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* Tinney was a building contractor. In 1927, CFYC's studio was adjacent to his office in the Arcade Building, a few doors east of the Province Building on Hastings.

The role of Roy R. Brown in the latter half of CFYC's history is not clear. He worked briefly for two other early Vancouver stations, CNRV and CFDC. His own firm, Commercial Radio Ltd., is listed in the 1928 city directory as operating CKWO, an otherwise unknown station. Milton Stark later encountered Brown running the radio repair service of a Seattle department store.

CKFC Vancouver

Vancouver's second religious station also broadcast from First Congregational Church. As previously mentioned, the church's services were first heard over CFYC in April 1924. These broadcasts brought letters from Alberta and the United States, as well as the coast and interior of British Columbia. Dr. A. E. Cooke, the pastor, decided to establish a church-owned station, and used some of his radio time to solicit financial support. Funds were also donated by Vancouver lumber executive Ross Peers and W. C. Woodward of Woodward's stores. Roy Brown installed a 50-watt transmitter and a licence was obtained under the call sign of CKFC.

The new station went on the air on September 7, 1924. Cooke based his sermon of dedication on Deuteronomy 4:36: "Out of heaven He made thee to hear His voice, that He might instruct thee." Cooke later wrote:

> . . . the radio CKFC was used three times every Sunday, at both morning and evening services and also at the Sunday Afternoon Forum. Over it the discussions of religious subjects and social problems by outstanding leaders and speakers from all over Canada and the British Empire and the United States were broadcasted . . . . It was efficiently operated by four young men of the Congregational Church until the United Church of Canada came into being in June 1925.

The United Church of Canada was formed by an amalgamation of two-thirds of the Presbyterian Church with the Congregational and Methodist Churches. The remaining third of the Presbyterian Church continued independently, receiving First Congregational Church as partial compensation for property lost in the merger. It was renamed Central Presbyterian and continued to house CKFC. At about the same time, Cyril Trott became involved with the station. Trott ran his own business—Radio Service Engineers—and operated CKFC on behalf of the church from 1925 to 1936.

CYRIL TROTT: In 1925, the man operating the station was James Wilson Spence. I worked with him for a period of months, and then he had to leave for Australia. So I had the job of operating the station, making the announcements, and introducing the church programs. That was my job from then on.

In 1929, we moved the station to Chalmers United Church at 12th and Hemlock.* We also [started] the shortwave station, VE9CS, which had an output of two watts and carried the church services up through the interior of British Columbia and down to California. We had [telephone] lines installed to different churches throughout Vancouver, and each church would take part for possibly a month to two months at a stretch. We'd broadcast their morning and evening services.

We did most of the afternoon programs from Chalmers United Church. Down in the basement, one of the classrooms was set aside; we just pulled some curtains around it and that was our studio. We'd do our programs for the Women's Christian Temperance Union and some of the Sunday school programs [there]. When we were through, we'd take our microphone back up to the top of the church. The transmitter and the record player were all in one little room at the top of the stairs.

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* In 1928, Central Presbyterian Church was licensed to operate a radio station under the call sign CHPC. Nothing further is known about this station.

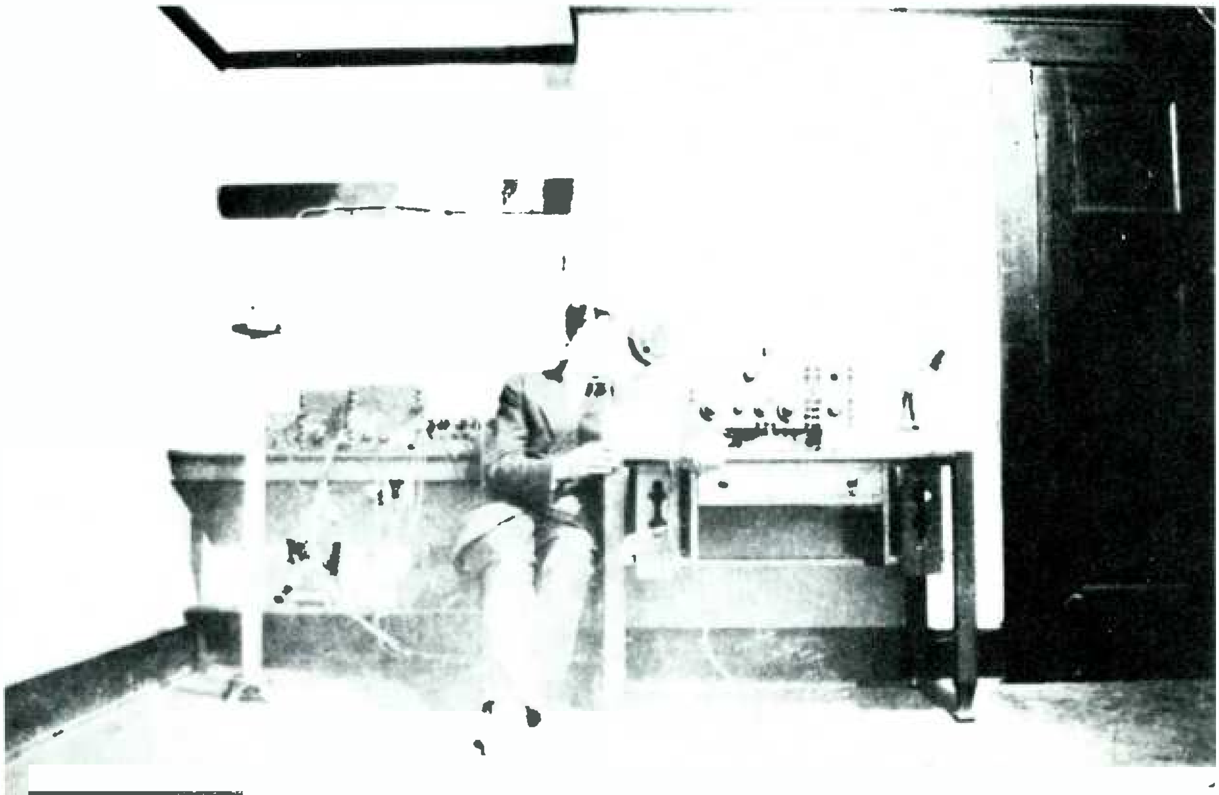
I was paid $15 a month for operating the station for them. They gave me the privilege of making very short announcements [for my company]. I would go on and say, "If at any time you need your radio repaired, please call Radio Service Engineers Limited." We used to have an hour and a half program each afternoon, and I'd probably put one in about every half an hour. That was the only advertising on the station. It was an informal way that we received benefit. At the time, I didn't realize how much benefit we were receiving from it. It wasn't until some years later that I realized how many people *did* listen to that program.

CKFC and its shortwave counterpart, VE9CS, remained under the direct control of the United Church intil 1936, when they were leased to the Standard Broadcasting Company. The company agreed to carry the scheduled church broadcasts and sell the balance of the time to approved sponsors. The shortwave operation continued as CKFX. Laurie Irvine was the engineer and Ian Clark was the manager.

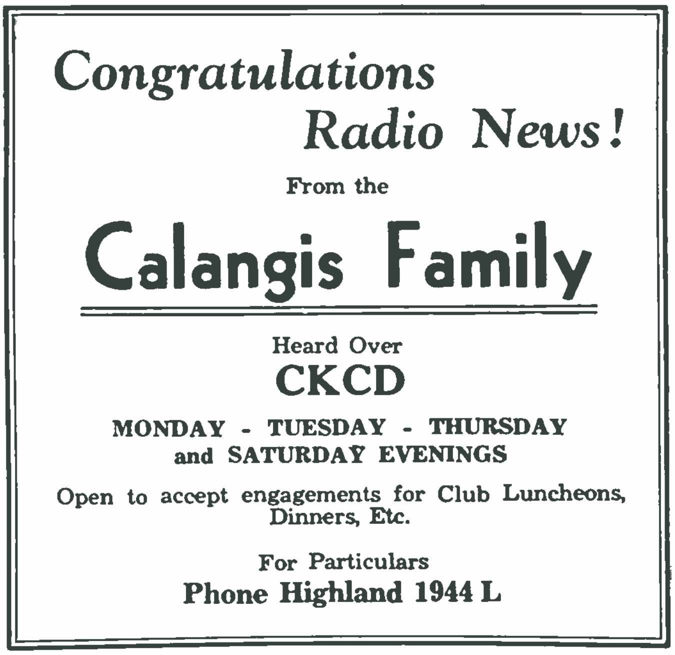
LAURIE IRVINE: The first time I saw the transmitter—literally a breadboard transmitter, built out of the Amateur Radio Relay League handbook—I nearly went home. It was just unbelievable, but there it was. We ended up with studios and offices in the Stock Exchange Building in downtown Vancouver, and a transmitter in North Vancouver, of all places. We were still sharing time [with CKMO], and we ran this shortwave station. What for, I don't know, because the audience was nil.

IAN CLARK: We went into a wider range of programming. We were going into more of a regular commercial station than what was held before. We had advertising on, we had local news and so on and so forth. We stayed pretty close to running quality non-religious programming. The lightest we ever got would be songs by Nelson Eddy and Jeanette MacDonald; we ran a lot of symphonies and so on.

Cyril Trott with the broadcasting equipment of CKFC at Central Presbyterian Church in 1925. Trott later moved the station to Chalmers United Church at 12th and Hemlock. (PABC no. 95730)



In 1937, the Standard Broadcasting Company was taken over by the Sun Publishing Company. CKFC and CKFX moved into offices in the Sun Tower two floors below their competitor, CKMO. Like CKCD, CKFC was eventually asked by the government to relinquish its licence in order to improve the cluttered situation on Vancouver's airwaves. When the station went off the air in 1940, CKWX assumed the commitment of carrying United Church broadcasts. CKWX also took over CKFX, which today still simulcasts the station's programming on the shortwave band.



Congratulations
Radio News!
From the
Calangis Family

Heard Over
CKCD
MONDAY - TUESDAY - THURSDAY
and SATURDAY EVENINGS
Open to accept engagements for Club Luncheons, Dinners, Etc.
For Particulars
Phone Highland 1944 L

CFDC Nanaimo/ CKWX Vancouver

One of the most frequently repeated stories of early broadcasting in British Columbia tells of the radio station that Arthur "Sparks" Holstead started in Nanaimo and moved to Vancouver. Stanley Goard provides a detailed first-person account of the beginnings of CKWX.

STANLEY GOARD: [The Sparks Company was] an automotive-electrical place at Wallace and Fitzwilliam Street [in Nanaimo], operated by Arthur Holstead and Bill Hanlon. Both these fellows had been employees at the powder works [the Giant Powder Co.] at Nanoose Bay. Sparks was a good electrician; he picked up the name "Sparks" there. He worked as an automotive electrician, on extracurricular activity, for Weeks Motors in Nanaimo, before opening his shop with Bill Hanlon; I think that was about 1920 or '21. They were Willard Distributors—Willard batteries— and they also carried the parts for magnetos and generators and starters. [They were] the people where everybody went; they just had a good business.

That's where I went to work for Sparks at $8 a week. Because I'd had an interest in wireless, it wasn't hard for Sparks to kind of appreciate what I knew about wireless. And about that time the word "radio" was beginning to be bandied about. I got acquainted with a young fellow by the name of King Cavalsky. He was out of school and looking for a job, and he'd been doing pretty much what I'd been doing—fixing up receivers and things. He'd got a little further along than I had in my day. He invited me over to his house and I heard my first sound of voice and music over the air in his place. He'd got the thing rigged up and he was picking up a Seattle station. And it left an impression. It startled me. It kind of came home to me, I guess, at that time.

On one of Sparks' trips to Seattle, he came back with a ten-watt Westinghouse Model TF transmitter. This got us thinking broadcasting, so Arthur Holstead applied for a licence and received the call letters CFDC [in 1923]. To put this transmitter on the air, we got King Cavalsky and put him on the payroll. From the Sprott-Shaw wireless school in Vancouver we got a fellow by the name of Jack Allen; Jack was glad to come over and help us put together the transmitter. We got the thing all set up and going in business. King left for the telephone company. Jack Allen's wife—an English war bride—got homesick for England, so Jack went back to England.

We ran this station mostly in the evening, after we shut down the shop; we did this as extracurricular activity. We borrowed records from the G. F. Fletcher Music Company and gave them credit on the air. We never did any advertising, never solicited any business for ourselves; it just wasn't thought about, I guess.

After Cavalsky and Allen left, it left it pretty much for me to go up in the evening [to run the station.] I was a young fellow and I needed to get out around at night a little bit after work. We weren't very dependable, and finally we shut it down. About that time, Sparks decided he wanted an automotive electrical and battery station in Vancouver, so he went over there and opened a place down on 1220 Seymour Street. He was doing it all himself; he left Hanlon in charge at Nanaimo. On one of his visits over to the island, I said, "Sparks, I'd like to come over and work for you in Vancouver." So the conclusion was that I should come over.

Radio was growing more, and more things were going on about the need for batteries and things. We had a few customers that we would go out to and pick up their batteries and charge them for them; [we'd] loan them a battery while it was being done. And this developed to be quite a little project. It ended up that we had three cars on the go; we'd take these batteries out to a customer's house and leave them the rental battery, which they could use while we had their regular battery for charging.

A fellow who was the chairman of the Liberal Party in Vancouver and a customer of ours—an attorney by the name of Ed Sears—knew that we had the transmitter sitting idle over in Nanaimo. He said that if we would bring it over, the Liberal Party would pay the expenses of bringing it over and setting it up in Vancouver, and they would have us broadcast the meetings they had as rallies to ensure their election. They footed the bill and we brought over the equipment. We arranged for a room on the top floor of the Belmont Hotel on Granville Street.

The Belmont Hotel was an advantageous location for the transplanted station. Microphone lines were strung to pick up the orchestra in the basement cabaret and the grand piano on the mezzanine floor, supplementing the programs of phonograph records played upstairs. However, the broadcast licence issued to CFDC made no allowance for the move from Nanaimo to Vancouver, and the station was ordered off the air. Luckily it had already established a coterie of regular listeners who successfully petitioned for its return to the airwaves.

Stanley Goard: When the Liberal activity was over, we were still operating it but just [for] short periods of time. A fellow by the name of Reg Burgess, who'd had experience selling advertising, came to us one day and said, "I think I could sell some advertising on your station." He succeeded, and when we saw some dollars and cents coming into the place, this changed the picture materially.

About that time, a fellow by the name of Ivor Bassett came along. He was a school teacher; very good command of the language, very knowledgeable, had an appreciation for classical music and an ability to just ramble on on a microphone. So he was up on the top floor of the Belmont Hotel, playing the records and announcing the program. He had a voice that "bothered" ladies like nobody's business. I was amazed at the mail that man got, and the things that were *in* the letters that he got. Ivor Bassett really did a lot to help that station go; he just *had* something. I don't know what it was. He wasn't anything to look at; he was a round-faced, red-faced individual, and bald. He didn't look anything like he sounded. I think a lot of the ladies or girls that wrote letters to him, if they saw him, they'd wish they hadn't.

By the end of 1927, CFDC had moved to larger quarters in the Sparks Company's garage on Seymour Street, installed a new 100-watt transmitter and changed its name. The original call letters were too frequently misinterpreted by out-of-town listeners seeking to identify the station; the call letters CKWX were chosen for their distinctive sound.

In 1928, CKWX moved its studios to the top floor of the Hotel Georgia, where they remained until 1941. In 1940 Taylor, Pearson and Carson Limited, an Alberta-based station management company, bought into the operation, eventually taking it over completely. In its heyday, CKWX was the most popular commercial radio station in the province.

Arthur "Sparks" Holstead poses with the original CFDC transmitter in this 1944 publicity photo. Holstead started CFDC in Nanaimo in 1923 and later moved it to Vancouver, where it became CKWX. (Dominion Photo Co.; VPL no. 26363)

CFXC New Westminster/ CJOR Vancouver

Like CKWX, CJOR Vancouver began its career in another municipality and under a different name. It was started in 1924 by Fred Hume of Hume and Rumble Ltd. in New Westminster. Hume was then a New Westminster alderman; he served as mayor from 1933 to 1942, and was mayor of Vancouver from 1950 to 1958.

HOWARD HUME: My father had a store in New Westminster. He was an electrician, and in the store they sold electrical appliances, lighting fixtures and so on. He was persuaded to sell radios, and he found that he couldn't sell radios in New Westminster because there was no local station. So he got a licence and started a radio station called CFXC.

The studio was in the top floor of the Westminster Trust Building. The deal made with the Trust Company was that if the radio station mentioned the name of the building, they got their rent free.* The rooms in the Trust Building consisted of one large room and what I think was a coat closet. The transmitter was in the coat closet and the large room was the studio, [where] they had a piano and some chairs. [The station] was on two hours a night. All the entertainment was live—piano, violins and so on. The performers were amateurs; they liked to broadcast just for fun.

In the early days of radio, it hadn't developed its own technology. The first microphone, for example, was the mouthpiece of a telephone. The broadcasting apparatus itself was breadboard style; the electronic components were mounted on a wooden board about a foot wide and three feet long. The tubes were all sticking up in the open and all the wiring was in the open, which is the traditional breadboard style. It was very low wattage; I think it was only five or ten watts.† It could only reach Vancouver after dark.

After a couple of years of operation, my father decided that radio broadcasting wasn't for him. It was thought that he could stimulate the sales of radio sets with the broadcasting station, and it apparently didn't work out. [In 1926] he sold the radio station and the licence to the Chandler brothers in Vancouver. They bought what equipment there was, and they named it CJOR.

ROSS MACINTYRE: George Chandler bought it for $350—$50 down and $25 a month, the months he had the $25. Nobody made money with radio stations in those days. That's why they could buy one for 350 bucks.

DON LAWS: George Chandler bought it from Fred Hume for something like $600—$300 cash and $25 a month. He moved it from Westminster as close [to Vancouver] as he could in the electoral district which he had to be in, which was New Westminster. The closest he could get to Vancouver was just across the north arm of the Fraser.

CYRIL TROTT: At the time, George asked me to help him install [the transmitter]. We did this out on Sea Island. We installed the transmitter and antenna system at the entrance to the bridge going east from there over onto the mainland. We were able to throw part of our grounding system in the water to make a good grounding system.* Their transmitter was installed in a building that was sitting on piles over the water. When the tide came in, we had water under us.

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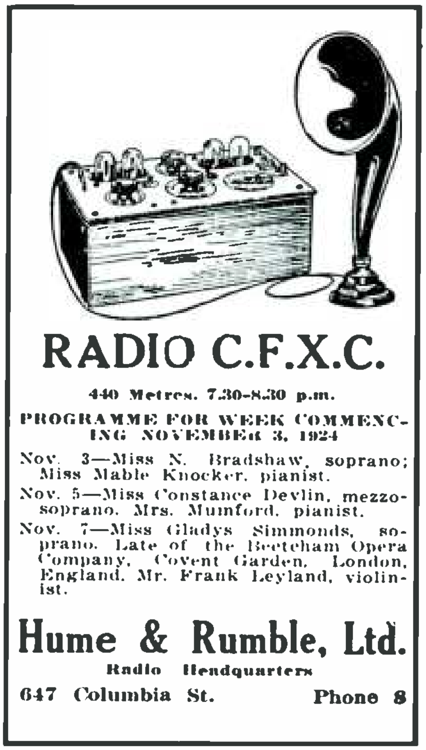
* The Westminster Trust Company also held the licence for CFXC.

† In Ross MacIntyre's words, the power output was "50 watts, sometimes."

Don Laws: He went from 50 watts, I think, to 100. The first antenna out there was a flat-top antenna. Apparently [Chandler] couldn't afford to buy two poles, so he bought one pole and the other end of the antenna was an old cottonwood tree. Of course, when the tree blew in the wind, our signal would be affected because of the movement of the antenna.



RADIO C.F.X.C.

440 Metres. 7.30-8.30 p.m.

PROGRAMME FOR WEEK COMMENCING NOVEMBER 3, 1924

Nov. 3—Miss N. Bradshaw, soprano; Miss Mable Knocker, pianist.

Nov. 5—Miss Constance Devlin, mezzo-soprano. Mrs. Mumford, pianist.

Nov. 7—Miss Gladys Simmonds, soprano. Late of the Beetcham Opera Company, Covent Garden, London, England. Mr. Frank Leyland, violinist.

Hume & Rumble, Ltd.

Radio Headquarters

647 Columbia St. Phone 8

The studio was in the St. Julien Apartments down on Georgia Street; they've changed the name to the Ritz. They had an apartment there. They slept in the bedroom; the kitchen was the engineer's office, with the soldering irons; and the living room was where they broadcast from.

John Avison: I think that the first job I had with a radio station was in the St. Julien Apartment Hotel. I remember they used to charge batteries for something or other in the kitchen. The gramophone was a wind-up type, and we played recordings by putting the microphone down on a piano stool in front of the gramophone.

They had an Ampico player piano in there. One program I remember, where George Chandler's two sisters sang duets [and I played piano], was for the Goodwill Industries. That was an operation to employ unemployed people in repairing boots and shoes and clothing. George's mother, who I think very likely owned the station, came around very often. She was the sort of head lady [at CJOR]; a very charming lady.

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* This is due to the higher electrical conductivity of salt water.

DON LAWS: George Chandler's interest in the station was the transmitter. Anything else was superfluous. You'd go in there and ask him a question about the transmitter and he'd talk for an hour, bring out his slide rule, talk double-talk until you didn't know what he was talking about. You'd go in and talk about a program, he just wasn't interested. But he was a marvelous man, very smart, and very well-versed technically. He received an award from Canadian General Electric as the man who had contributed the most to Canadian radio. He was the first person to get that award who wasn't a qualified engineer. He was a self-made man; he never went to university. He was quite a character to work for. I used to say I knew him better than anybody; I didn't know him at all, you know.

In 1930, CJOR moved its studio into space above the Alexandra Ballroom,and later to Howe Street. For a number of years, its 500-watt transmitter made it the most powerful commercial station in Vancouver. CJOR remained in the hands of the Chandler family until the mid-1960s.

CHCE and CFCL/CFCT, Victoria

Victoria did not lag far behind Vancouver in establishing its first radio station. In 1922, four young Victorians formed the Western Canada Radio Supply Company to build and sell receivers. With Kenneth G. Moffatt as manager, they opened a store on Fort Street that also housed, for a short time, a five-watt station called CHCE. According to G. M. Warnock, one of Moffatt's partners, the transmitter was built on the premises and occupied a small mezzanine balcony. Mr. Warnock writes: "Broadcast entertainment consisted of a stack of three minute assorted vocal and musical favorites popular in that era with no commercials or newscasts that I can recall."

Meanwhile, Dr. Clem Davies of Centennial Methodist Church decided that the church should have its own station. Davies, who had previously broadcast in southern California (and was later heard on CKWX in Vancouver), was determined the station should be in operation by Easter Sunday of 1923. A 500-watt Marconi transmitter was hurriedly purchased and installed, and the station commenced broadcasting on schedule as CFCL.

Eventually the church choir master, George Deaville, became involved in the operation of CFCL. In the *Daily Colonist* of April 1, 1956, Mrs. Bertha Parsons—Deaville's sister—explains how this came about.

> "George really got into radio in a strange way. Dr. Davies had arranged for a temperance worker to make a broadcast. The station engineer at the time did not favour prohibition and vowed that not a single word would be sent over the air.
>
> "To make his threat good, he locked up the studio, pulled out wires, switched tubes around and created no little chaos.
>
> "George broke down the door and stayed up all night working to repair the damage and succeeded in getting both the station and the temperance talk on the air."

In 1924, Dr. Clem Davies left the pulpit of Centennial Methodist and established the Victoria City Temple. George Deaville moved the radio transmitter into downtown Victoria where he continued broadcasting on an amateur basis. A new licence, CFCT, was obtained by Davies for his City Temple broadcasts, although the call sign CFCL may also have been used for a time. In 1926, Deaville purchased the station and began to operate it commercially as CFCT.

Both Don Horne and Dick Batey worked at CFCT in the latter part of the 1930s, a difficult time for the station.

DON HORNE: The station in Victoria was, in many ways, similar to CKMO; neither station had much money. [CFCT] had been, at one time, one of the most powerful stations on the west coast. They had been 500 watts, but I guess the transmitter just eventually wore out. When I arrived in 1936, they were actually using the same little ship transmitter that I had taken my wireless telegraphy tests on in Vancouver. It had been modified as a broadcast station. I really don't know how they were allowed on the air; the quality must have been pretty bad. Of course, you thought at the time it maybe sounded pretty good, but by today's standards it would be terrible.

DICK BATEY: I gather at one stage of the game [Deaville] had a good and reasonably well-run and reasonably profitable radio station. But when I entered the picture in 1939, it was a thoroughly run-down, utterly haywire operation. For example: some of the commercials came on 33⅓ rpm 16-inch disks, and we didn't have a 33⅓ rpm turntable that worked. There was a turntable with a pickup arm, but the motor was broken. We used to turn it by hand. That made for some interesting commercials; the pitch went up and down [as the speed varied]. But you got comparatively [adept] at turning the thing at the right speed with your finger.

CFCT was purchased in 1941 by the Island Broadcasting Company, with shares mainly held by Jim Matson (then owner of the *Daily Colonist*) and Taylor, Pearson and Carson Ltd. The station has operated since then as CJVI, and was until 1950 the sole station in Victoria.

CFJC Kamloops

CFJC, the first commercially viable radio station in the British Columbia interior, commenced operation in May 1926. It was a joint venture of N.S. Dalgleish and Sons, and Weller and Weller Electric. Once again, the objective was to promote the sale of radio receivers. Claire Dalgleish operated the station, which was located in the N.S. Dalgleish department store.

IAN CLARK: They had an area curtained off on the second floor. They had a phonograph, two microphones and a transmitter that was licensed for ten watts; I think it put out about five or six. They held the microphone in front of the phonograph for the music, did their talking and what have you, and that was it. That went on for a time, and then the ownership was transferred to D.S. Dalgleish and Sons [a stock brokerage firm]. Then the Depression struck, and [in 1932] the station was taken over by the *Kamloops Sentinel*. I think they looked at it and said, "This radio thing is starting to be widely accepted, and we might be very wise [to buy it]. It could perhaps have an effect on the operation of our newspaper."

LAURIE IRVINE: Kamloops had a sort of fame—or a little bit of infamy, perhaps—in British Columbia. Everybody in radio in the early days went through Kamloops at one time or another. All kinds of fellows roamed through there. They'd stay a little while and they'd disappear, and then they'd replace them. There'd always be this one bedroom at Ma Frisken's boarding house which had a radio man in it. They just flowed through there, one after another.

I went up there in 1937 and found them with a 100-watt rig and a permit to build a kilowatt [transmitter]. We did that by signing off at 11 o'clock and working all night,

Announcer Doug Homersham (at microphone) introduces an unidentified duet at CFJC Kamloops, ca. 1938. Laurie Irvine is visible through the control room window. (Kamloops Museum & Archives no. 7109)

and the next morning went back to broadcasting again. We had wonderful working conditions, the three-man staff. You could get by with a two-man staff on Sunday by carrying CBC all day. That meant that one fellow could have a day off, so we used to get every third Sunday off. You worked for 20 days and had a day off, and we loved it, just loved it. All this for the magnificent sum of $80 a month. I was there for four years, by which time the staff had grown to an astonishing four people—so we got every *second* Sunday off.

IAN CLARK: After I became manager of the station [in 1943], I went to Mr. White [Ralph White, publisher of the *Kamloops Sentinel*] and said, "I think we have got to get some new equipment. There is one microphone and a pair of earphones that I'd like to keep. But the rest of it, I'd like to throw out altogether—put in brand new equipment." And he went along with it. I wouldn't like to say the station wasn't making a profit at that time, but if it was it would have been a very small profit. So I must say Ralph White and his son, Ronald White, who took over as president of the company after his father passed on, treated me completely fairly. After I was here four or five years they very graciously allowed me to lease the station from them.

There were times when we were definitely in competition with their newspaper. There were some times that the editor would blast me in their editorials, and there were other times, I guess, when I went after them on the air. At no time did they say to me, "You shouldn't do this" or "You shouldn't do that." The radio station was completely independent. With the passage of time, Ronald White brought me in on the ownership of it—ultimately, the complete ownership of it.

CHWK Chilliwack

Jack Pilling: The initial justification for a radio station in Chilliwack was brought about in this manner—and this involved both Casey Wells and Jack Menzies [of Menzies Hardware]. Radio receivers were not very sophisticated then, and the Chilliwack Valley, being surrounded by mountains, made it very difficult with the receivers of that day to bring in signals from outside the valley. Casey and Jack arrived at the conclusion that if they were going to go into sales of radio receivers someone had to have something to listen to. The best way to accomplish this was to establish a little radio station.

Casey Wells: In 1927 I went down to Mission. I knew a radio ham there—Mr. Earl Streeter—quite well, and persuaded him to sell his ham radio broadcasting station. My Dad backed a note for me, and I went down with a cheque and picked up this transmitter from Mr. Streeter. We loaded it into the Model T truck and came back with a complete radio station: miles of wire, 1,000 volts in storage batteries, and an old transmitter off a submarine in the First World War. That was the original equipment in CHWK.

Our schedule then was from twelve to one and from six to seven. From one o'clock on and after seven, I was selling radios. These radio sales generally took till midnight. You couldn't catch the farmers in the daytime. The only time to sell [to a farmer] was after he'd finished the milking and had his supper; then you could go in and talk. In 1929, we were fortunate in getting Jack Pilling to help in the radio department of Menzies Hardware.

Jack Pilling: The radio station was operating more or less one hour a day, between twelve and one. If Casey was out trying to close a sale and 12 o'clock came around, the radio station became a secondary thing and it didn't go on the air that day. The local residents used to [make] bets as to whether it would or would not come on the air between the hours of twelve and one.

Gradually I became the one who had to take over when Casey didn't show up. We had a single turntable—which was hand-wound, believe it or not—and a fairly good selection of the records of that era. You just played records and made comments and tried to pick up a little news here and there—which was very, very difficult—and just filled in the hour as best you were able, and then signed off.

FRASER VALLEY PROGRAMS

OVER

CHWK

"The Voice of the Fraser Valley"

Abbotsford District Hour—Thursdays, 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m
Mission District Hour - - - Fridays, 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Agassiz-Harrison Hour—Wednesdays, 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Chilliwack Valley Hour—Thursdays, 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Tune In To YOUR Program!

It would be about 1932 or '33 that Menzies Hardware decided that they would also go into the furniture business. For that they would require the second story, in which the radio service department and the radio station was located. At the same time, they decided that maybe radio broadcasting was not too profitable a line of business. Casey decided to purchase the stock that Menzies Hardware held, and we cut a hole through the cement wall and moved into the area above the Fashion Bakery.

Through the thirties, there were a number of shifts in the ownership and control of CHWK. Jack Pilling became an equal partner with Casey Wells in 1940.

CKOV Kelowna

In contrast to the many changes of ownership undergone by other radio stations, CKOV has remained in the hands of the same Kelowna family for more than 50 years. The station had its origins in 10AY, a non-commercial operation started in 1928 by the Kelowna Amateur Radio Club. The prime movers at 10AY were George Howard Dunn, a longtime radio enthusiast, and James W. Bromley-Browne. It was Browne who started the commercial outlet, CKOV, in 1931. His widow recalls the genesis of the station.

TRYPHENA BROWNE: My husband was a South Africa [Boer War] veteran and he had a bad heart. When radio came along, he was in bed a lot of the time, unable to move. So I thought the best thing I could do was to get one of these "music boxes"—which was a radio—to amuse him and get him going. He was interested in everything of that sort. I brought this thing into his room and he turned it on.

The one thing he heard that really got him thinking again was a report from the north. The government was trying to find this young Mounted Policeman [who patrolled] a big, big territory. He had married before he went up, and took his wife up. Apparently his wife was going to have a baby, so he sent her back [east]—I believe it was Toronto. Well, this report came over. They were hunting for him up north, but he missed the mail all the time because he was on the trot, and it was slow travelling in those days. They were hoping that somebody—the postmasters and places like that—[would] hold him up to tell him that he had a son. That interested my husband very much; he thought how wonderful it was that people could be caught that way. That started his interest in radio.

A fellow by the name of George Dunn was the city clerk at that time. He had a shortwave set and he was putting on the Anglican Church, because they had a wonderful boys' choir. When I got Big Jim back on his feet again, he and George got their heads together and started to broadcast little concerts on George's set. We had a lot of musical talent here. We had the organist in the United Church and we had this wonderful boys' choir in the Anglican Church. There was a family of [the name of] Kirk, and they played anything and everything; a wonderful, talented family. It grew from there.

George wanted his shortwave, because he liked that best. Jim said, "Come in with me and we'll start a business." Jim would get one of the [commercial] radio licences. George didn't want anything to do with it. He wasn't interested; he had his job and that sort of thing. So Jim went out on his own and he finally got the licence.

We got a wire from Ottawa to say that the licence had gone through. I had a hairdressing business at the time. One day a woman came in, and she wanted to buy a business like mine. She came in and she took up my whole morning asking me, she wanted it so badly. I got in touch with my husband and told him what had happened. He said, "You do just what you like." I thought it over and I talked it over with him, and I said, "I'm going to do it. You start your radio station."

CJAT Trail

EARLE CONNOR: Trail was started as an amateur station. It was put together by a group of radio buffs in Trail that wanted some entertainment. Trail is in a bowl in the mountains, down in the valley of the Columbia; there just isn't any reception of radio in the daytime.

ALAN RAMSDEN: A group of people, I think mostly in the executive and engineering group on "the Hill" [at the Cominco* smelter]—were aware of their own use and need of radio communication. Cominco was using radio from very early on to talk to their mining operations in the far north, and also to keep in contact with their fleet of aircraft, so they had a rather large shortwave operation. They had radio people on their staff, as well as bright electrical engineers. So they went ahead and obtained an amateur licence, which happened to be 10AT ["ten-A-T"]. It was humourously referred to as "One-Oat"—a very small transmitter.†

EARLE CONNOR: They used to volunteer—ran it like some of the university stations are run today. And then somebody got hold of the idea, "Let's go commercial." They bought themselves a 100-watt transmitter and they did [as CJAT].

ALAN RAMSDEN: There were two or three affluent people who were supervisors and that on "the Hill," who got together with some local merchants in Trail and set up a company—Kootenay Broadcasting—and made shares out of it.

EARLE CONNOR: When I got to Trail [in 1935], the mess was horrific. I got in there in a snow storm, and on the way down into town I said to the wife, "I might as well stop in at the transmitter and let 'em know I'm here." It was a discouraging sight. They had the studio in this abandoned building, to start with, and there was junk all over the place. The transmitter was crowded into one little corner of it, and it hadn't been swept, I guess, for six months. The windows were dirty. I came out to the car again and said, "If it wasn't snowing, I think I'd turn around and go back to Vancouver."

Trail was a bit of a challenge. Charlie Smith and I ran that station. We were the only announcers, and we did all the engineering as well. We did all the record shipping, and we wrote a lot of the scripts. We did it for three years. In that period, we put up a vertical anntenna; we put a 1000-watt [transmitter] on the air; we moved the studios into a new building; we took a pipe organ out by the roots at the theatre and moved it over to the studio, and [we built] the complete new control equipment. We did it with just the two of us, and kept the station going at the same time.

Until the founding in 1939 of a station in Nelson, CJAT was the only station in southeastern British Columbia. Taylor, Pearson and Carson took on the management of the station in 1937.

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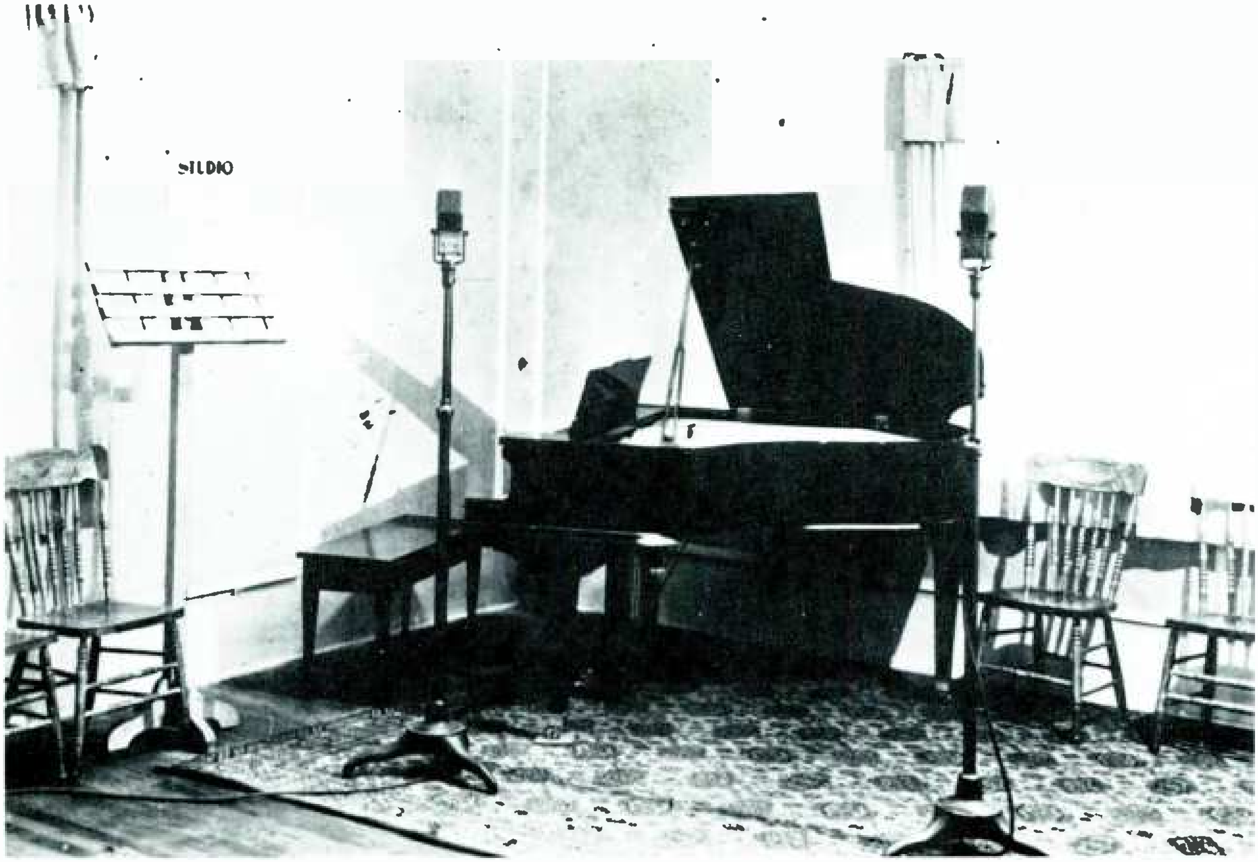
* The Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company.

† 10AT went on the air in December 1931.



Studio at CJAT Trail, ca. 1935. (PABC no. 90559)

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A number of other stations were licensed in the early twenties, mainly in Vancouver. Licences were granted to the Canadian Westinghouse Company (CHOC), the Radio Corporation of Vancouver (CHCA), and the Vancouver Merchants' Exchange (CHCL). However, these stations existed only briefly, if at all. CFVC Courtenay and CJCB Nelson were operated temporarily by merchants selling radios in those communities. Undoubtedly there were other short-lived stations as well. They were the products of radio's sudden popularity, and could never have sustained themselves commercially. Most of them have been forgotten.

HAROLD PAULSON: There was one station in the Province building. A chap by the name of Harry Hooper ran it for a while. He was quite a guy. He used to drive the "Black Maria" in Vancouver—the police wagon. Then he got out of that and he took over this station. I'm telling you, why, it was a harem. You never saw anything like it: the colours, the Tiffany lamps, cushions all over the floor. When I went in, I said, "Gosh, where are the girls?" He spent all kinds of money on this decoration. I think he lasted about six or eight weeks or something, and then he went belly-up. He didn't get any money; nobody came around. I don't know what station that was.

A RICH MAN'S HOBBY

Earle Connor: In those days, radio broadcasting was a rich man's hobby. It wasn't expected to pay. It wasn't until after the Second World War that radio really came into its own. Up until that time, certain stations had been making money; in the middle to late thirties, they started to pick up. But it wasn't really until the '46-'47-'48 period that radio really started to make money.

Although early radio stations were born variously out of public service, hobbyists' enthusiasm, or a desire to sell radios, it was clear the key to their survival was advertising. Since their fortunes were dependent on the patronage of other businesses, they were especially vulnerable during the Depression. The difficulty of sustaining a broadcasting station commercially at such a time was compounded by the newness of radio itself.

Jack Pilling: You have to recognize the situation that existed at that time. As an advertising medium, radio was not recognized. As a matter of fact, in the Chilliwack area there was a very high incidence of merchants who said, "We don't advertise. The farmers here know that we're here, and if they want to do business with us they will come in."

Don Laws: The big trouble with radio advertising was that people believe what they read in the newspaper—at least, the advertiser does. A merchant could put an ad in the newspaper, he could go home and open the paper and read his ad—because he knew it was going to be there—and look at his wife and say, "Look dear, there's our ad. Isn't it nice?" He'd buy a spot on the radio and it was usually on when he was in the store. He'd never hear his announcement; all he got was the bill, and he didn't know if he was getting any results. It was difficult; it was selling an intangible.

Earle Connor: [In Trail,] there was a fair amount of national commercial business. But there was very little local business, because the local merchants—except the ones that had gone in to put the station on the air to start with—didn't believe in radio.

The radio stations faced stiff competition from the well-established newspapers—competition that ranged from the friendly to the openly hostile. In addition, they had to contend with the federal government's severely restrictive advertising regulations. Regulation and competition combined to make things difficult for broadcasters.

Don Laws: Radio does one job, newspapers do another. But the newspapers were afraid that radio was going to take them out of business, which is stupid. Never would. It's a different branch of the media. They were so anti-radio that if we were doing a broadcast—I can remember one case in particular, at the opening of a new wing of St. Paul's hospital; we had our mikes up there, and the speakers were behind it. The press were there, taking pictures of the opening, and [in their photographs] they would etch out the call letters on the microphones so you couldn't tell what station it was.

John Baldwin: Newspapers looked upon the dollar available for advertising as a single unit. Either the newspapers, the billboards or some other known advertising device was going to get all or a portion of that unit. When broadcasting came along, they felt that this was going to further impair their business, and they were not inclined to give you any chances to move into their territory.

What actually took place was that advertising revenues increased to take care of the changing market scene. Broadcasting turned out to create advertising dollars, rather than divide them.

Don Laws: One of the regulations was that you couldn't quote prices. The other stupid thing was that you couldn't run an announcement after 7:30 at night; you had to run a program. All these things just made it so difficult. We used to get around the first in a small way by saying, "Buy so-and-so's chocolate bars, less than the cost of a streetcar ticket"—which was 5¢. This is damn stupid, y'know. At the same time, they were screaming about the amount of advertising and the length of the ads. Well, hell, if you were advertising a man's haberdashery and you could say, "Here's a three-piece man's suit, it's on special today for $35," that's all you needed to say. But when you couldn't say "$35," you had to talk for five minutes about how good it was, and "you mustn't miss this," and "the price is unbelievable"—just baloney.

John Baldwin: I started selling for CHWK in 1930 or '31. I shall never forget the end of my first week. The time came for the ghost to walk, and I walked in to Casey Wells and suggested it was time to get my salary for the week—$10. As it happened, they didn't have $10. They had $3.40 in the till, and I got the $3.40. This was all the money they had. It was a hand-to-mouth existence.

I sold a Santa Claus broadcast to what was then the David Spencer department store [in Chilliwack]. I said to the manager of Spencer's, "Who's going to be your Santa Claus?" "Well, I guess you are." I said, "That wasn't part of the deal." He said, "If you want to make the sale and you want the program, you're going to have to have a Santa Claus." So I became Santa Claus. I had to write the program, such writing as was done, and I solicited letters from children. Santa Claus was heard on the air, then he had to make his appearance. They provided the Santa Claus outfit. I didn't get a fee for being Santa Claus; I got the program sale, which the station desperately needed. I think the total cost to Spencer's was under $100, including 15 minutes a day on the air for two weeks and the appearance of Santa Claus.

Don Laws: I went to work for George Chandler in '33, selling time at 20 percent [commission]. I can well remember, one day, spending the whole day on one ad. I went to see some outfit that was teaching people how to sew, and took all morning to sell them on the idea of spending $5 for their announcement on the radio. I went back to the station, wrote the copy—a huge long announcement, no length restriction in those days. Came back to the customer, got it okayed, went back and broadcast it. Eventually I came back and got the $5, out of which I got a dollar. Sometimes there was not enough [commercial revenue] to pay the staff.

Jack Pilling: There was no money in the game, because you couldn't sell much advertising. So you had to be a sort of a jack-of-all-trades. For ten years at the radio station, I would do the sign-on shift [from] 7 o'clock in the morning until 10, and then I would go out and sell advertising. Then I would take the 12 to 1 shift, and we'd shut down maybe until 5 or 6 o'clock in the afternoon. In the afternoon I would write all the advertising copy. And then three nights a week, when we extended our schedule, I'd work from 7 till 10 o'clock, and all day every third Sunday. This went on for years on end. But you didn't think you were handicapped; you were just damn glad to have a job.

ERNIE ROSE: We used to have a situation just before payday [at CKMO]. We'd be called into the office, and we'd be given a bus pass and a sheaf of invoices. We'd have to go around and bang on doors of all our customers and clients, collect the money, and bring it back in so that we could get paid. They always managed to pay us Friday afternoon, and the cheques were always issued about 3:30. The banks closed at three, so you were sort of stuck. Whoever had money, that's who you lived with for the weekend.

Even when merchants could be persuaded to advertise on radio, the quite nominal rates charged at the time were often prohibitive. The logical solution was a revival of the barter system. "Contra accounts," as they were called, paid the wages of many beginning personnel and made it possible for stations to remain on the air through the Depression.

ALLAN KLENMAN: Contra accounts were quite common, and more prevalent on some stations than on others. They would range from every type of service or goods. If the station needed new curtains and they didn't have the money to buy them, they went and exchanged radio advertising for them. Many advertisers—when I say "many," perhaps over half of them—had their first introduction to radio by contra accounts.

DON LAWS: We sold a minute spot for $5, $4, $3—a lot of it in contra. One of our announcers had a suite in the Sylvia Court, took it out in contra. The first car I ever got, I got it on contra because I needed a car in my business. The first decent suit of clothes I got, I got for selling a baseball inning to Deem and Long. We ate at Love's Cafe on contra and gave them advertising. Nat Bailey was just starting on his way to being a millionaire at the White Spot; he fed the boys at the transmitter three meals a day. They'd go in and get their hot dogs and chips and stuff, and we'd advertise the White Spot. It was all contra there for a while.

ERNIE ROSE: I think CJOR was doing pretty good. 'WX was doing pretty good. [But at CKMO,] I think we had the all-time high for contra. We were sort of the poor relative in the broadcasting business. There was no such thing as buying parts. The gramophone needles were so worn, I sometimes used to look at them and wonder which end to put in the pickup.

BARNEY POTTS: One of the early shows I remember was in Purdy's Restaurant, across from the Capitol Theatre. It was for CKMO, and it was called "Cinderella Slipper Time." The idea was, somebody [a shoe store] donated a shoe, and if it fit, the contestant would win. They got the slippers. Not much money in those days!

Despite the bleakness of the economy, commercial time was being sold with some success. Since the broadcasting regulations forbade direct advertising in the form of spot announcements during the evening hours, indirect advertising through sponsored programs became more common. This type of advertising supported many programs, both at the local level and on the networks.

FRED BASS: We had a blank spot come up on Friday night, and Sparks Holstead said, "See if you can get hold of somebody that'll do a half-hour." So I remembered, [from] the Kiwanis Glee Club, a fellow by the name of Ray Holbrook who was working for Boultbee's [an automotive company]. I got hold of him and said, "Ray, could you fill up Friday night for me?" He says, "Fine. Why don't you phone some of the other boys from the Glee Club? We'll make a quartet." I said, "Well, we'll try it."

Telephone
TRINITY 3338

RADIO STATIONS

Effective
September 1, 1938

CKFC—1410 kc.
212.7 Metres

CKFC - CKFX

CKFX—6080 kc.
49.3 Metres

Established 1921

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Simultaneous broadcasting on long and short wave bands. Short wave CKFX carries all CKFC programmes, giving additional rural coverage at no extra cost.

RATES INCLUDE BOTH STATIONS

ADVERTISING RATES SCHEDULE

Commissions and Discounts — Agency commission, 15 per cent. Bills due and payable when rendered. No cash discounts.

General Advertising — Advertising of alcoholic beverages not accepted. Programme charges are additional to broadcasting rates and are not subject to discount. All programmes subject to approval of Station and to the terms and conditions detailed in contract.

Rates

SCHEDULE "A"—6.00 p.m. to 11.00 p.m.

	1 time	13 times	26 times	39 times	52 times
One Hour	$30.00	$29.25	$28.50	$27.75	$27.00
Half-hour	18.00	17.55	17.10	16.55	16.20
Quarter-hour	10.00	9.75	9.50	9.25	9.00
Ten Minutes	6.65	6.50	6.35	6.20	6.05
Five Minutes	5.00	4.85	4.75	4.60	4.45

(Schedule "A" rates apply all day Sunday)

SCHEDULE "B"—11.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m.

	1 time	13 times	26 times	39 times	52 times
One Hour	$23.00	$22.40	$21.80	$21.20	$20.60
Half-hour	12.50	12.20	11.90	11.60	11.30
Quarter-hour	7.00	6.80	6.60	6.40	6.20
Ten Minutes	4.70	4.55	4.40	4.25	4.20
Five Minutes	3.50	3.40	3.30	3.20	3.10

Announcements — No advertising spot announcements between 7.30 p.m. and 11.00 p.m., or on Sundays. Announcements limited to 75 words. No frequency discounts on Announcements.

Participating Programmes: Single, $3.50; Weekly, $17.00; Monthly (Calendar) $55.00.

Time Signals, Weather Reports: 1 daily, $30.00 month; 2 daily, $50.00 month.

Political Speeches — No time discounts. Schedule "A" rates apply on all time.

He got [two other singers]. I was going to announce the program and be the bass singer. These other two guys were scared to death, so I built a little skit. I said, "Ray and I will start it. Here's the window washer outside, and he's making a lot of noise. I get him to come in and [ask him], can he sing?" We fixed up some other kind of an entrance for the other guys, and we did a program. Right after it finished, Spud Boultbee—the boss of this company—phones up. "I liked that quartet you had tonight. It was good. What time you got available on Sundays?" I said, "Why, are you interested in buying it?" He said, "Yeah." I said. "I'll send a salesman over." The salesman comes back and Spud Boultbee wants this quartet for a show two nights later.

We had no theme, no nothing. I got the fellows in a hurry and said, "Spud wants a program this Sunday night." I took an old Southern melody called "Way Down South," and I wrote the words. "Boultbee for brakes, Boultbee for brakes, don't forget it's Boultbee for Brakes." [That was] the theme, and they did it in harmony. That program was on for nine years.

Another one I broke-in that I was a little proud of was a coffee merchant here in town. They used our station [CKWX] only—no newspaper, no other station—to give a test as to the selling ability of radio. They brought their coffee from Bogota in Colombia. They give me the books on coffee; for three months I studied coffee. They made an appropriation for a program, and we pulled one on the poor public. We worked out a proposition where we would tune in, supposedly, to Bogota for "Don Pedro and his guitar." "Don Pedro," a local boy, would come on and sing his Spanish songs, and then we would fade him out with a lot of static and what have you. [When] people wrote in asking for a request, we sent the names and addresses to Bogota, whereupon they would send a postcard of "Don Pedro," thanking them for their request. And we launched that. The coffee is still on the market.

DON LAWS: "Treasure Trail" was the first of the big give-away programs. We produced it at CJOR. I can remember getting a letter from Tandy Advertising in Toronto, outlining this show and saying, "We have a budget of $35 per show." We said, "$35? Isn't that fabulous!" I was the producer, I got ten. The announcer got five, the engineer got three, the guy who carried the pot of silver around got two. We gave away 50 silver dollars on each of these shows. People had to send in their Wrigley's Gum wrappers. The biggest mail we ever got was 35,000 letters in one week. It was the first of the money give-away shows. All they gave away was $50 and all they paid for production was $35. That's 85 bucks.

If it was often difficult to finance a radio station in Vancouver, it was that much harder to do so in a small town. Nelson's CKLN, the last station founded in British Columbia between the wars, was handicapped from the start by topography, newspaper competition, a limited market and one instance of very bad timing.

ALAN RAMSDEN: The first attempt at broadcasting in Nelson was [in the twenties] when the publisher of the *Nelson Daily News* persuaded a couple of local electrical people, the Bennett brothers, to install a small transmitter in the top of the Daily News building. They broadcast several small transmissions featuring local musicians, and some records were played. After those broadcasts there was a period of time when nothing was being done.

By 1938 the Green family, who owned the News Publishing Company here, decided that they might usefully get into this business. By then, the Trail station had begun making much more noise; they decided to increase their power to 1,000 watts, and when they did that they were going to be heard in Nelson. Being in the newspaper business at that time, and aware of the cost of advertising, the local paper owners decided that they should perhaps pursue this a little further. They got on the air in July 1939 with the usual fanfare—people coming in and visiting the station, everybody quite thrilled. Then came September, and the war was on.

The actual revenue was absolutely nil within six months at the beginning of the war, which meant that the News Publishing Company were forced to pump money in to keep the radio station on the air. It was being heavily subsidized. In order to cut down the subsidization, the company paid very low wages and they didn't demand anything in the way of quality. They lost staff very quickly, so that the station ended up in '42-'43 without any experienced radio people.

The station didn't reach anything but Nelson. The population in this area—at that time, particularly—was very pocketed. There was Nelson, and then there was nothing until you got to Castlegar. South of us there was no reception anyway, but the nearest community was Ymir, a place of of about 100 people. [To increase the power] would have been an absolute waste. If you got another five miles, you got a lot more pine cones, rocks, gophers and whatever, but you got few people.

So you either dealt with Nelson as a population or there was nothing. From an advertiser's point of view, it was a very limited market. The national market was very small, and the local market wasn't prepared to pay very high rates. They could use the newspaper, which was circulated over the entire Kootenays on a daily circulation of something like ten thousand copies every morning. And here was a radio station that could deliver two or three thousand homes at best.

However, the majority of radio stations—especially those in larger centres—seem to have benefitted during the war years. The general increase in commerce brought more advertising to the medium. Listeners tuned in for the war news and for a growing number of popular network programs from the United States. Most stations were able to upgrade their equipment and facilities and increase their wattage. A number of them were taken over by larger companies and enjoyed a measure of financial stability.

JOHN BALDWIN: Gradually, the thing became a little more successful. Broadcast advertising became a more accepted mode. Merchants began to recognize that they could motivate people very quickly with broadcast.

ALLEN KLENMAN: In the thirties, the radio stations—like any other business or any other individual—just squeaked by. One of my experiences [at CKWX] was that Mr. Holstead came around and told the married men they could go and cash their cheques. The single men couldn't; they had to wait two or three days, and then they were told they could go and cash their pay cheques.

That, of course, was prior to Taylor, Pearson and Carson buying the station. When they bought it, everyone was paid at once. They had no end of money.

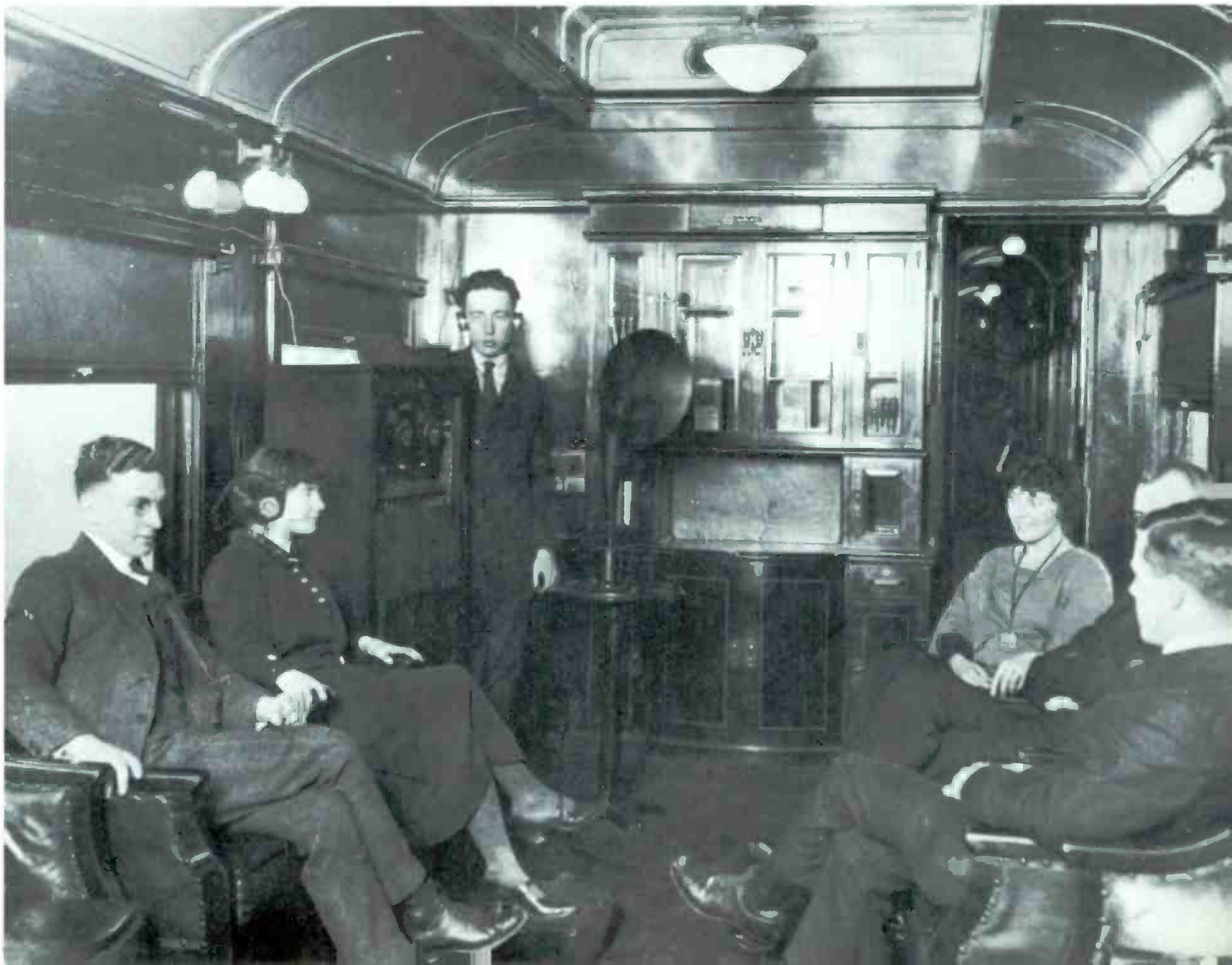
Another sign of radio's increasing importance in British Columbia was the emergence of several new stations, beginning with New Westminster's CKNW in 1944. CKPG Prince George opened in 1945; CJAV Port Alberni in 1946; CJDC Dawson Creek and CJIB Vernon in 1947; CKOK Penticton and CHUB Nanaimo in 1948, and CKDA, Victoria's second station, in 1950. Radio was finally established as an industry throughout the province.

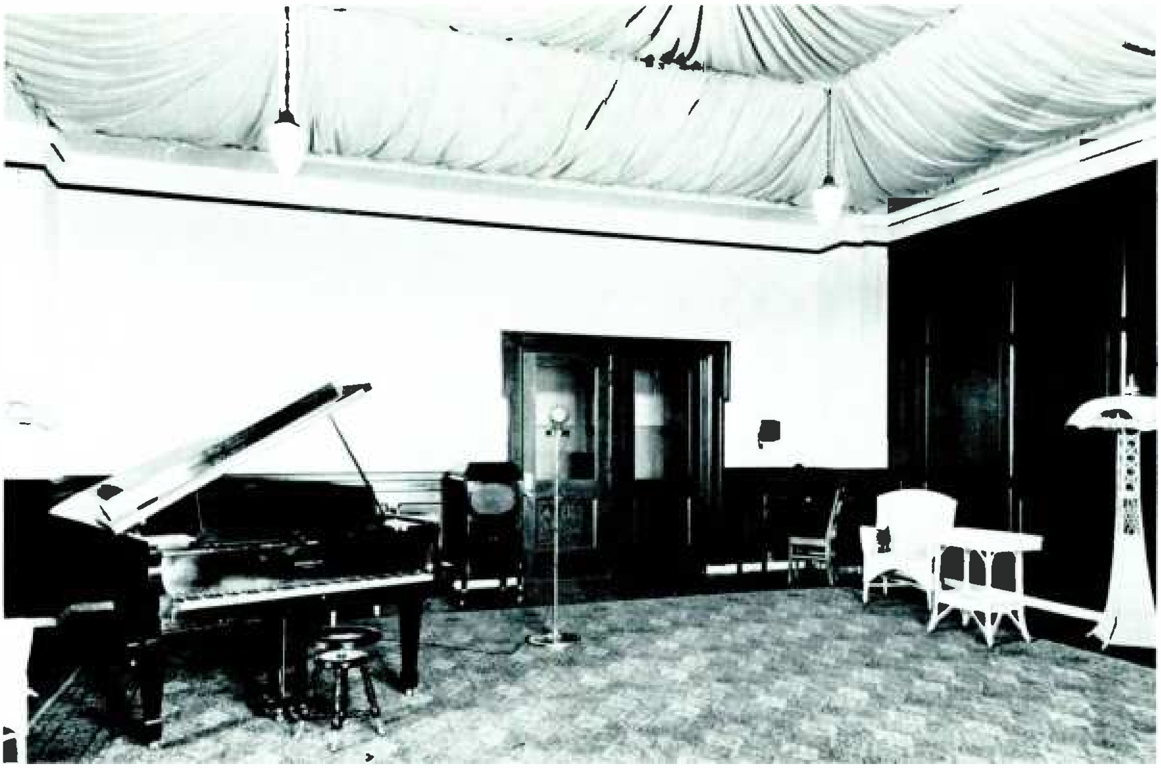
THE VOICE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

IAN CLARK: You know, I think we tend to forget that the CNR did a first class job in the early days when they started into broadcasting. They had their trains equipped with radios, and the idea was that you could travel "the National way" on the railroad. They had earphones in certain cars so that you could listen to the stations. Mind you, there were a lot of areas where there was just no reception as they travelled across the country, but as they got nearer some centres they could get reception.

The Canadian National Railways Radio Department, a forerunner of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, was created in 1923. Radios were installed in a number of lounge cars as entertainment for the passengers, with operators to tune the sets to available stations. It was a scheme calculated to increase passenger traffic, and it worked. More importantly, the company provided programming on a regular basis via a series of stations

A CNR radio car. The operator (standing by the receiver) was on hand to tune in the clearest available stations. Passengers could listen through headphones or through the primitive speaker at the centre of the photo. (VPL no. 8371)





CNRV's studio was housed in the Vancouver CNR depot. The ceiling is hung with sound-absorbing material. (Leonard Frank photo)

across the country. Most were phantom licences on existing transmitters that operated as CNR stations while the trains were within range. But in Vancouver, Ottawa and Moncton, the company established and ran stations of its own. Vancouver's CNRV went on the air in 1925.

John Avison: It was on the north end of the main floor of the CNR station. The broadcasts were always live, and included the sound of the train bell, which you could hear as it came across Commercial Drive and all the way into the station, getting louder and louder as it approached.

Jim Laurie: It was in what is now the restaurant of the CN station. The transmitter was on Lulu Island. The trains, as far as the licence was concerned, were incidental; it came on as a public broadcasting station. They tried to play recordings which would be acceptable to the passengers on the trains, and the hours usually included the time when the train was within range. But it was both [for the train passengers and for the general public].

We didn't bother with the early train. It arrived at 7:25 a.m., so it was a lost cause. I mean, people got up and they went to the diner and that was it. The train left, I think, at 8-something in the evening, so we normally came on the air at 6 o'clock and we stayed on till 11 o'clock at night, or sometimes midnight. If there was a fancy program, we didn't let the rules interfere. They normally started with recordings, and I think possibly from about 8 o'clock until whenever they decided to sign off, it would be either the CNRV Orchestra or the CNRV Players. We would have a play on and you never knew whether it would last an hour and a half or two and a half hours. If it ran over, no problems; it ran over. If it was a symphony orchestra, we stayed on until the symphony was finished. That was it.

Helene Ainsworth had a group; she was a French lady who played fiddle, and had a very nice little orchestra. We didn't have announcers as such in those days; when we played records, whoever [of the technical staff who] happened to be around—me, Basil Hilton or George Humphries—was the announcer. Another program was "The Four Continental Limited Porters." It was sort of a blackface variety show; they were the porters, chitchatting around. They were certainly on the network, because that was train-oriented.

BARNEY POTTS: I was one of the Four Porters. We tried to copy "The Two Black Crows" and "Amos 'n' Andy." They were popular, so we thought, "What the heck, we might as well take a crack at it." We'd get on the train at Coquitlam and come in [to Vancouver], just to make a publicity stunt out of it and get people to the studio. Sonny Richardson was there, and John Emerson was also with us; I forget the other one. It was blackface, which I think would be frowned on very much today. On radio it was kind of silly, if you think about it, but it created publicity.

Through its efforts in drama, music and variety programming, CNRV reached large audiences both locally and nationally. On July 1, 1927, it was linked to Canada's first national network for the broadcast of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in Ottawa. By the end of 1929, it was part of the CNR network on a regular basis.

JIM LAURIE: I can remember that for a long, long time, the station in Vancouver inaugurated more live programming than all the west coast down as far as the California border. When the network came in, we were second only to Toronto and Montreal in program origination. We would come on and feed programs [to the network] after the Toronto and Montreal people had gone to bed.

Despite the popularity of CNR radio, the Depression rendered it a costly luxury. Economy forced the termination of radio receiver service on the trains in November 1931, though the network and stations continued to function at a reduced level. Early in 1933, the newly formed Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission purchased the CNR's broadcasting facilities, including the Vancouver station. It remained in the railway depot but was renamed CRCV. Both CNRV and CRCV featured the talents of many Vancouver performers, including musician John Avison and husband-and-wife variety performers Alan and Esther Roughton.

JOHN AVISON: I stayed there longer than I thought I would. I scored some music for a guitarist, and I suppose because of my youth I made the music unduly complicated. The guitarist, who was conducting the program, was having great problems conducting it. He was so desperate that I got out of my corner and started conducting the orchestra. The whole thing came together very well—primarily, of course, because I had written it and I knew it. Unfortunately for the guitarist, the manager of the station happened to be in the control room. He came bursting out of the control room and he said, "You better let that boy do the show. Obviously the other fellow isn't competent." That was the beginning of my conducting career.

ESTHER ROUGHTON: [Alan] had been at CRCV, approaching them for a singing program. Mr. [George] Wright was the manager at the time, and he said, "Alan, we've got dozens of singers coming out of the walls." Alan got this idea of writing a domestic comedy because—he said—we had so many years of experience. Anyway, we did this thing; Alan wrote it and I typed it and we rehearsed it at home. He said, "Well, we'll go down [to CRCV]; Wright said if we can find anything else, he'd love to put us on." So we went down there and we did this for him. He was absolutely doubled over with laughter, and he said, "You're on."

All the other stations we'd been on, all we got was $2 for a program, as a rule. [Wright] said that the fee would be $8. It was in the Hungry Thirties and we had no money at all. [When we let the station], we just walked along there; we didn't even notice the distance we walked. I wasn't a very good walker, but we walked for about two miles and I never even noticed it—I was so excited, you know. We were just so thrilled about that. We were on for two years at [CRCV].

It was in the old CNR station there, on Main Street. Right on the ground floor at the corner, with big French doors out to the sidewalk. We used to drive our car right up there so we could have the car running when we had some scene with the car breaking down. Then [if] we were doing the lawns, we used to take a lawn mower down and run it up and down the sidewalk right outside the windows, and leave the doors open.

[Alan] was very humorous. He was really a very good writer, I thought, because he could sit down and dash these things off. I'd type them, then we'd rehearse them and away we'd go and do them.

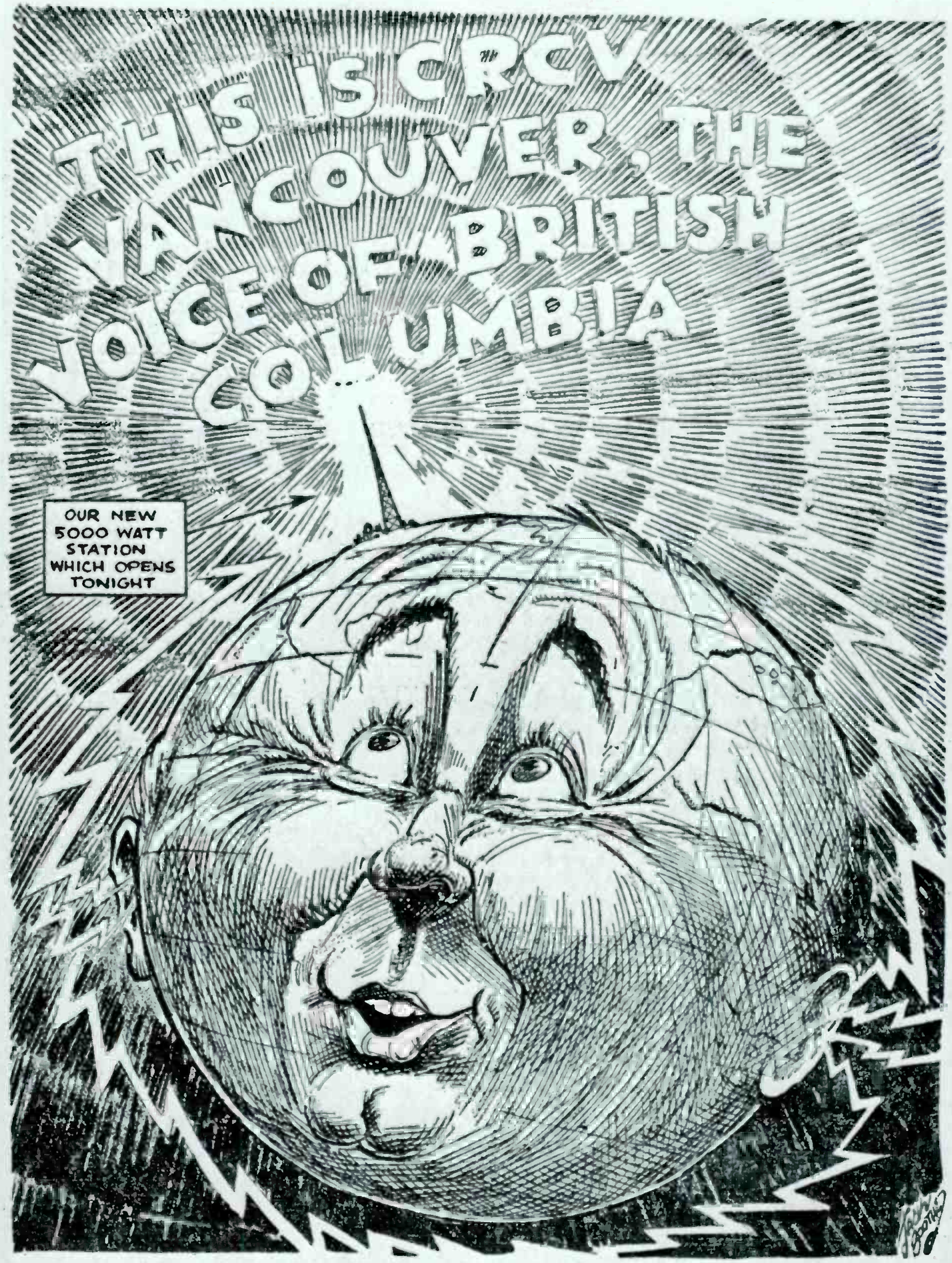
Esther and Alan Roughton were featured in the domestic situation comedy "Mr. and Mrs." on CRCV in the mid-1930s.

Some of the private stations in the interior carried up to three hours of CRBC network programming a night. In addition, they began to feed local programs to the network.

IAN CLARK: They used to originate some programs in Kamloops, in fact. In the studio of CFJC at that time, the heating was done from the basement, and there was a large walk-over grill in the floor to allow the warm air to come up. They were just starting a network broadcast; the music had stopped and the announcer, a very heavy chap, went over to the microphone, which was just sitting off the grill. As he passed over the grill, the grill caved in and plunk, down into the basement he went! Naturally, there was a blank on the air while the decorum was being restored. This was while a broadcast was being carried on the CRBC.

The staff and facilities of the CRBC were taken over by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in November 1936. Early in 1937, the studios of CRCV were moved into the newly-built Hotel Vancouver and a more powerful transmitter went on the air. As the *Province* noted on February 17:

Opposite: This Province *editorial cartoon by Jack Boothe celebrates the CBC's inauguration of new studios and a new transmitter in Vancouver in February 1937.*


THIS IS CRCV VANCOUVER, THE VOICE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
OUR NEW 5000 WATT STATION WHICH OPENS TONIGHT

> From the very beginning, lack of coverage has been one of the chief defects of radio broadcasting in Canada, and British Columbia suffered from lack of coverage more than most of the other provinces. We are a province of great distances and we have all sorts of physical interferences. It requires a station of power to reach all our people, and now we have the station.
>
> The existence of a powerful station, of up-to-the-minute equipment, and of an excellent new studio will be an incentive to the staff of CRCV to continue to supply programmes of a quality that cannot be ignored.

The newspaper's prediction was an accurate one. Favourable circumstances soon brought the CBC's Vancouver outlet—renamed CBR—to a position of eminence that it enjoyed for several years. This was largely due to the influence of Ira Dilworth. Educated at McGill and Harvard, Dilworth made his first career in education. He was principal of Victoria High School, and later became a professor of English at the University of British Columbia. He joined the CBC in 1938 as Regional Representative for British Columbia and manager of CBR.

JOHN AVISON: He was, without a doubt, one of the most brilliant men that we ever had in the field of radio. As a matter of fact, he could have been the most brilliant man in almost any other field—literature, for example. I have treasured, over a long period of time, letters I received from him which are models of writing. If he had a problem at all, it was because the people who were on the staff were simply not of the same calibre that he was, and consequently they couldn't understand him.

KENNETH CAPLE: He was a most charming, able and unusual person; he was sensitive and aware, and he had had a very wide training in cultural things of all kinds—literature, music and social affairs. Many people thought sometimes that he was a bit *too* intellectual and a bit too, as some of them nastily said, "airy-fairy." But he wasn't; he thought mankind had a wide general interest. Of course, being a well-trained professor and university man, he saw, possibly, a little more of the intellectual side than the commercial type. At that time commercial radio wasn't so important as it is now. Now it's "Will it get listeners and will it sell the goods?" You evaluate a program on that basis. Ira Dilworth's evaluation wasn't a commercial one.

As a matter of fact, once a month he would invite eight or nine people connected with a particular program up to his house and give them a very good dinner. He was a bachelor and lived in a beautiful house on West Point Grey Hill, and he used to love cooking. After dinner he would play back the program which we were to discuss. We would sit and listen to it and then we would discuss it. "What did that program intend to do? Did we achieve it? What could we change to improve that program?" Then he would play it again. Often, till midnight or one o'clock, we would dig in on that particular program. This was something that Dr. Dilworth was very clever about doing. He didn't browbeat people, but he brought out of them, and made them see, what they could do more creatively.

JOHN AVISON: Of course, I have a certain prejudice. He was the man who first suggested and approved the idea of my having a serious orchestra. My father's name was also John, and I was invariably called "Jack," so we knew which one of us my mother was calling for dinner. As soon as Ira Dilworth got the idea of my doing a program of serious music, he said, "Your name is John, isn't it?" I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "And so it will be on this program. 'Jack' doesn't sound very well with classical music."

Ira Dilworth directed the CBC's operations in British Columbia from 1938 to 1946. (PABC no. 33385)

Dilworth went east in 1947 to become General Supervisor of the CBC's shortwave International Service. He later served as National Director of Program Production. In *The Struggle for National Broadcasting in Canada,* E. Austin Weir wrote of Dilworth: "I can recall no one else who quite so accurately mirrored the conscience of the CBC."

Under Dilworth's direction, CBR originated many programs of national interest, as well as popular regional programs that became part of daily life in British Columbia.

KENNETH CAPLE: We started this Vancouver Chamber Orchestra, and that became a weekly feature—one hour of live music. Andrew Allan was here then, and we started a one-hour drama from Vancouver every week. They went nationally. Then there were [other programs] which went to the B.C. network. There were women's talks in the middle of the afternoon, and another talk series in the morning. We put on half-hour [educational] broadcasts that the teachers in the rural schools could plug in, bringing them material which would not ordinarily be [available]. For instance, most rural school teachers didn't have training in music, so we gave a half-hour training in music. And we were very proud of the farm broadcast; that had agricultural information, economic news, and usually a skit with a farm family, which dramatized an agricultural problem.

JIM LAURIE: "The Carsons," on the farm broadcast, was a five-days-a-week thing. It was an ongoing serial; just a homespun, "farm people" sort of thing.

ESTHER ROUGHTON: "The Carsons" were friends of everybody. They came into their homes just at the right time, just after the news, and everybody had lunch with them.

JIM LAURIE: We went up to the Armstrong Fair; we had the Carson family going up to make a personal appearance there, and I recorded that. My expense cheque was a bit late, so I went to the local bank to cash it. Bill Buckingham, who was the father—he was "John Carson"—went along with me, just for the stroll. The bank manager recognized a couple of CBC types and he came out to [give us the] glad hand. I introduced Bill as "John Carson." [The bank manager] immediately went on to a great long thing about crops and farming and so on, and Bill didn't know a ruddy thing about it!

In fulfilling its mandate as "the voice of British Columbia," CBR faced two major geographical handicaps. The first was its distance and separation from the focal point of the network in the east; the second was the topography of the province itself. Before the advent of microwave transmission, all network connections were made by land line. Being at the westernmost end of the network posed a number of technical problems.

Don Horne: We had an "open wire" network; that is, a bare copper wire right along the railway tracks. Its quality, of course, was not the greatest; it was supposed to carry 100 to 5,000 cycles. There was a lot of interference. Summertime was just terrible, because the open wire, all across the Prairies, would pick up summer static like you wouldn't believe, and it would just crackle and pop away. If it was an aurora borealis display, it just about went.

The open wire had some other bad technical effects. The line-up on the network, section by section, would be done in the early morning hours, before we started broadcasting. In certain cold weather, the lines were built up with frost and ice. That would mean that the men at each repeater point—I forget whether they were 35 or 50 miles apart, all across the country—would have to use more equalization. The 5,000-cycle end of the [frequency] response would drop off, so they'd use an equalizer to bring it up. That was great when we started out in the morning, but by afternoon on a lot of days, the sun had melted all the ice off the wire, and now you've go the most tin-canny sounding network you've ever heard. They were never supposed to touch it once they got lined up, so we just had to suffer through that.

In wintertime, if a snowslide came down and took out the tracks, it almost always took out our network. If a train derailed, it invariably took us out. There would be times in a bad winter when we might not have a real good Canadian network for two or three days at a stretch. We would have to lease lines through the States, just temporarily, to get some of the main news [from the east].

That actually had quite an effect on what happened out of the Vancouver studios. Our program people were always trying to get some bigger [network] shows to come from Vancouver. The people in Toronto pointed out something we could't argue with; the main place where the network failed was in the Rockies. Well, if *they* were feeding [the network], we were the only ones that were lost. But if *we* were feeding, almost all of Canada lost it. That continued on right up until the time we no longer used the open wire.

Kenneth Caple: We had the big transmitter, CBR, here in Vancouver. It covered the whole province to a certain extent, but in mountain valleys the reception was poor. At this time there was some interference from a station in Mexico that was broadcasting on the same wavelength; far-out places in B.C., tuning very finely, would get the Mexican station. So the CBC started what they called "LPRTs"—low-powered rebroadcast transmitters.

Ernie Rose: We started installing them in 1942. It was then that I discovered that British Columbia was a massive province and a very difficult province to serve with radio, because of all the mountains and valleys and centres of population where during the daytime they had absolutely no radio.

These were little 20-watters that we were installing, and they were only good for maybe 15 or 20 miles. After that, you'd hit five farmhouses and then go another two or three miles before you got the signal coming from the next station. The people in these four or five farmhouses said, "Why don't we get the signal?" Now what do you do? Do you raise the power of the stations or do you put another one in between them? This is what happens when you start extending service. Once you start, then everybody says, "Me too!" And you're committed; you just keep going and going.

Don Horne: Another very interesting thing during the war was this "Warning to Lightkeepers" thing. When it first came in, I think we did it every half hour. Of course, you have to realize that people overreact, naturally, under trying conditions; after Pearl Harbor, we used to say the Japanese [were] going to be here any day. So they had this

"Warning to Lightkeepers" [on the CBC]. "A for Apple" was "All's well with the world." "B for Butter," I believe, was "Turn out the light." Now, we never got to "C"; whether that was "Blow up the lighthouse and leave," I'm not sure. But the idea was, of course, these people had no means of communication. Originally we did this very frequently. It got to be a few times a day, and it was always prefaced—to attract their attention—with a recording of "On the Road to Mandalay". And do you know, from that time on, I've never heard anybody play "On the Road to Mandalay," because it was on umpteen times a day, week in and week out, for years! That was a real pain for a long time.

Another wartime development was the acquisition of a station in Prince Rupert. CFPR, which had operated privately since 1936, was leased by the CBC in 1942 to serve U.S. and Canadian troops on the northern coast. In his book *Radio—the Remote Years*, Dick Halhed recalls operating the station with engineer Jimmy Gilmore in early 1942. The two men provided 17 hours of local and transcribed programming daily over a 50-watt transmitter. A small dilapidated building housed the primitive equipment; the roof leaked and the "washroom" was a nearby cliff. Under considerably better circumstances, CFPR still broadcasts today as the second CBC-owned station in the province.

In 1944 the CBC created a second national radio network to provide more air time for expanded programming and commercial sales. The new "Dominion" network consisted entirely of private stations (except for a CBC-owned station in Toronto), and featured several popular commercial programs, many of them American in origin. The original network became the "Trans-Canada" network and mainly carried the culturally-oriented programming for which the CBC is known today. Network affiliation was very important to British Columbia's inland radio stations.

RUDY HARTMAN: We carried quite a lot of network [at Trail] in those days; I would say more than 60 percent of the [broadcast] day. A lot of the programs on the CBC were American shows. We had "The Breakfast Club" with Don McNeill, which came out of Chicago. We had a morning full of soap operas from CBS and NBC and so forth—"Big Sister," "Pepper Young's Family"—a whole host of them that used to take up a two-hour block in the morning. If you were a network station in the States or in Canada, network took up a great deal of your time.

The control room of CBR's studio C during a B.C. Schools Broadcast in the early 1940s. From left to right: Director of Schools Broadcasts Kenneth Caple, unidentified, technical operator Don Horne, producer Roy Dunlop.

JACK PILLING: We were a basic station on the Dominion network, which was very helpful. This allowed us to greatly expand our schedule, because we could hang on the CBC for programming. And it was the policy of the CBC, on the Dominion network, to originate programs in every station that was affiliated with it. We originated programs in Chilliwack to the B.C. network of the Dominion network of the CBC, as did Kelowna, Kamloops and Trail.

RUDY HARTMAN: I think at one time there were as many as seven programs a week going [from Trail] to the the B.C. network. They were all music programs. The talent wasn't awfully good, in many cases, but there were ensembles and solo presentations and so forth. We had an organ program which came out of the Knox United Church for Carnation Milk; it was a 15-minute live organ pickup.

IAN CLARK: One time I came up with an idea for a program called "The Story of Christmas." My daughter was just a little girl at the time, and she was after me to tell her the story of Christmas. In working this thing out, I finally told on the air the story that I was going to tell her. We had the choir of St. Anne's Academy here, and we had all kinds of wonderful cooperation from local people. There were about a dozen voices in the thing, plus the choir, and we had chimes and what have you. Basically, it was just the story of Christmas. We fed a sample of it down to Dr. Ira Dilworth at the CBC in Vancouver, and he said, "Yes, we will carry this on the B.C. network on Christmas Eve." Then a little further along he said, "We will carry this on the Western Network of the CBC." Then, just a few days before Christmas Eve, we got a phone call from Vancouver. They said, "It is going to be carried coast-to-coast."

It was a little on the scary side. My concern was that we would be able to do a decent job, and that we would have it down so that when we came up to 29 minutes and 40 seconds, that cue would be right on the button. And it was; we weren't a second over or a second under.

I remember very well, coming out of the studio that night. It was snowing; my car was covered with snow. You couldn't have picked a more beautiful evening. Walter Harwood, who was a tremendous help putting the show together, said, "You know, ordinarily I'd like to go and have a drink and relieve the tension, but not now." He walked off, and I didn't know whether he was going to get some cigarettes or whether he was just caught up in emotion. In any event, I went to my car. I was going to get out the brush to clean the snow off the windshield, and I thought, "No, I'll just leave it here and I'll walk home." So I walked home. It was just a tremendous feeling of relief, I guess, because it was the first time we had done anything locally that was carried coast to coast.

When I got home, my children thought the program was just for them, and I guess in a way it was. Then the [telegrams] started coming in from people all over the country, and the telegraph people, instead of sending somebody out, just phoned me the wires. It was one of the highlights of my life.

The Dominion and Trans-Canada networks were amalgamated into a single national network in 1962. In 1947, the CBC opened British Columbia's first FM radio station, and in 1954 its first television station. The Corporation also retained its regulatory authority over private broadcasting until the Board of Broadcast Governors was established in 1958. However, the CBC's most valuable function in British Columbia—as elsewhere in Canada—has been to provide programs of national, regional and cultural interest that would not have been feasible in a strictly commercial system. The contributions made by CBC Vancouver and its predecessors to the field of radio drama are discussed in a later chapter.

ALL THINGS TO ALL PEOPLE

Allan Klenman: Radio in those days was local live talent. It was not just all records and talking. Radio stations tried to be all things to all people. There were very few stations, and the wants of the populace were, of course, different.

Laurie Irvine: There was much more live programming. The musician's union hadn't priced live programming clean out of the business for an independent station. On 'WX in the forties, we used to have a live show every morning for an hour with a group of local musicians, about five of them—Sonny Richardson, Barney Potts, several others. It was a housewives' thing, a scripted show that [was supplied by] a service. It had poems to read over [a musical background], recipes for the ladies, housecleaning hints and all this sort of nonsense. It was all in the script, and you put it together with a live group and had a lot of fun. I used to handle that show as the announcer.

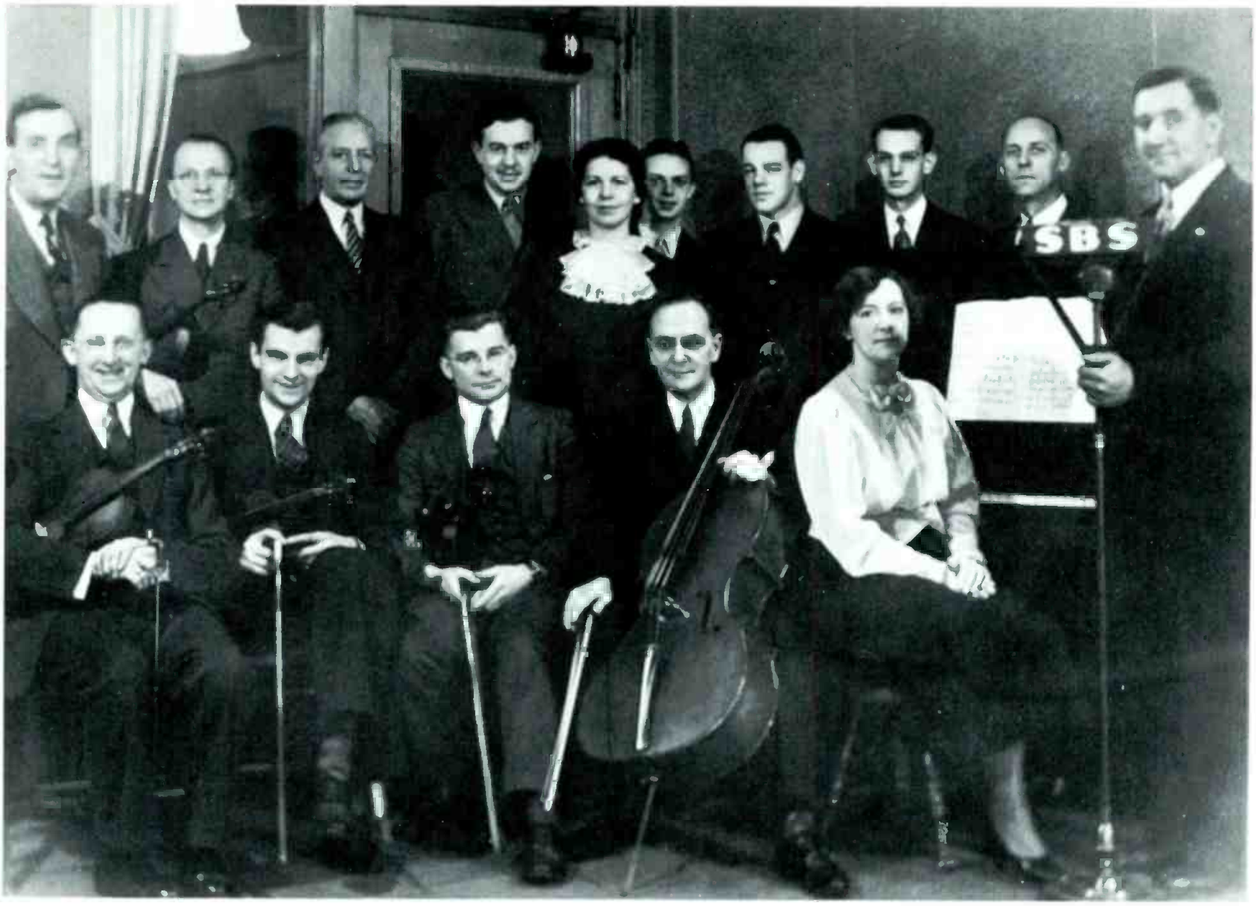
Don Laws: After 7:30 [p.m.] everything had to be live. You couldn't play records. Even if you had the best symphony in the world on a record, you couldn't play it because of this damn stupid regulation.

Ross MacIntyre: We had to fill the time with something live. We improvised, and we scrounged, and we dug up talent. The Home Gas Concert Orchestra [played on CKWX]—about a 50-piece orchestra. It was the orchestra off the stage at the Capitol Theatre, conducted by Calvin Winters. Of course, you had to have a sugar daddy like Home Oil to pay for the band. So we had a 100-watt radio station with a 50-piece orchestra on once a week. Broadcasting today is a shambles compared to what it was in those days.

Fred Bass: You could buy any talent for three bucks. When [CKWX] made me program director, I had a talent bill for one week that would knock your eye out—$27. Everybody that had talent came along. Half of them weren't getting paid at all; they just wanted to be on.

Don Laws: We had Laddy Watkis, who was our accountant at CJOR. She was Laddy Watkis and sang as a contralto; she was Margaret May and played the piano. If she played and sang both, she was Margaret May and Laddy Watkis.

Ernie Rose: In those days, we didn't have the Canadian content regulations, per se, that we have today. But even in a small station, we were regularly making [remote] dance band pickups. This was the era of the big bands in the States. In [Vancouver] we had the Belle Tavern, the Mandarin Gardens, the Eagle Auditorium, the Commodore, all kinds of cafes—they were all where dances [were held]. At CKMO, we used to do about three or four dance pickups a week, and all the other stations were doing the same.



It was not unusual for small radio stations to have their own orchestras. The CKFC Concert Ensemble (ca. 1937) was comprised of students from the Beresford School of Music. Mr. L. Beresford, Sr. (standing, far left) owned the school. His son, Earl (in front of door), was part-owner of CKFC. The four men standing to the right of the door are CKFC staffers Jeff Davis, Laurie Irvine, Gordon Hodgson and Frank Rutland. The "SBS" on the microphone refers to the Standard Broadcasting System, which operated CKFC.

Ross MacIntyre: We used to do a lot of remotes at CKWX. Earle Connor and I would play leapfrog all over town with two remote outfits. He'd run for thirty minutes one place while I was moving and setting up, then I'd take over the next program and he'd run someplace else and set up.

Don Laws: Mart Kenney always says that he owes his success in broadcasting to CJOR. He was playing in the Alexandra Ballroom, and we were over the Ballroom. The CPR was trying out bands to go to Banff for the summer season. Mart wanted to apply for it, but he couldn't afford to go to Calgary for the audition; the guy who used to pick the bands was the manager of the Palliser Hotel there. So we arranged this: after we went off the air at 12 o'clock, we came back on the air at 1 o'clock, specially. Mart got his band together and played a one-hour program of music. It was 2 o'clock in the morning in Calgary and all the stations were off, so they could hear us. The manager listened to Mart Kenney and hired him. And this is how he says he got his career started.

Ernie Rose: At CKMO, we used to do an organ program with Paul Michelin out of the Orpheum Theatre. This was a Sunday night program. I used to have to announce this thing and cart the equipment down and set it up. This was while I was still courting my wife-to-be. We used to sit in the Orpheum Theatre—just the two of us, one night watchman, and Paul Michelin on this great monstrous organ. I'll tell you, that's a pretty romantic place to be.

Ross MacIntyre: I built a shortwave backpack transmitter, and we made a lot of use of it. Union Steamship ran a moonlight cruise from Vancouver up to Bowen Island with an orchestra on board. We used to put the transmitter on board. We picked up the signal at Malkin Bowl in the middle of Stanley Park with a receiver, because we had a line in there anyway, and we fed it back uptown and put it over the air.

Ernie Rose: There were a lot of local remote pickups that we used to do that nowadays just aren't done. And for obvious reasons: the cost of performing rights and [musician's union wage] scale precludes this and makes it very expensive. This is in itself detrimental to the advancement of Canadian programming.

Stanley Goard: People in Portland had a program, "The Hoot-Owls." They were young Chamber of Commerce or local service club people, young fellows who had talent for entertainment, some who could sing and some who could tell stories. CFCN in Calgary had a group, "The Bronco Busters." We had a similar group called "The Lumberjacks."

Harold Paulson: These were ad-libbed variety shows that came on. I organized one [at CKWX] in Vancouver, "The Lumberjacks' Radio Nightclub." [I played] "Paul," the superintendent. Jack Ruddock, the manager of Westminster Breweries, was "Reggie," the Englishman. Harry McKelvie, manager of the tobacco department down at Kelly Douglas and Company, did a very good Chinese dialect; he was the Chinese cook. And there was Ron Jeboult and Harold Darling. Most of these chaps belonged to the United Commercial Travellers' Association. We'd meet every Saturday night, about 10 o'clock, in the Metropole Hotel on Granville by Davie. Each one of us would bring a magazine like *College Humour*. We'd sit around having a beer, and we'd say, "You say this, I'll say this, and we'll all laugh." This was how we made up our jokes.

We went on the air at 11:30. We had our magazines right in front of the microphone, and we'd read something off. One would say something, then the other'd say something, and we'd all, "Ha-ha-ha-ha, funny-funny-funny." This used to go on, why, till 1, 2, 3 o'clock in the morning; as long as we had material and the phones were ringing, we kept on going. People would phone us, requesting numbers. We'd put on skits. A chap used to phone Love's Cafe, and they used to bring down a great big platter of sandwiches and coffee for us. People were sending gifts to us. It got to be quite something.

We did it for the love of it. Then our salesman went out and sold it to the Vancouver Tourist Bureau. I think he got $25, and that was divided among the gang; of course, I didn't get anything, because I was manager of the station. I think they only made $3 apiece or something; that was how they divied it up. But a chap would feel, "Well, I'm doing more than he does," and then the jealousies and animosity started. In six months, [the show] was gone. So long as it was voluntary and there was no money, everybody thoroughly enjoyed it. It was quite a study in the effect that a little bit of money had.

Another variety program on CKWX was initiated by Jack Gillmore of the CNRV Players, a popular drama group whose long-running series had succumbed to the Depression. Gillmore's "Radio Artists Revue" was a product of the live programming regulation, but it also provided an important outlet for performers in the Vancouver area.

Jack Gillmore: Sparks gave us two hours, free. He said, "Just do what you can." We got hold of practically anybody [who] would go on the radio for nothing—just to keep in practise, you see. Nobody could pay anything. Cal Winters and his orchestra came on.

We used the CNRV Players, only we called them a different name; we'd put on a half-hour play. We had Romeo with his marimbaphone; "Millie and Lizzie"; Billy Blinkhorn [a "singing cowboy"], who later went to Australia and created a real name down there. They were tickled to death to come in just to get exposure at that time, hoping that it would lead them to some engagement.

Anyway, that came on and we asked the audience for money. We told them that the station was giving us this time, and that if they could send in any money, just for carfare and anything like that, we would appreciate it. We got enough to pay a couple of dollars for carfare and expenses. Sparks gave us the time every Friday night, and it kept the artists coming in, just to have something to do.

We'd been on about two months, probably, when a chap phoned up. He said, "You know, I like your show, but I think two hours is too long. If I paid you 25 bucks, could you give me an hour show?" I said, "You're doggone right we could." That was [Percy] Whalley of Excelsior Lumber Company. He took on the show and he kept it on until [1935].

Esther Roughton: Jack Gillmore was a very clever writer and he used to write sort of parodies on famous plays—just short ones, sketches—and we'd do them. It was very hard to get sponsors, and everybody just let their tongues hang out to get the $2, you know. When Jack would sit on a chair with the back of the chair between him and the cast, we knew that we weren't going to get any pay that week!

Jack Gillmore: We put that show on once a week. We wrote a script around a theme. For instance, we'd have a Nautical Idea or Venetian Idea or Spanish Idea. Fred Weaver of David Spencer's would give us any [sheet] music we wanted [in exchange for advertising]. They were original shows, every one of them. I had to write one every damn week!

"Radio Artists Revue" is an interesting example of non-network variety programming from the Depression era. As Gillmore later wrote, the shows "may not have been brilliant by today's standards, but they were written, produced and directed by ONE person, not the staff that is now considered as necessary to produce a 15-minute episode." An examination of "Revue" scripts reveals how much concepts of humour and entertainment have changed in 50 years. But they also reveal a love of wordplay, a mischievous use of local references, a sense of the absurd, and a knack for cleverly working in commercial messages.

Recorded music was one of the earliest forms of radio programming. At first, record manufacturers tried to prevent the playing of records on radio, fearing that it would curtail their sales. Eventually it was demonstrated that radio was actually popularizing current recordings, and record shows became a staple of radio programming.

Harold Paulson: I like a nice constant type of music; I've always leaned toward it. We were broadcasting in the morning, from eight to nine or something like that, with this nice melodic music. I was home with the flu one Monday. I was lying in bed and Mrs. Paulson was doing the laundry. In those days, the housewife's washing machine was a scrubbing board, and I could imagine her scrubbing like this [slowly]; you'd never make much time, listening to the music at that pace. So I changed the whole format around, and from eight to nine in the morning we put on some lively music so you'd get your work done.

Laurie Irvine: Early broadcasters used to really *know* music in a rather odd sort of way. Our listeners [were] the same. Everybody knew musicians for the sound they produced. It was no trick at all to run contests saying "Who is the tenor sax in this selection?" The

Opposite: Fred Bass was staff pianist and music director at CKWX for many years.
(Dominion Photo Co: VPL no. 26366)

thing wouldn't be rolling 16 bars before the phone was jingling off the hook with the right answer. We had a lot of fun with that.

Ernie Rose: The transmitter at CKMO was in terrible shape, so Ray Mackness, who was then the chief engineer, and myself decided we would rebuild the transmitter. We were on the air all through the day; we used to sign off at 11:30 at night. So from 11:30 at night we used to work on this new transmitter. While we were there, we used to play records, just for our own amusement. They'd go over the air, and we just kept playing the Fats Wallers and the Benny Goodmans and whatever was "vogue" in 1934, and there was lots of it. We used to identify the station maybe every 15 or 20 minutes. We'd just say, "This is CKMO in Vancouver on 1410," and then we'd just go on playing records while we were working and burning the midnight oil.

The Australian ships, the *Aorangi* and the *[Niagara]*, were running then. Everytime an Australian boat would come in we'd get mail [from] people, saying that they could hear this station in Vancouver, Canada, on 1410—this little 100-watter. They would say, "At such-and-such a time you played such-and-such a number." This was what we called "DX" in ham radio; DX is distance. At that time, the station didn't have money to send out even postcards [of confirmation], and I certainly wasn't going to do it out of my meagre salary. So I decided that every night, while I was playing, I'd answer these cards over the air. Two or three times through the night, we would stop and say, "Mr. So-and-so in Sydney, we received your card, and this is to verify that you were really listening to us. If you're listening to us now, please send us another card." We were getting a tremendous amount of mail from down under.

While we were doing this, people in Vancouver suddenly started to hear it. They would phone up and say, "Look, while you're playing something, why don't you play this?" So we'd play some of their music. We were doing the thing we wanted to do. It was a fun thing—very loose, very informal. It eventually turned out to be what we called "The DX Prowl." Then the management said, "Can we get a sponsor?" The one and only sponsor that we started with was the Owl Cab Company, so the "DX Prowl" became the "DX Owl Prowl," and eventually the "Owl Prowl."

LAURIE IRVINE: Our record shows on CKWX were all done complete with a script. In other words, you didn't just run music; you ran a quarter-hour of waltz time and a half-hour of Guy Lombardo. Or you had a slot which was labelled "The Big Bands" and you did a half-hour show, each show being a different big band. You picked up the theme of the band, you picked the music, you put the thing into a flow of tempo. You timed the intro [of each piece] so you could start the music going, wait three seconds and speak for seven, which let you hit the melody right on the button. The copy department wrote the copy that went in between.

The criterion in those days was that a record show not [sound like] records. When you got off [the air], you asked, "Did that sound like a live show?" We even put applause into the things. I remember doing a show which was a copy of "Make-Believe Ballroom." We put in reverberation and applause and everything else. It was a tough job to [detect] that it wasn't a dance band broadcasting from some big hotel someplace, except for the fact there was a local announcer.

One of the most enduring figures on the entertainment side of radio in British Columbia was Billy Browne. He was a fixture on the airwaves from the thirties through the fifties, hosting a variety of programs—first on CKMO, then CKWX, and finally on CJOR. Allan Klenman recalls Browne's popular programs on CKWX.

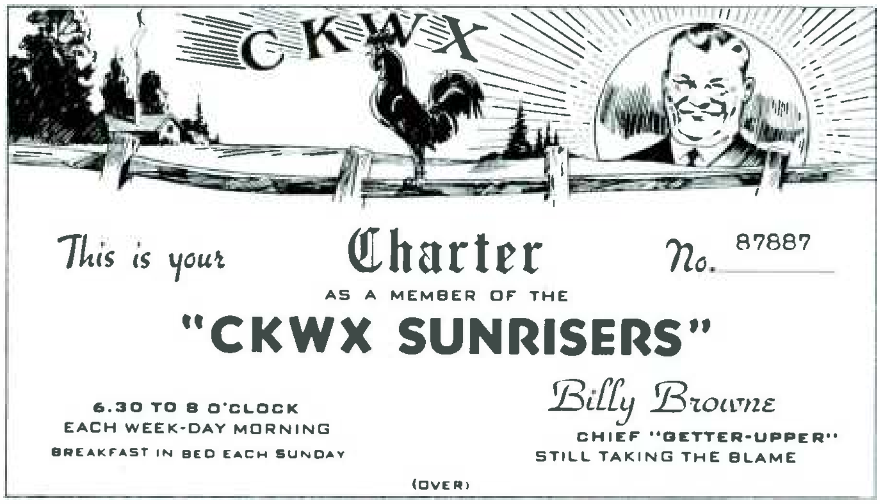
ALLAN KLENMAN: Billy Browne had a program from 2:30 to 3:30 every afternoon, and it ran on radio in Vancouver for over 15 years. He had the largest single audience of any individual [program]—news or anything else. He was in a class by himself. His forte was British music, through recordings of the British artists of the time.

He had this afternoon program, which was called "Billy Browne's Brevities." This should be recalled, because it's going to be lost unless someone remembers it. Here's a man who sat in a little studio and turned out all the lights, except one light directly above his script. He would sit there and he would have his head down, resting on his hands, and he would be reading these poems and interesting stories. He had his music selected, and we would have special records ready to play after a certain poem or story that he would read. Sometimes he would have his music in the background, and he would ask for it to be raised or lowered at certain stages of the reading. I would be sitting there watching for his every cue. For a good number of years, I was the only man that he would allow to operate his program for him. I was in sympathy with his work; I didn't make light of his program. I felt that he was trying to create something, and I was serious about it.

[He would read] homey stories, philosophy and poems bringing out the good deeds of life. The writer Edgar Guest was very popular on his program, and a number of other people. Billy Browne himself was [a veteran of] the First World War, and [during World War II] he brought out a lot of wartime nostalgia. He featured Great Britain and the boys "over there"; that was his great feature, along with these poems. It was our most popular afternoon program.

One of the most interesting things about this particular program was that we had the only copy [in Vancouver] of Jan Peerce singing "The Bluebird of Happiness." It was on a special transcription service, World Transcription Service, which was very expensive. [The song] became so popular that everyone wanted it to be played at every time of the day. The station management made a decision that Billy Browne could play it every Wednesday afternoon at exactly 2:30. And you could imagine the radios turning on; you could just about hear them clicking on, all around the city. If I said there were 60 or 70 letters asking for dedications on that one record, it would not be an exaggeration. He was the only one that played that for years and years. You could go out and talk to the people that I met in the normal walk of life, and they said, "Oh, yes, we'll be tuning in on Wednesday. We want to hear Billy Browne play 'The Bluebird of Happiness.'"

His morning program, "Billy Browne's Sunrise Club," was for the few that had to get up early in the morning. He gave out membership cards. You had to phone in to prove to him that you were up between 6:30 and 7 o'clock in the morning; then he would mail you one of these [cards] and you were a member of the club. My number was [about] 87,900, so we see that through the years he had given a lot of membership cards. He would play George Formby and people like that, and rousing marches, and English comedy, and songs like "Knees Up, Mother Brown." He had a tremendous English family following: people that were from the old country, or "Blighty," as he called it. Well, that was Billy Browne.



CKWX

This is your Charter No. 87887

AS A MEMBER OF THE

"CKWX SUNRISERS"

6.30 TO 8 O'CLOCK
EACH WEEK-DAY MORNING
BREAKFAST IN BED EACH SUNDAY

Billy Browne
CHIEF "GETTER-UPPER"
STILL TAKING THE BLAME

(OVER)

Another form of programming popular with both listeners and advertisers was the live sports broadcast. It was not always as popular with the broadcasters themselves, however, as it presented a unique challenge to anyone unfamiliar with the game in question.

Canada's first hockey broadcast was heard from Toronto arena on February 8, 1923. Some time later—probably late in 1924—Milton Stark arranged for a hockey game to be broadcast over CFYC in Vancouver. While the broadcast was clearly not "the second in the world," it was certainly the first such broadcast in British Columbia. It was picked up from the Denman Arena over a telephone line that had been put in to carry Mackenzie King's speech on CFYC.

MILTON STARK: That was in the arena. I had read where they put on the first hockey broadcast in Toronto. So I told this to Guy Patrick. "Why not broadcast the second in the world, here in Vancouver? It won't cost you anything, we've got the line in."

We set up the apparatus in the press box before the boys arrived. I had the amplifier, the storage batteries and the microphone down on the floor. Before the game got started, Andy Lytle, who had the highest reputation for a sports announcer, saw us—we were in his section—and he says, "Get the hell out of here!" So I had nothing to do but get the hell out of there. I pushed the stuff over to the aisle, and the game starts. I don't know anything about hockey; I can say, "The blues are doing this to the

B. F. GOODRICH
Baseball Broadcasts
980 ON YOUR DIAL
CKWX

Announcer Don McKim and technician Glen Robitaille marshal their energies for a broadcast from Vancouver's Athletic Park, ca. 1940.

reds," or "The reds are doing this to the blues." I had an overcoat on, and I put the microphone under the overcoat so people wouldn't be asking me, "What the hell is this?" Then a fellow from the Vancouver *Province*—Patterson—he came over and broadcasted the second hockey game on radio in the world into my coat pocket.

Ross MacIntyre: [There was] a six-day bike race. I don't know why they insisted I go and do it; I didn't know anything more about a six-day bike race than I do about running a submarine. In fact, I think I know more about running a submarine; at least I know it must submerge. When they start these jams on a six-day bike race, you've got 12 riders out there, we'll say, and they're changing positions all the time. You never know who's leading, or by how many laps. That was rough. I don't think I said anything I shouldn't have. The trouble was, I couldn't say anything. I didn't know what to say. I sure signed that show off as soon as I could.

Jim Laurie: We used to go out and do baseball pickups from Athletic Park, just to the left of the [south] end of the Granville Bridge. As a matter of fact, we were on [the air] the night they turned the lights on for the first night baseball. Charlie Defieux and I were doing it. We sat right behind the batter. The ball just zinged in, and the mike was right up against the chicken wire at the back there; the ball hit the mike and slapped it into Charlie's face—darn near broke his nose. We went back the next week and damned if the same thing didn't happen again!

Alan Ramsden: The first national network broadcast that originated in Nelson was done by Bill Good at the famous Nelson Summer Bonspiel. He came out from Winnipeg, and the CBC arranged that he do his broadcast from our studio at CKLN. They sent a technician and a producer up from Vancouver to do this broadcast. Two things happened to me.

I had never really been terribly interested in sports in school—I wasn't into baseball, hockey or curling—and here's this curling bonspiel. The woman who was the manager of the station just told me on Saturday, "Be at the curling rink at 7 o'clock Monday morning. The fellow who's doing the technical installation is going to put the amplifier in at the rink, and you'll be doing the curling broadcast." In those days, I had supreme confidence in myself, so I appeared at the curling rink about 6:30 in the morning to find out what the curling game was all about. They were so busy getting ready that nobody had time to talk to me.

When I got on the air, the first thing I found out was that I didn't know how to read the score board. I wasn't sure whether the tallies were marking the ends that the score was, or whether the score was the end [number]. I'm sure there were some vivid and marvelous phone calls going to the station over this scoring business, the first 20 minutes I was on the air. I got a really quick and rough introduction into the world of curling. I wasn't in any way a sports broadcaster, but there was the opportunity, just flung at you, and you were just expected to go ahead somehow.

I was also selected to do the introduction to Bill Good's broadcast, which went on at a quarter to seven at night. We put the 6 o'clock news on the air, and they said, "Well, let's go into the studio and have a crack at it while the network show is on, so we can get all ready." I sat down and thought, "Well, here's another really interesting challenge." They handed me the script. It had about one sentence on it, I think. It said something like, "Here's Bill Good with the western sports news." I think it took almost the 45 minutes that were left between then and the actual broadcast for Tony Geluch [the CBC technician] to convince me that I shouldn't call it "nooz." He insisted that the word was "news." These four or five deathless lines were my introduction to network broadcasting, and I had a hard time managing *that*! I always remembered the time I spent learning how to say "news" just the way it was wanted on the CBC.

Programming from the two networks of the CBC was playing an increasingly prominent part in the schedules of smaller stations. Quality program material was also available on disks from expanding music libraries and transcription services in the United States.

ALAN RAMSDEN: Aside from the regular network feeds, we did a lot of record programs. Record programs were based on two sources, one being the 78s of the day—the popular music and classical and so on. The other source was to subscribe to a transcription service, which was a music service.

JOHN BALDWIN: A great many services provided these transcribed programs. In the early stages, the disks would be 16 inches in diameter, and the very early ones were thick. NBC came out with their Thesaurus Library Service. They had cued selections and libraries that told you what number was where. You could then build programs. NBC sent along suggested program formats: fifteen minutes of songs, or of violin playing or whatever. This sort of programming was very valuable to a station in areas like Kamloops or Kelowna—"the hinterlands"—because they could suddenly start to bring a professional atmosphere to their broadcasting, rather than rely on what was coming through the CBC in fiddle and flute.

Though network programming and transcription services broadened the commercial base of broadcasting, it can be argued that they also started the gradual move away from distinctive and varied local programming on radio. Programming on modern independent stations, while predominantly local in origin, is very limited in type: news, sports coverage, talk shows, and recorded music. The scope and variety of radio in the pre-television era have vanished.

DICK BATEY: One of the salesmen and I were sitting down in the Island Farms place on Broughton Street [in Victoria], having a glass of milk. He was trying to figure out something to sell the Island Farms. He said, "Maybe they want to sell milk to children. What would children like?" We agreed that maybe they liked bedtime stories. He says, "Dick, can you tell bedtime stories?" I said, "Sure I can tell bedtime stories." "Okay, do one."

I have always been fond of making machine noises, engine noises, that sort of thing. At one time, I was fairly good at it; I liked doing it and I liked children. So I dreamt up this idea for "The Big Red Barn," which was peopled by a bunch of machines. There was Bruce the Big Bulldozer, Betty the Baby Bulldozer, Cuthbert the Crane, Terry the Trailer Truck, Gus the Gas Shovel, and a bunch of others. Every night at 7:20, for ten minutes, I'd have these crazy stories about Bruce the Big Bulldozer and Betty the Baby Bulldozer. She'd get stuck in a ditch and Bruce would come along and pull her out, complete with engine noises and the whole works. At the end of it I'd say, "Okay, everybody off to bed!" and I'd bang this gong thing I had. We used to hear from dozens and dozens of parents who said that their children simply wouldn't go to bed until they'd heard the story and I'd told them to get to bed.

One of the most fascinating little human interest offshoots of that: Frank Copley used to have a machinery outfit out on Carey Road. He had a big barn; it was painted red, and that's where he kept his equipment. When Copley's men were out with bulldozers, children would come up and say, "Is that Bruce the Big Bulldozer?" And the men, to their credit, would never spoil the illusion. They'd always say, "No, this isn't Bruce. He's back in the Big Red Barn. He's had to have one of his tracks fixed today."

That was the basic advantage of radio drama and radio storytelling. You didn't have bulldozers spelled out for you in pictures; you imagined them, and your imagination is a damn sight better than most pictures. I had many adults stop me in the street and say, "You know, we listen to that blinking program." I'd say, "Do you? Why?" They said, "Well, frankly, we really don't know how you're going to get yourself out of some of those fixes." I said, "If it's any consolation, neither do I." I didn't have any script, and I would just ad-lib my way, sometimes, into the damnedest corners—you know, with a gas shovel upended in a corner with a tree stump sticking out of his arse end. He'd have to call for Bruce the Big Bulldozer; then Betty would come along and help, and they'd load everybody on Terry the Trailer Truck. At any rate, that was a very satisfying series.

Children's programs emphasizing safety were popular in the 1930s and 1940s. Allan Klenman (standing) was the studio technician for this broadcast of "The Crone Safety Show" from CKWX's main studio, ca. 1941.

CHANGES

Harold Paulson: In the early days, we used to "throw" our voices. You had the feeling that the microphone needed help, and we trained our voices to "throw." One night you'd feel that your voice was going to Blaine, Bellingham, Seattle; another night, why, you felt it couldn't get further than the border. And some nights you'd just feel everything ringing right out. Rather peculiar, how we used to train ourselves.

Radio programming developed rapidly in the period between the World Wars. Electronics and broadcast technology were also developing, but it was very difficult for the smaller independent stations to keep abreast of these changes.

Up until 1940, one of the main problem areas in radio was the allocation of broadcasting frequencies. As station after station went on the air across North America, the number of frequencies available for use became quite limited. The problem was compounded by the fact that even low-powered stations could be received at a great distance, particularly at night. It was not unusual for transmissions from the United States or Mexico to interfere with the reception of local stations in British Columbia.

Because of the limited number of frequencies available, stations were often forced to share frequencies on a part-time basis. This was especially true in Vancouver, which until 1939 had two more stations than any other Canadian city. At times, as many as seven stations were sharing as few as two or three frequencies. This made for complicated broadcast schedules, with stations signing on and off the air throughout the day.

Ian Clark: CKWX, CKMO, CKCD, CHLS and CKFC all shared one frequency [until the early thirties].* I would say that CKWX and CKMO had the bulk of the time. CKFC came third, CHLS fourth, and CKCD, which merely carried the news, [fifth]. The government were studying how best to divide the broadcast band. In those days there were no [international] regulations. Until the North American Broadcasting Agreement came into effect, it was pretty much of a dog's breakfast.

The North American Broadcasting Agreement, worked out at a conference in Havana in 1937, was an international pact dividing broadcast frequencies and setting permissible power output among stations in the United States, Canada, Cuba and Mexico. One effect of the agreement was to give each station a clear frequency in its own region. In Vancouver it became essential to reduce the number of stations and consolidate their programming. As a result, CKCD and CKFC went off the air in 1940.

Another factor in the confusing state of the airwaves was the so-called "self-exciting oscillator" that determined the frequency of the early transmitters. A less than exact piece of equipment, it allowed the stations to wander from their assigned frequencies—and not always by accident.

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* CJOR and CNRV shared a second frequency.

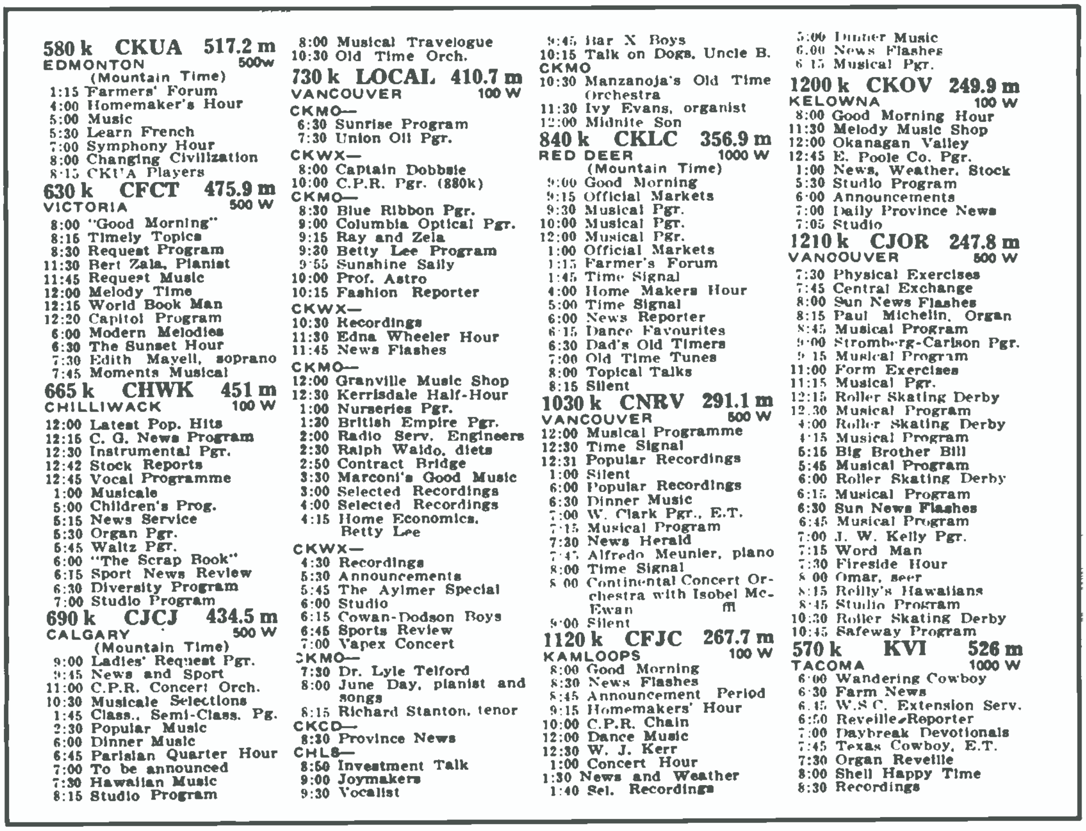
Ian Clark: One time, my dad and my brothers in Grand Forks were listening in to our station [CKFC in Vancouver], and there was interference. So I said, "Well, we'll just change the frequency a little bit," and I got up and tuned the thing down, so that it got on another frequency that wasn't occupied. They received the programming very well. Of course, this wasn't according to Hoyle.

Ross MacIntyre: [CFXC] didn't work too well on the frequency it was supposed to be on. [We'd change it] if we found a better place on the band. The radio inspector used to go crazy. He'd come over and set the Westminster station up on frequency, and by the time he got back to Vancouver I had it back on the band where it worked.

Ian Clark: Mr. [Bowerman] was the radio inspector in Vancouver in those days—just a splendid gentleman, a man of great compassion [who] understood things. We got into several problems, technically [at CKFC], operating on the wrong frequency and various things. [Bowerman] knew we were trying to do our best. We weren't always successful, and we got off on the wrong tangents and what have you, but at no time did he threaten to cancel the licence. He just drew it to our attention and said, "Fellows, this is not good enough. You have to do such-and-such." We respected him very highly. I think there were times, to be honest with you, when he kind of closed his eyes and his ears and said, "Well, they're at least doing something." He was a very understanding man, fortunately.

Eventually, at the urging of the government, self-exciting oscillators gave way to crystal-controlled transmitters, in which a vibrating crystal maintained the station at an exact frequency. But the crystals, like all early broadcasting equipment, had their own idiosyncrasies.

This radio program schedule for Monday, October 31, 1932, shows how the 730 kilocycle frequency was shared by Vancouver's low-powered stations. In addition to the stations shown, CKFC used the frequency on Sundays and certain weeknights.



580 k CKUA 517.2 m
EDMONTON 500w
(Mountain Time)
1:15 Farmers' Forum
4:00 Homemaker's Hour
5:00 Music
5:30 Learn French
7:00 Symphony Hour
8:00 Changing Civilization
8:15 CKUA Players

630 k CFCT 475.9 m
VICTORIA 500 W
8:00 "Good Morning"
8:15 Timely Topics
8:30 Request Program
11:30 Bert Zala, Pianist
11:45 Request Music
12:00 Melody Time
12:15 World Book Man
12:20 Capitol Program
6:00 Modern Melodies
6:30 The Sunset Hour
7:30 Edith Mayell, soprano
7:45 Moments Musical

665 k CHWK 451 m
CHILLIWACK 100 W
12:00 Latest Pop. Hits
12:15 C. G. News Program
12:30 Instrumental Pgr.
12:42 Stock Reports
12:45 Vocal Programme
1:00 Musicale
5:00 Children's Prog.
5:15 News Service
5:30 Organ Pgr.
5:45 Waltz Pgr.
6:00 "The Scrap Book"
6:15 Sport News Review
6:30 Diversity Program
7:00 Studio Program

690 k CJCJ 434.5 m
CALGARY 500 W
(Mountain Time)
9:00 Ladies' Request Pgr.
9:45 News and Sport
11:00 C.P.R. Concert Orch.
10:30 Musicale Selections
1:45 Class., Semi-Class. Pg.
2:30 Popular Music
6:00 Dinner Music
6:45 Parisian Quarter Hour
7:00 To be announced
7:30 Hawaiian Music
8:15 Studio Program
8:00 Musical Travelogue
10:30 Old Time Orch.

730 k LOCAL 410.7 m
VANCOUVER 100 W
CKMO—
6:30 Sunrise Program
7:30 Union Oil Pgr.
CKWX—
8:00 Captain Dobbsie
10:00 C.P.R. Pgr. (880k)
CKMO—
8:30 Blue Ribbon Pgr.
9:00 Columbia Optical Pgr.
9:15 Ray and Zela
9:30 Betty Lee Program
9:55 Sunshine Sally
10:00 Prof. Astro
10:15 Fashion Reporter
CKWX—
10:30 Recordings
11:30 Edna Wheeler Hour
11:45 News Flashes
CKMO—
12:00 Granville Music Shop
12:30 Kerrisdale Half-Hour
1:00 Nurseries Pgr.
1:30 British Empire Pgr.
2:00 Radio Serv. Engineers
2:30 Ralph Waldo, diets
2:50 Contract Bridge
3:30 Marconi's Good Music
3:00 Selected Recordings
4:00 Selected Recordings
4:15 Home Economics, Betty Lee
CKWX—
4:30 Recordings
5:30 Announcements
5:45 The Aylmer Special
6:00 Studio
6:15 Cowan-Dodson Boys
6:45 Sports Review
7:00 Vapex Concert
CKMO—
7:30 Dr. Lyle Telford
8:00 June Day, pianist and songs
8:15 Richard Stanton, tenor
CKCD—
8:30 Province News
CHLS—
8:50 Investment Talk
9:00 Joymakers
9:30 Vocalist
9:45 Bar X Boys
10:15 Talk on Dogs, Uncle B.
CKMO
10:30 Manzanoja's Old Time Orchestra
11:30 Ivy Evans, organist
12:00 Midnite Son

840 k CKLC 356.9 m
RED DEER 1000 W
(Mountain Time)
9:00 Good Morning
9:15 Official Markets
9:30 Musical Pgr.
10:00 Musical Pgr.
12:00 Musical Pgr.
1:00 Official Markets
1:15 Farmer's Forum
1:45 Time Signal
4:00 Home Makers Hour
5:00 Time Signal
6:00 News Reporter
6:15 Dance Favourites
6:30 Dad's Old Timers
7:00 Old Time Tunes
8:00 Topical Talks
8:15 Silent

1030 k CNRV 291.1 m
VANCOUVER 500 W
12:00 Musical Programme
12:30 Time Signal
12:31 Popular Recordings
1:00 Silent
6:00 Popular Recordings
6:30 Dinner Music
7:00 W. Clark Pgr., E.T.
7:15 Musical Program
7:30 News Herald
7:45 Alfredo Meunier, piano
8:00 Time Signal
8:00 Continental Concert Orchestra with Isobel McEwan
9:00 Silent

1120 k CFJC 267.7 m
KAMLOOPS 100 W
8:00 Good Morning
8:30 News Flashes
8:45 Announcement Period
9:15 Homemakers' Hour
10:00 C.P.R. Chain
12:00 Dance Music
12:30 W. J. Kerr
1:00 Concert Hour
1:30 News and Weather
1:40 Sel. Recordings
5:00 Dinner Music
6.00 News Flashes
6:15 Musical Pgr.

1200 k CKOV 249.9 m
KELOWNA 100 W
8:00 Good Morning Hour
11:30 Melody Music Shop
12:00 Okanagan Valley
12:45 E. Poole Co. Pgr.
1:00 News, Weather, Stock
5:30 Studio Program
6:00 Announcements
7:00 Daily Province News
7:05 Studio

1210 k CJOR 247.8 m
VANCOUVER 500 W
7:30 Physical Exercises
7:45 Central Exchange
8:00 Sun News Flashes
8:15 Paul Michelin, Organ
8:45 Musical Program
9:00 Stromberg-Carlson Pgr.
9:15 Musical Program
11:00 Form Exercises
11:15 Musical Pgr.
12:15 Roller Skating Derby
12.30 Musical Program
4:00 Roller Skating Derby
4:15 Musical Program
5:15 Big Brother Bill
5:45 Musical Program
6:00 Roller Skating Derby
6:15 Musical Program
6:30 Sun News Flashes
6:45 Musical Program
7:00 J. W. Kelly Pgr.
7:15 Word Man
7:30 Fireside Hour
8:00 Omar, seer
8:15 Reilly's Hawaiians
8:45 Studio Program
10:30 Roller Skating Derby
10:45 Safeway Program

570 k KVI 526 m
TACOMA 1000 W
6:00 Wandering Cowboy
6:30 Farm News
6.45 W.S.C. Extension Serv.
6:50 Reveille-Reporter
7:00 Daybreak Devotionals
7:45 Texas Cowboy, E.T.
7:30 Organ Reveille
8:00 Shell Happy Time
8:30 Recordings

Jim Browne Jr.: One occasion was very amusing. Fred Weber, a darn good engineer, was out at the [CKOV] transmitter. He couldn't get it on the air, and he phoned me. I struggled out of bed at some ungodly hour of the morning, and down I walked. I said, "What's the trouble?" He said, "We can't get it on the air." I knew what the matter was; it was the crystal. Those damned old crystals sat in a little wooden box, and they'd sit too long in one spot. I figured that was the trouble right away. I had big work boots on, and I just gave it a hell of a boot in the ribs. Bingo! Everything lights up, and away she goes; I walked back out the door. Fred never got over that.

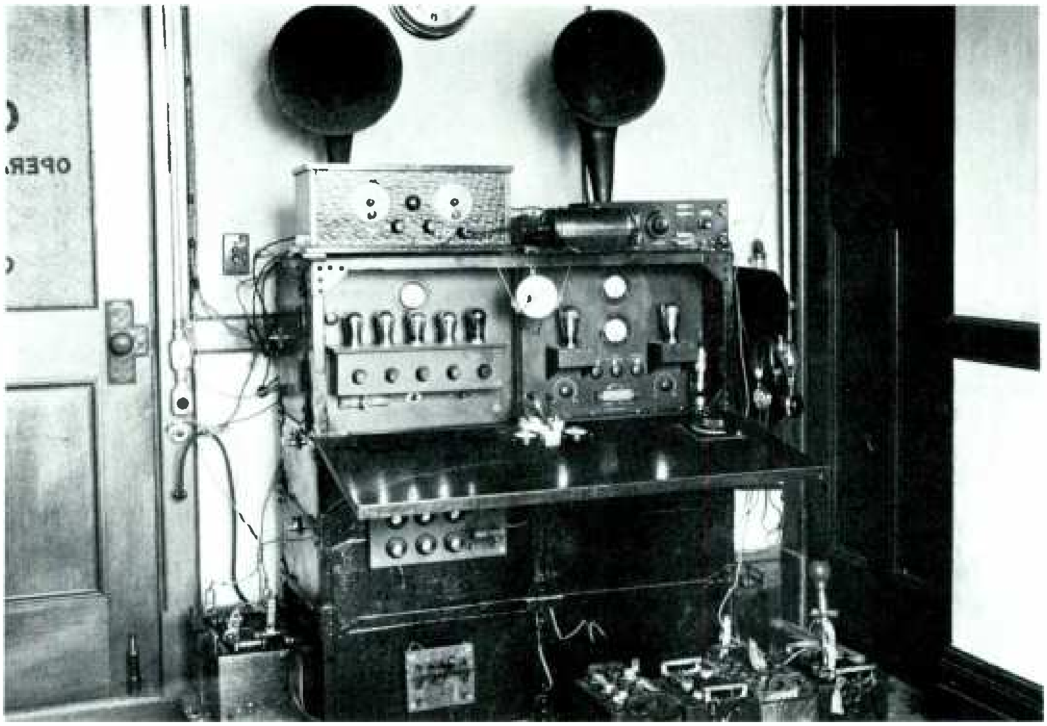
John Avison: [In the twenties] no one who worked in a radio studio for any length of time would go without a screwdriver. The microphones were made up of granules of carbon, and at times the carbon would pack down and the microphone would go dead. Having received from the engineer the information that the microphone wasn't operating, you took the screwdriver out of your back pocket and pounded the microphone with it. It must have made a great noise when the microphone came on; I can't recall, because I was busy pounding the back of microphones.

Ian Clark: Up until 1940 every private broadcaster had home-built equipment. I'm not speaking of big stations like CFRB in Toronto; I'm speaking of Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, and smaller communities such as Kamloops and Kelowna and Prince Albert.

[At CFJC], we were putting about 10 or 12 amps into our antenna and, gosh, you could go along the wire fence out in front of the place and draw sparks with a phonograph needle. There was a lady who lived across the street from the transmitter. One day she came along and said, "I just don't understand it. The radio station is coming out of my stove!" So over we go, and sure enough, the thing was singing away. She was boiling cabbage; I've never had it fully explained to me, but the leaves of the cabbage rectified the signal, it was so strong. It caused sound to come out of it. [The saucepan amplified it] and it was quite clear.

One time we lost a condenser that was used in the tuning of the antenna. To get one of these condensers, we had to send back east and, gad, we were going to be off the air maybe a couple of weeks. So we had to make up something. We got a big glass pan from one of our ladies; we got some aluminum and some knitting needles. We built this condenser and poured castor oil on it, to complete the capacity of the condenser. We got this thing all rigged up and all connected at around 10 o'clock at night. Laurie Irvine was there, and Doug Homersham and myself. Doug was sitting on top of the transmitter, working on this antenna tuning unit, and he said, "I think we're all set to go." We had a motor generator in those days; Laurie said, "Go in the back room and get her going." So I went in and kicked the thing up. It turned out 2200 volts of direct current. You had to start to consume that current as soon as you started the generator, otherwise it would be turning into heat. As soon as it started up, Laurie could hear the thing, so he threw the switch and the whole thing blew up! Doug was just absolutely covered from head to foot with castor oil, and Laurie too. You never heard such shouting going on. We were off the air most of the next day before we devised a way to get this thing going.

Ernie Rose: At CKMO you just didn't buy things unless you had to. I think the way we operated was on the basis of "not good, but loud." I'd listen to the radio at home and I'd measure the voltage and say, "CKWX is pushing a little more signal today." So I'd go up to the transmitter, set up a few taps on the transformers, and go home and measure it; "Now I'm even with him." We'd stay even for two or three weeks or a month, and pretty soon Ross MacIntyre [at CKWX] would be bumping his up a bit more. It



The amplification control equipment for CFCT Victoria, ca. 1925.
(J. H. A. Chapman photo; PABC no. 95652)

eventually got so that on our so-called 100-watt transmitter we were running around 180 or 190 watts; the tubes were almost melting. But every once in a while we'd get a call from the radio inspector, who would say he'd better come to inspect us. Then we'd have to pull the power back down. I finally decided there was a better way. We put jumpers across the meters, and as we increased the power we jumpered the meters down, so it always read "100 watts."

ALAN RAMSDEN: If you were working around that equipment, you could tell just from the look of the tubes what the state of things were. If [they] were a certain shade of orange, you knew they were okay; you didn't have to worry about checking any other readings or any other parameters. You would watch those things very closely to see whether they were getting darker or not. At a certain stage, you'd realize that at the next possibility you'd be changing them. Changing them meant more than just throwing them in. It meant you had to put them in and warm them up and let the mercury disperse before you put any load on them, or you would destroy a brand new tube. In those days, tubes might be worth $45 or $50 apiece, which was going to be tough on your salary if you blew them up.

As radio advertising sales began to improve, it became possible for stations to buy new and reliable factory-built equipment, usually increasing their power output as they did so. Thus the "haywire" era of radio broadcasting gradually came to a close.

Another important area of technological development was the evolution of recording equipment. Up to the end of the Second World War, disks were the only commonly available method of pre-recording programs.

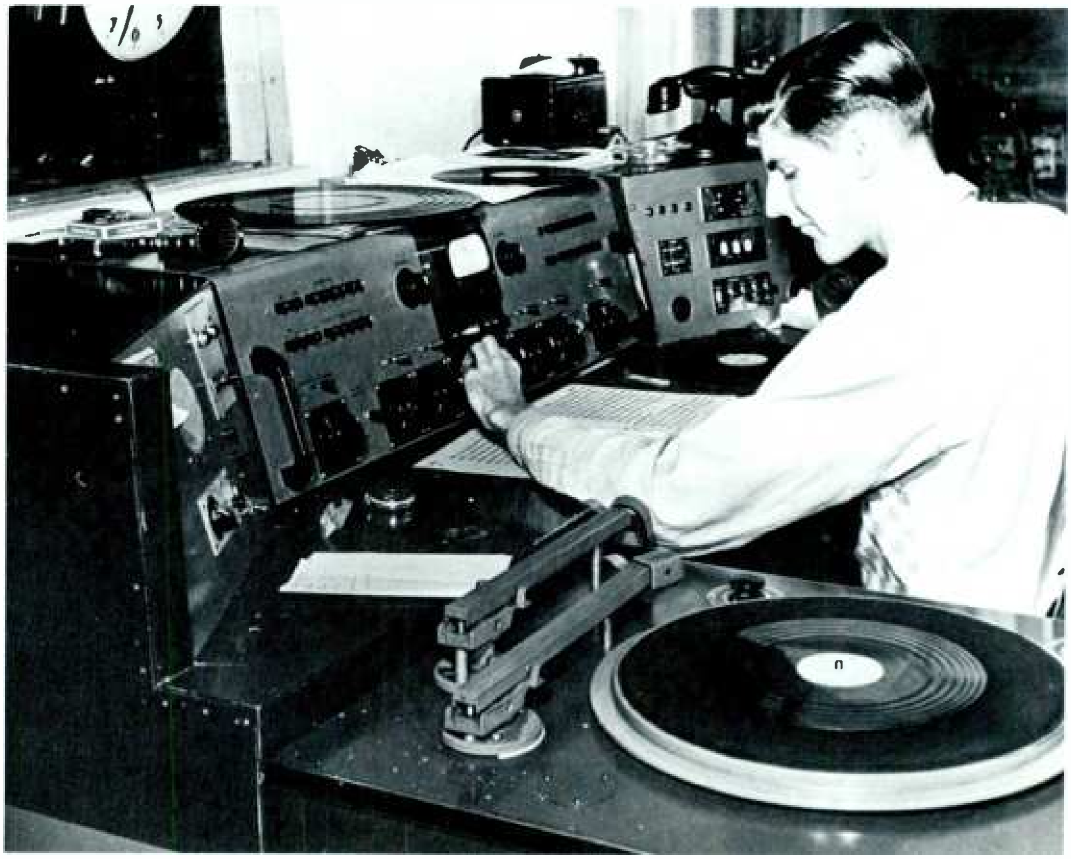
ALAN RAMSDEN: [The recorders] used instantaneous lacquer disks, acetate-coated aluminum disks. The disks were driven on what was called a lathe. The technique was to use the turntable. The cutting arm was mounted on it and it swung off like a pickup arm would, only much heavier. [There was] a threaded screw across the length of this lathe thing, and the end of it dropped over the center of the turntable. [The center post,] as it turned, turned a screw which turned the horizontal screw; the cutter arm engaged the screw, and that would give it its drive. It would travel across the face of the disk.

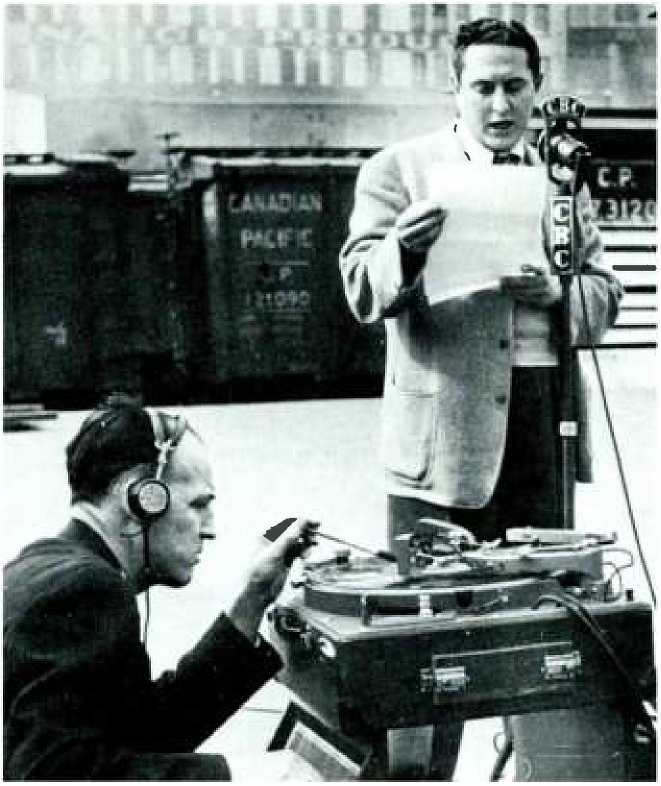
These disks would come in sealed boxes, because the lacquer material on them would dry out. You used to buy a limited number and only open, say, a package of them; then they would be used up fairly quickly for recording commercials or programs or whatever. They were good for two or three plays and sounded very good; after that, they began to deteriorate. After six months or so, they would get hard. It wasn't really economical material to record with, because you couldn't re-use it. Once it was cut, it was cut.

DON HORNE: Initially the disks were all on an aluminum base. Of course, when things got tough during the war, aluminum was no longer available, so they went on either a cardboard base or glass. The cardboard was terrible. The disks would almost always end up being concave or convex, depending on which side you looked at. Many a time, when we had to turn one over and use the other side, we actually had to tape the outside edge to the turntable to hold it down so we could cut it.

The glass disks were beautiful—except that, obviously, if you dropped it, you didn't get to play it even once. There was a fellow called Bob Bowman who, during the war, went around the country to places where the war effort was being carried on. When he was here [in Vancouver], he'd go to the shipyards, this type of thing, and we'd send out fellows with our portable recorders, all glass-based disks. I was assigned to mix this show; there was just an announcer, this Mr. Bowman, and Jimmy Gilmore, the sound effects man. We were getting ready to go before Mr. Bowman arrived. I had the

Operator Jack Hughes in one of CKWX's control rooms, ca. 1941. The equipment shown is "state of the art" for the time. CKWX was among the first stations to separate the roles of announcer and operator for all programming. The announcer would speak from a separate booth while the operator played the records and controlled the volume.





Announcer Bill Herbert recording a program "in the field" with technician Clayton Wilson in the 1940s. Herbert's commentary is being recorded on a Model Y disk recorder; Wilson is ensuring that the strands of cut acetate do not foul the cutting stylus.

studio set up, the announcer was there and I was there. Jimmy came bombing out of the sound effects office with his glass disks and the inevitable happened; every last disk broke.

Jimmy knew our sound effects library inside out. None of us breathed a word. We brought some disks in, the big ones, but Jimmy did the entire show from stuff we already had in the library. And got away with it!

After the war, another type of recorder became available which recorded sound magnetically on a length of moving wire. Wire recorders received limited on-air use before they were replaced by tape recorders, originally developed in Germany during the war.

Ian Clark: [Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip stopped in Kamloops during their Canadian tour of 1951.] There was quite a "do" down at Riverside Park: the mayor, the MLA, the MP and others, all welcoming these wonderful people to Kamloops. Prince Philip spoke [and we recorded the speech]. We were going to use an excerpt for the news, and we thought we'd start with Prince Philip; it was more or less a news clip. We had this wire recorder in the control room, and everything was ready to go. The news fellow in the studio introduced the thing. He talked about the train arriving in Kamloops, and escorting the couple down to the park, and all the people that were down at the park and what have you. Then he said, "And Prince Philip said . . ." and gives the guy the high sign, and on comes, "Syd Smith Limited! Oldsmobile, Cadillac, Chevrolet cars!" They got the thing turned off, and the fellow said, "Well, I think we goofed. Let's be honest about it, we really goofed."

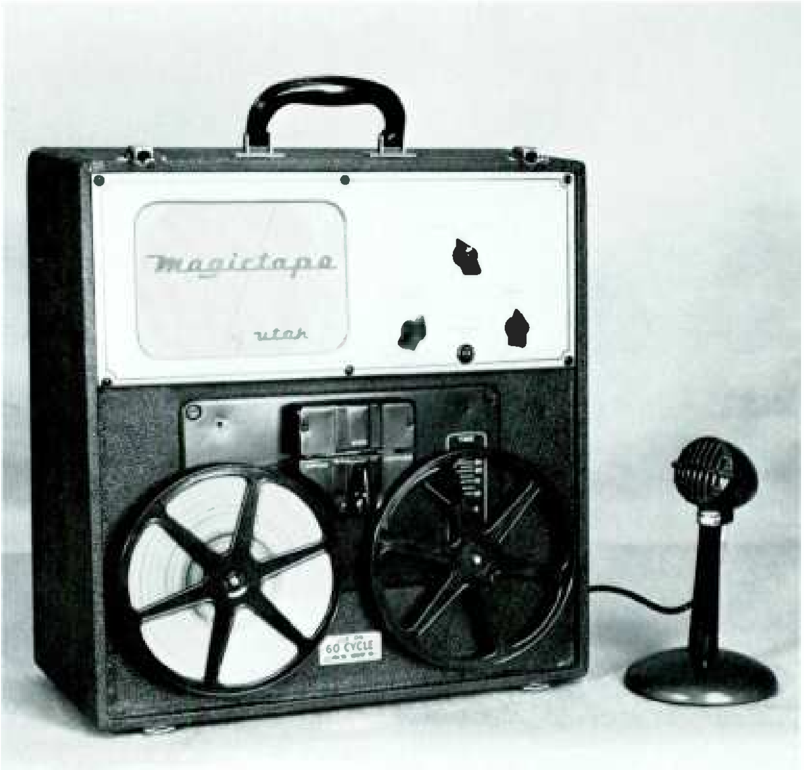
Alan Ramsden: When I was at the Trail radio station, they had just decided to buy the first RCA wire recorder. They used that a bit. We didn't find it too useful. [The wire] would break, and you'd have to tie a knot in it. They had no editing capability. There were lots of things wrong with wire recorders for on-air use; they were noisy, mechanically.

The first tape recorders we got used paper-based tape. It must have been 1947, I think, when I saw the first one. The tape was on an 8 mm. movie reel. The recorder looked very much like a movie projector. The reel-to-reel system of tape was synonymous with film; the difference was just the difference between the magnetic pick-up [in a recorder] and the light projecting equipment [in a movie projector]. [Paper tape was replaced by] the plastic-backed tape, which was much superior, except that it would stretch. If the tape got snagged or something, the take-up reel would pull it along and it would stretch the tape out of shape, and you'd get all sorts of weird sounds and problems. The other thing we found was that some chemicals, in the air, would strip the magnetic coating off the tape. I remember going to work one day; a painter had been in the place, and he'd left a jar of turpentine open in the room where the tape was. I put a reel of tape on and watched in horror as the program I was about to present peeled off on the machine into thousands of flakes. That meant ad-libbing right away and going into a music fill with records, then the boss phoning up, "What the heck's happened to that program?"

Another important postwar development was the growth of FM, or "frequency modulation," as a broadcast medium. FM broadcasting effectively reduced static for improved reception and provided more accurate reproduction of higher-pitched sounds. The CBC started British Columbia's first FM station in 1947, but private broadcasters in the province did not follow suit until the fifties and sixties.

The Second World War also altered the sound of radio in ways which were not, strictly speaking, technical in nature. One effect was the acceptance of women as announcers.

ALAN RAMSDEN: The image of the old radio announcer was the fellow with one hand cocked behind his ear and a deep, resonant, mellow tone. Most of the people in broadcasting who succeeded at all had that kind of a voice. They had an appealing



An early portable tape recorder, ca. 1947, threaded with a reel of paper-based recording tape. (VPL no. 28002) voice after it was projected from a speaker, and most of those speakers were pretty terrible. There was a feeling that men's voices had a better resonance or a deeper tone that was more suited to the speakers [they] were coming out of at the other end—although internationally, in shortwave radio, women's voices were probably more common. You could hear the international radio from various places and they nearly all had some women's voices on them.

DICK BATEY: [During the war] we had a shortage of good men announcers. As far as my memory serves, it was one of the first times we started using women on the air. The listeners didn't like women. If we used the women, the listeners would bitch like steers—and that's a contradiction in terms, if ever there was one—but anyway, they did.

ALAN RAMSDEN: I think during the war practically every station had some young women working on the station. Here in Nelson one of the girls in the office, Jean Underwood, used to do announcing—not a great deal, but some. In Trail, they had a young woman who was really an excellent announcer and worked all during the war years. I think that women were accepted, particularly in this part of the world. I don't remember any on the American stations, though, and I don't remember the network having women announcers until towards the end of the war. That seemed to be the pattern.

Partly as a result of the manpower shortage during World War II, women gradually became more accepted in on-air roles. (Duncan Macphail photo; PABC no. 95654)

THE NEWS

From the beginning, radio was seen as a medium of many facets. Its entertainment value did not obscure its ability to inform and instruct. Serious programming, including news, public events, religious services and political speeches, was heard on radio from its inception. However, the presentation of programs was often unsophisticated by modern standards.

JOHN BALDWIN: In the early stages of broadcasting, with some exceptions, news was largely theft from the papers or the periodicals of the time. The radio stations just clipped items from whichever newspaper happened to be in the area. They'd put it together and call it a newscast. They had no reporters of their own. They would have people phone in and tell them of anything that happened in the district. If you saw a barn fire, you got to the nearest phone and you phoned them.

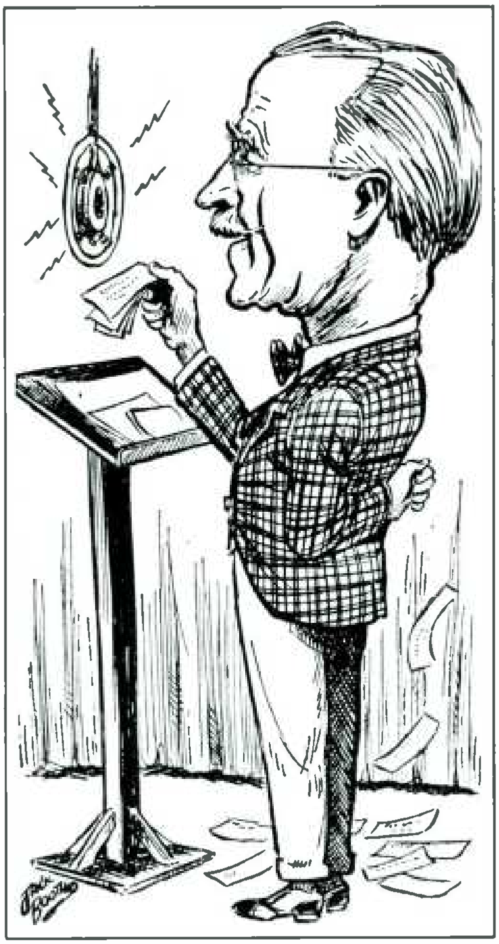
HAROLD PAULSON: At CKWX we used to broadcast about ten minutes of news at 6 o'clock every night. I'd have to go through the newspaper for news. Well, it's surprising; *you* try and find ten minutes of real "meatty" news [in] a newspaper. It's not easy. I used to take a black pencil and circle the paragraphs. There'd be a great long article, and I'd just glance down it and take the "meat." We'd cut it all out of the pages and make it compact, and when we read the news at night we'd just read these paragraphs.

SAM ROSS: Ken Hughes used to take the *Sun* into the studio and lay it out, and when the time came, there was "Ken Hughes and the News." He started to read, and he jumped from story to story. I said, "Ken, how do you know when to quit reading?" He said, "Well, if it gets dull for me, it gets dull for the audience, so I just quit." It was a good lesson; if it's too long for the announcer to read, the public will go.

JACK PILLING: [At CHWK,] old Casey Wells would grab the *[Chilliwack] Progress* when it came out on Wednesday and immediately put the news on the air. And Charlie Barber [of the *Progress*] would phone up and raise hell!

Most newspapers viewed the radio stations as upstart competitors for advertising revenue, and they were not happy about the use of their news copy on the air. But without access to teletype new services, and lacking news departments of their own, the stations' only source of news was the local paper. The stations owned by newspapers were in a much more favourable position. In Vancouver, the *Province*-owned CKCD featured a nightly newscast read by veteran reporter Earle Kelly, popularly known as "Mr. Good Evening." Kelly was also heard on other Vancouver stations at various times. In the years before World War II, he was British Columbia's best-known radio personality.

LAURIE IRVINE: Earle Kelly was a fantastic old skumdudgeon of a character [who] had all his own ideas about news broadcasting. He did a 15-minute newscast, and everybody in the province who could possibly hear him listened to him. He was unbelievable.



Province *reporter Earle Kelly read the nightly news on various Vancouver stations for nearly 20 years. This Jack Boothe caricature appeared in the* Province *the day after Kelly's death in April 1946.*

Sam Ross: Earle would walk in, put one of these printer rolls in a typewriter, look at his notes, and start typing—not a full newscast, but headlines and key words—and he went on the air and came off on the second every night, no matter what he did. He had a record of having 58 items, I think it was, in a 15-minute newscast. You say that's impossible, but the way he read it—and he was a slow reader—everything was a punch, every word *meant* something.

Don Laws: He always stood up [to broadcast] and worked this long roll of paper through his hands. He could put about 90 items into 15 minutes. He used to get terribly plastered occasionally, but you'd never know it unless you knew him. If you knew him, you would notice his sibilants would start to slip. One of the things he always did was give the position of the *Maquinna*, the CPR boat up the west coast of Vancouver Island. It was important, because people were never quite sure when this boat was going to come into their little dock or town. So Earle Kelly would say, "The S.S. *Maquinna*, southbound from Ucluelet, will be arriving at such-and-such a time." But if he was pixilated, it would come out, "The esth-esth *Maquinna*, sthouthbound. . . ."

Harold Paulson: Earle Kelly used to broadcast over CKWX, though he was with CKCD. I remember when Canada went off the gold standard, he said, "I'd better come up and do the story." It was such a traumatic event for mankind, he didn't think I was capable; it needed somebody more mature, so he came up and he announced it.

Sam Ross: There's a very good story about him. He had a particular sign-off, wishing everybody "a restful good evening." Every night it was the same, but with somebody picked out special. One night he said his regular "restful good evening, and especially to June brides." In about two seconds, the phone rang. "Mr. Good Evening, I heard your broadcast and I heard your sign-off. What June bride *wants* a restful good evening?"

ALAN RAMSDEN: Earle Kelly was sort of a radio institution in British Columbia. I was about eight, I think, when my father took me on a trip to Vancouver. We stood in the little sound booth where Earle Kelly was delivering his nightly news. When you were a guest at one of those performances, he always mentioned who he had in the studio with him. I also received all the clippings of the news for that broadcast. I think it was probably in the background of how I got into broadcasting.

SAM ROSS: The last time I saw Earle, he was coming down a hallway at CKWX, heading for the studio. He was driving himself then; he said, "Come on, Earle. Come on, Earle. You can make it, Earle." He was one of the greatest.

ROSS MACINTYRE: We had the *Sun* supplying news to CKWX. We put in an amplifier down there, and one of their staff members read the news—three times a day, I think. They had the news-gathering facilities which we didn't have, and I don't know where else we'd have got it. All there was was the Canadian Press wire service, and they only way you could use that was through a newspaper.

DON LAWS: CJOR was the first station in Vancouver to arrange for an outside news service. We arranged for Trans-Radio News, an American outfit that broadcast news to stations on shortwave. Vic Waters was a shortwave ham, and he would pick it up at his house and take it down by typewriter. Then he'd rush it down to the station.

Dick Diespecker was a very good news broadcaster, but he was also a good butt for practical jokes. Vic Waters was a bit of a wag. He knew that the taxi driver would rush the news copy down to the station about two minutes before it went on the air, and Dick would grab it and go into the studio. Dick was a pretty good sight reader; he didn't have to read it over. Vic started out with a perfectly logical news report, and then drifted off into a bunch of gobbledeygook. Diespecker would be going blithely along and he would get into this. This one time that I heard him, you could just see his face: "What's happening?" He was slowing down and slowing down. It didn't make any sense to him. Vic was listening at home and killing himself.

Of course, in those days we only put on news, basically, at 8 o'clock in the morning, 12 noon, 8 o'clock at night, and 10 o'clock at night. This "news on the hour, every hour" didn't start until the war.

RUDY HARTMAN: [When World War II began] CJAT had just acquired the Canadian Press wire [news service]. It was just like a ticker-tape, and that's the way the news came in. I think we had only had it for a few months, and it wasn't dependable. It would be there sometimes, and either the machine would fault or there would be a ban on broadcasting news. The CBC was carrying a lot of American programming, and the news from the different networks would be very active with bulletins and so forth. Programs would be interrupted, and this would be the first time that you would hear the teletype on a news broadcast. The program would be interrupted and the announcer would say, "We interrupt this program and we take you to our newsroom in New York." The teletypes would come in and you'd hear a bulletin about the war.

This happened almost at any time; ten minutes apart, five minutes apart. Programs would be interrupted just like mad in the early stages of the war. It got to the point that even when we were not on the network, we used to monitor the program that was on the CBC network at the time. As soon as we heard the program cut, we knew a bulletin was coming up and we'd join [the network]. We'd interrupt anything. Being a kid, I used to have a great time interrupting programs and commercials and everything else. We felt that these bulletins would naturally take priority.

This, of course, was before the CBC opened up its own news bureau. I guess they suddenly realized this was stupid, taking all the news developments from a foreign country and not doing it themselves.

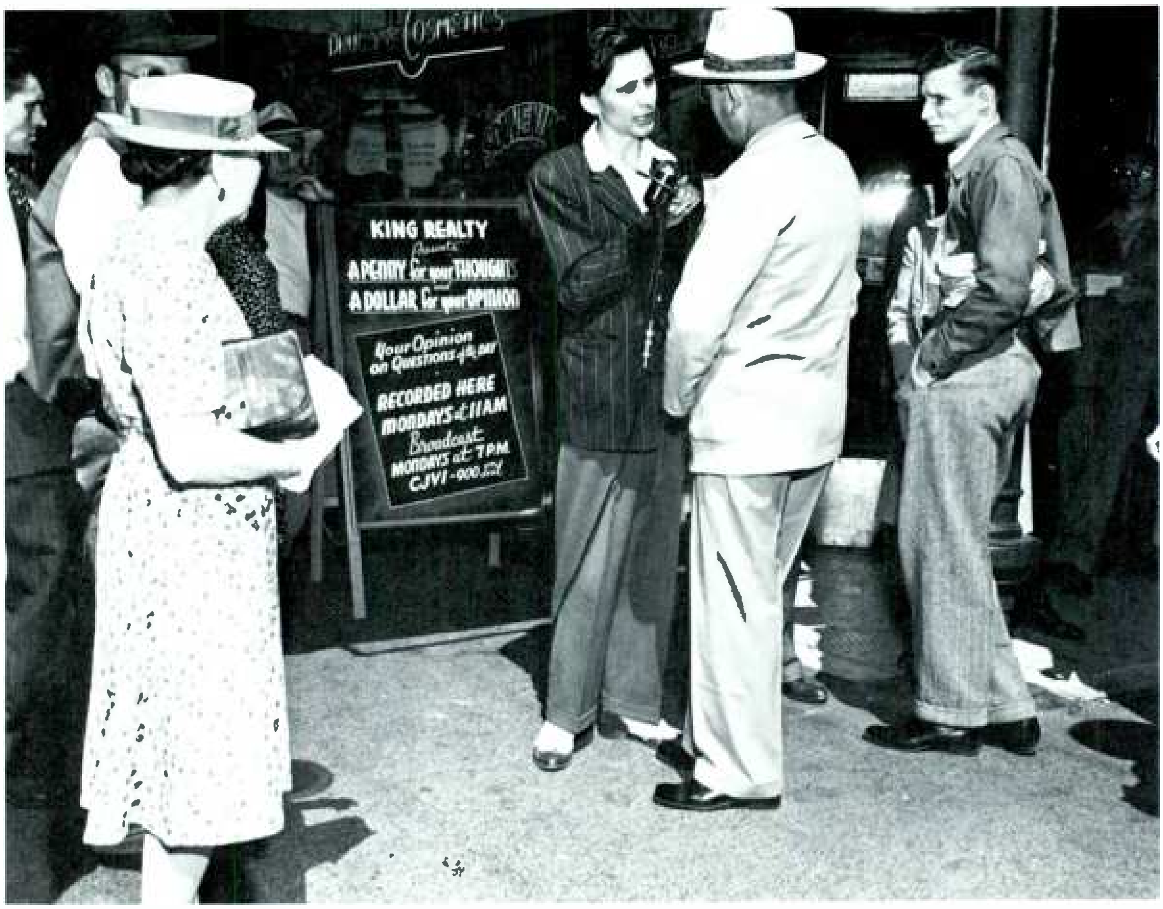
JACK PILLING: During the war years, the power of radio became apparent—the immediacy of radio. During those years, you could be almost sure that 90 percent of the population were tuned to the CBC at 10 o'clock at night when Lorne Greene gave the news, good or bad. This brought about an appreciation of the value of radio.

LAURIE IRVINE: Radio news was made by World War II. All of a sudden, people wanted to know about this thing that was going on, and newscasts became prime listening times. More stations began to get hep to this and go to work in the news area. Everyone said, "When the war's over, it's over, and that will be the end of the big boom in news." Of course, [they were] completely wrong, because by then people had been educated into realizing how much they wanted information about what was going on, particularly locally.

Before the advent of the portable tape recorder, on-location coverage of local events was carried live via telephone lines between the station and the location. Remote broadcasts were frequently done for entertainment programs, as well as for political speeches, church services, public occasions and news events.

Bill Tutte (left) and Ian Arrol at work in the CKWX newsroom, 1944. (Dominion Photo Co.; VPL no. 26358)

Canadian Pacific
CKWX


KING REALTY
presents
A PENNY for your THOUGHTS
A DOLLAR for your OPINION
Your Opinion on Questions of the day
RECORDED HERE MONDAYS at 11 AM
Broadcast MONDAYS at 7 PM
CJVI-900

A reporter records the opinions of passers-by for CJVI Victoria, ca. 1947. Man-in-the-street interviews were a popular feature of radio for many years, and a forerunner of today's "open-line" shows. (Duncan Macphail photo; PABC no. 95655)

DICK BATEY: We would go into what today are considered complicated live broadcasting situations, with nothing more than a bare-bones sheet with a few facts on it, and ad-lib around it. You had to be a good ad-libber. As a matter of fact, one of the minor training disciplines I exposed myself to was to go out on the roof and describe what I was looking at. If you think that's easy, you try doing it sometime! Try describing what you're looking at off the roof of a downtown building, in a reasonably attractive and coherent fashion. It's not easy to do, but it's something you learn to do.

You had to be pretty facile and precise in your speech. Victoria, historically, has been peopled by individuals who, to a surprising degree, are well-educated and cosmopolitan in their upbringing and experience. If we broadcast things that were either sloppy in speech or wrong in fact, we'd damn soon hear about it. As a consequence, we did our best to get announcers who had a good basic knowledge of English and the ability to pronounce it correctly. If anybody came here from eastern Canada, we always insisted that Toronto had two "t's" in it; it wasn't pronounced "Toronna." We emphasized precision in speech, probably to a greater degree than at present.

DON LAWS: We used to do a lot of unusual broadcasts. When the First Narrows [Lions Gate] Bridge was being built, when it was in the catwalk stage, Dick Diespecker climbed up and did a broadcast from the top of that bridge, describing the construction and everything. Hair-raising bloody thing, walking up this catwalk.

ALLAN KLENMAN: Radio was "now." If there was a fire up the street, the boys would grab a microphone and run out on the street with a long cord trailing. We had lines into about

12 or 15 locations at any given time. We could run out with a mike and a very small amplifier and plug it into the line, and we'd have these announcers giving a live story of what was happening on the street. We got the name of being the station "Johnny-on-the-spot."

FRED BASS: We [covered] a lot of outside events at CKWX; in fact, we built a big reputation on that. For instance, there was a big fire one night. I'd been broadcasting from the Capitol Theatre and I was just finishing. I put my earphones up on my ears to see if everything was okay and listen to the sign-off from the transmitter. It was Ross [MacIntyre]; he says, "Hey, Fred, great big fire over on Hamilton Street. Get over there, I'll meet you with the [shortwave] pack."

So I go down there. It was a peanut butter and margarine place, and it was really going. But we had passes through the police lines, and the fire chief had been a sergeant with me in France in the First World War. Sure enough, there's Ross. He straps the pack on my shoulders and I go right into it with the firemen—stand right by the nozzle, so you get the swish of water [as I] describe the fire.

DICK BATEY: During the war, we were building ships here [in Victoria]. One of them was built for the Dutch Navy. It was built by Yarrows, and it was going to be transferred, I think, to operate under the Royal Navy with a Dutch crew. Princess Juliana, who latterly became Queen Juliana, was living during the war in Ottawa, as my memory serves, and she came out here [in February 1944] to launch this ship. It was a big "do," a big social event. There were two sets of broadcasters there—Bill Herbert of the CBC and myself. Right around the bow of this ship had been built a platform for the brass. The shipyard brass were Mr. Norman Yarrow, the president, and Mr. Izard, the general manager. Also on the platform were Princess Juliana, some aides escorting her, two or three navy admiral types, and Bill Herbert and I, describing the goings-on.

When a ship is on its ways, there are a whole bunch of wedges that hold the ship in place. On a given signal, a bunch of men knock out the wedges all at once, and the ship plops down [the] greased ways and slides into the water. [In this case,] the signal was Mr. Izard pressing a button that lit a bunch of lights slung underneath the ship. The bottle of champagne that Princess Juliana was to use to launch the ship was held on a spring-loaded device; when she said, "I bless thee..." or whatever she did, she pressed a button and this spring-loaded device bonked the bottle up against the bow of the ship. Everything was under control—except that on the spring-loaded device, there was a safety catch so it couldn't be accidentally sprung, and somebody forgot to take out the safety catch.

The Princess declared the ship well and truly launched and reached over in a grand fashion to press the button. Mr. Izard pressed his button, the fellows all hit their wedges, the ship moved off—and the safety catch is still on the blasted bottle of champagne! Here's Batey and Herbert describing this state of affairs; we didn't know what in hell to say to cover up the embarrassment among that group.

They subsequently pulled the ship alongside the jetty and slung a rope down from the bow with the champagne on it. The princess took the rope and swung it up against the ship and broke the bottle of champagne. But that was the sort of thing [that could happen].

When tape recorders became generally available, recorded news clips began to take the place of live remotes. The fact that recordings could be re-done and edited for broadcast gave greater leeway for dealing with the unexpected.

IAN CLARK: The CPR was widening their railway tunnels ten or twelve miles west of Kamloops. They were starting their new "Canadian" passenger trains; evidently the cars swayed more or something, and they had to widen the tunnels a bit to make sure the cars would get through without scraping the walls. The CBC wanted a story for the National News, so Walter Harwood and I went to the CPR, got a motor speeder on the track and went down with our recording equipment. [We recorded the story there and] we brought it back and listened to the thing. It was all right, but it just didn't *sound* right, you know.

So Walter said, "Let's got up to your place, Ian. We'll start outside; we'll walk into the basement and from here into the fruit room under the stairs. That'll sound more like it, because it's got nothing but echo." So up we went. We started outside of the place and described what the "tunnel" looked like. We moved into the basement, and you could hear a different quality. We walked slowly into this cement room where all the fruit was stored, and that really sounded like a tunnel: a nice bassy boomy voice. We listened to the clip and said, "That's the thing." We got that down to the network and that night, on the 7 o'clock news, on it came. It sounded very good.

It was quite some time before I met the chap from Toronto who was in charge of this news. He said to me, "That news clip on the tunnel, that was very interesting."

I said, "Yeah, it was very nice. How do you like the weather out here in Vancouver? Do you like all this rain?"

"Well, I don't know about the rain. But tell me, what was involved?"

I said, "Well, we got a speeder and we went down to the tunnel—but you know, in Vancouver in the summertime, you couldn't find a nicer place than you could find here; the sun and all the beautiful water and the islands and what have you."

But he kept coming back to this clip, and I couldn't get him off it at all. Finally I up and confessed, and he was just madder 'n hops. He went up one side of me and down the other. He had no sense of humour!

As far as the network was concerned, that was the only thing we ever staged. After that, I would have been scared to death to stage *anything*.

Ian Clark was general manager of CKFC and the shortwave station CKFX when this photo was taken, ca. 1937.

CBC

THE PERFECT STAGE

ALLAN KLENMAN: Radio was imagination. People [sat] in their living rooms and they would have to imagine how a person looked and what was happening, just from the sound that came out of the speaker. Families would sit around for hours on end, imagining and listening to what was coming out of that one speaker.

Many people feel that radio reached its peak with the presentation of live drama. Certainly dramatic serials like "The Shadow" and anthology programs such as "Lux Radio Theatre" and "Mercury Theatre of the Air" were very popular. In Canada, most serious radio drama was produced by the CBC or its forerunners, and many of the programs came from Vancouver. In *The Struggle for National Broadcasting in Canada*, E. Austin Weir writes: "Vancouver, in my opinion, exercised a more far-reaching effect on radio drama than any other English-speaking city in Canada."

This reputation had its roots in the early twenties. Arthur J. Foxall, who taught acting and singing in Vancouver, had organized an amateur operatic and dramatic group in the city. In June 1925, Foxall's National Players presented an hour of musical and dramatic selections on CKCD. On July 10 they were heard again in the three-act comedy *Nothing But the Truth*, which was retitled *The Truthful Liar* to avoid royalty problems. This production—possibly the first broadcast of a full-length play in Canada—was followed on July 31 by the popular *Peg O' My Heart*. The group continued to perform on stage in the city until Foxall left for the United States.

Jack Gillmore, a member of Foxall's company, was instrumental in the continuing development of radio drama on the west coast. At the invitation of CNRV manager George Wright, Gillmore presented a repeat performance of *Peg O' My Heart* on CNRV in February 1926. The cast was drawn from Foxall's group and the Vancouver Little Theatre. According to Gillmore, the group received the CNR's "maximum pay" of $25 per show, all-inclusive.

In 1927 Gillmore put together a repertory company to perform on radio as the CNRV Players. George Wright agreed to broadcast three plays on a trial basis in October and November. The scripts used were generally popular stage plays adapted for radio by Gillmore and presented under alternative titles to avoid the payment of performance royalities.

JACK GILLMORE: George got an excellent response, and he said, "All right, let's carry on and see how long this thing will last. We'll put them on two weeks apart." So that started and it went on for five years. We would lay off for the summer, but all together

Opposite: During a drama rehearsal in CBR's studio A, actor-writer Fletcher Markle (left) confers with CBC producer Andrew Allan. In the background are cast members Al Pearce, Claire Murray, Peggy Hazard and Kathy Graham. The play in production is probably from the series, "Baker's Dozen," written by Markle and broadcast in 1941 and 1942.

we put on 110 shows. We finished in June 1932.* By that time we were getting $50 [per show] and we were also given a stenographer to type the plays.

We had no scripts. We had to take a stage play and adapt it for radio. We had to change it so it would be self-evident over the air what was happening, to create the picture. We had to put in "Here comes Paul" and "Oh, they're leaving now." We devised a way of giving an introduction of the scene—what the settings were and so on. One of the things we did was to ask the people listening to draw their chairs up close to the radio, turn down the lights and refrain from conversation—in other words, imagine that you were in a theatre, so you could get the atmosphere of it. It went over well.

We'd have a rehearsal on Thursday night and then we'd come down at 5 o'clock on Friday night and go through the show fast. We'd change it to what we wanted to do, have a bit of dinner at the coffee shop [in the railway station], and be ready to go on at 9 o'clock. We went on and we had the whole station open as long as we wanted. We had no advertising whatsoever; we had a straight-through show, just as though it was seen on the stage. These were all complete shows. They were edited slightly, but on the whole they ran [one and a quarter to one and a half hours]. Of course, a stage [play] usually runs two to two and a quarter hours, but they have the entr'acte where they change scenes and all that, whereas we went right through with just a description of the setting.

[We did] shows like *Outward Bound*, *R.U.R.* and *The Last of Mrs. Cheyney*. They were top-flight. We also did Sheridan's *The Rivals* and Oscar Wilde's *Lady Windermere's Fan* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*—in other words, good plays. We ran two or three musicals, incidentally. Marjorie Reynolds [adapted] *Alice in Wonderland* for us; we put that on with music. We put on *The Vagabond King* with music. Also, about every three months, we'd put on local authors. They would submit one-act plays.

We ran across one play called *Within the Lines*, a play of the first war, which [was set] behind the lines in France. In that, we had to have rifle shooting; we had to have machine-gun fire; we had to have a chap falling down from a tree, coming down through the branches and landing on the ground. Also, [walking] through the snow and one of the French 45s coming over and exploding. There were no [sound-effect] records, so they had to be made instantaneously. Going through the snow was crackling a strawberry box; that would just give the sound of the crunching of the snow. The shell coming over and exploding was a tricky one. They had a filing cabinet on rollers; we'd pull that out, and as we shoved it in, it would come in with a crash. It would sound exactly like the exploding [shell]. For machine-gun fire, we fastened leather thongs to a fan and put a leather cushion down below; turn on the fan and you'd get the rat-tat-tat-tat-tat of a machine-gun. For the fellow falling out of a tree, we actually broke branches as he came down, and then [had] a great big thud of a cushion when he fell on the ground. It took days to [put[that thing on.

Rui Shearman, a good friend of mine—he was probably the leading amateur Shakespearean actor in Canada, and a member of the Shakespearean Society—said, "Let's put on Shakespeare." I said, "Rui, that's pretty heavy stuff." He said, "Well, I have an idea that Shakespeare would go over very well." Now if you think about it, you'll realize that in Shakespearean days they had no scenery, they had no programs. Therefore, the context of the play had to tell who the character was. For instance, the first Shakespearean play we put on was *The Merchant of Venice*. Of course, we were able to give, in the scene, the actual location where they were. But if you read

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* The group was briefly revived in 1933 as the CRCV Players and presented a number of plays on that station under Gillmore's direction.

Some of the cast of the CNRV Players, 1929. From left to right: Jack Gillmore, Corrinne Taylor, Rui Shearman, Geoffrey Simpson, Elsie Swann and Frank Sparrowe. (PABC no. 95571)

Shakespeare, you will find that he introduced his characters by name. They will say, "Yonder comes Bassanio." It was the easiest play we ever put on the radio. We [did] *The Merchant of Venice, Othello* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

By that time, *The Microphone* [a weekly radio magazine] was printing the cast of characters and a full description of the show, so that the readers would know what was coming and could visualize it better. And *The Buzzer*, from B.C. Electric, used to put in what show we were putting on. If it was a good show, such as those I mentioned, the teachers would advise their classes and they would listen to us. It was a family institution; it reached right out quite well. And we were getting letters from literally all over the continent.

None of us were full-time actors at all. We were all working; I was out in another business. The six basic [actors] were Stan Bartindale, Frank Sparrowe, Elsie Swann—I later married her—Geoff Simpson, Mona Brown and myself. We would change around, too. For instance, Rui Shearman had other commitments, so he couldn't always play with us, but he'd come in when we wanted a certain type. I would call in E.V. Young, who was later instrumental in forming the "Theatre Under the Stars" [a group doing popular theatre in Stanley Park[. In other words, we could draw from all the various artists around Vancouver, and they'd come and work for the $5 or $3.50 or whatever they'd get, just because it was a new field and they were interested in trying it out. There was nothing else like it on the continent; we were the only ones. It was the first radio stock company.

Not all of the dramatic fare on radio originated with the major network stations. Some of the independent stations offered plays of their own which ranged in scale from skits based on current movies to dramatizations of regional history.

EARLE CONNOR: Very early on, when the sound motion pictures came in—I think it was with the [sound on] 16-inch records—they sent along a copy of the script with all the dialogue, in the interest of continuity. One of the managers in Vancouver got an idea that if he could sort of recreate this on the air, he could maybe bring some people into his theatre. He used to come down [to CKWX] and bring two or three of his ushers and usherettes, and they used to read a section of the dialogue of this particular movie. We built a little studio at the transmitter just to put these things on.

DON LAWS: We had a dramatic group [at CJOR] headed by Dick Diespecker. We would put on live dramas; "This Week in History" was one. We did historic dramatizations of all the big companies in this area, like the CPR, the Powell River Company, MacMillan Bloedel. Dick Diespecker and Dorwin Baird wrote the scripts, and we'd cast them. They were well done and they had a big audience.

One popular drama series was produced at CJAT Trail in 1936 and reached much more than a local audience. The man responsible was Mercer McLeod, an English-born actor who had toured the United States and directed the British Guild Players in Vancouver. Somehow he ended up in Trail producing "The Ghostwalkers." As a boy, Rudy Hartman occasionally took part in the series.

RUDY HARTMAN: This chap was quite good at adapting stories. In fact, on a trip down to Spokane he picked up a pocketbook and read it over and just created the script from the pocketbook.

The first dramatic presentation was called "Grandfather's House" ["At Grandpa's House"]; it was a half-hour weekly presentation. Then it developed into

A skit in rehearsal at CKWX during World War II. Left to right: Larry McCance, Peggy —, Fred Bass, Barney Potts, Bob Hutton.

"The Ghostwalkers," an hour a week that originated from Trail to the full western network [of the CRBC]. It was a thriller, and it was done by half a dozen people or less. It was something like "The Whistler," I guess. Stories like Edgar Allan Poe's "The Telltale Heart" were adapted for broadcasting. I took part in that; I was the violin pupil taking lessons from the teacher, and I had to play the violin in both matters, as a pupil and as a teacher.

Everything was done live; even the sound effects were done live in those early days. The show used to open in sort of an eerie fashion. It was very eerie music, and there used to be a chime—a big long-stemmed thing, hanging from the ceiling—and somebody whacked that. Reta Laverne [McLeod's wife, an actress] shrieked, and there was a loud thud—a piano bench that was brought up and let go.

I used to be pretty good at imitating Greyhound buses and things like that, and I used to do that on microphone with my lips. In one of these "Ghostwalkers" presentations, one rather long sequence took place on a launch. There I was in front of a microphone with my head buried and my mouth underwater, and I was "blurping" like a launch, like an exhaust underwater.

My mother was in an instrumental trio that did the music backing. Eventually, of course, they started using recorded music and sound effects.

The small acting group, which did all different characters, was quite professional. At least three or four lived in Trail. [Acting] wasn't their profession—they worked for [Cominco]—but they had acting experience somewhere down the line, and they were very good. They seemed to do the show from week to week, and I rather suspect they only got together [to rehearse] two or three times, if that.

There were about four stations contributing to the B.C. Regional network: Kelowna, Chilliwack, Kamloops [and Trail]. Trail really had the distinction, because it had this "Ghostwalkers" presentation, which went regularly to the western network—as far as Winnipeg—and on two or three occasions to the full national network. One of these programs was Dickens' *Christmas Carol*, which went out on Christmas Day. I remember all my family was in the show; we were doing little bits within the show. That went to the full national network.

Mercer McLeod also served briefly as a producer and program director at CRCV in Vancouver before going east to write and act in programs for CBC and NBC. While at CRCV he did the mystery series "Chains of Circumstance."

JOHN AVISON: I used to write and play music for "Chains of Circumstance." It opened with Frank Vyvyan dragging a huge chain across the studio, and Judith Evelyn—a very fine actress who made a tremendous success on Broadway in "Angel Street"—would scream into the open piano, which made the strings reverberate. Between the clanking chains and the screaming in the piano, it became the beginning of a horror story.

Radio drama in Canada was brought to maturity by producer Andrew Allan. Allan first worked in broadcasting as a writer and announcer at CFRB Toronto; he also produced radio variety shows during an extended visit to England. At CBR in Vancouver, he began the acclaimed productions that became the cornerstone of CBC radio drama. This was due in large part to the presence of Ira Dilworth as Regional Representative. In his autobiography, *A Self-Portrait*, Allan wrote: "It was under his [Dilworth's] influence that I discovered in radio the perfect stage for the Word."

Technician Don Horne frequently worked with Allan at CBR.

DON HORNE: Andrew arrived late in '39. He stayed in Vancouver until the summer of [1943], and I don't really know how many hundred shows I must have done with him.

Actor, writer and producer Mercer McLeod in a characteristic pose.

Once the war broke out, for many periods of time we were doing three dramas a week: two half-hours and one hour-long drama, a propaganda show called "War in the Pacific." Of course, all this was live, so I really gained a fantastic amount of experience in an unbelievably short time. Andrew Allan, in no time at all, became considered the best drama producer in Canada, possibly in North America.

Andrew was a real stickler in the studio. He was quite different than any other producer I ever worked with. He would walk into the studio and discuss what was going to happen in a very informal manner. But the minute production started, when he spoke to the actors or to me—or to anybody else—it was always "Mr.," "Mrs." or "Miss". He kept strict formality, in spite of the fact that some of the actors were close personal friends. And I think it created an atmosphere that was so entirely professional that it just led to people doing that sort of work. He was also not like a lot of producers at that time. They'd end a show, the cue light would go off, and [they'd] say, "Great show, gang, see you next week," no matter whether the show was good, bad or indifferent. If we had a bad drama night, with maybe just a poor performance or some people goofing off, he'd say, "That was a pretty lousy performance and we'd all better smarten up before next week."

JOHN AVISON: I admired him enormously. He was a very cultured man. He also had tremendous sensitivity, particularly in relationship to the English language. Often something which was not clear to the actor could be clarified in a very few words by Andrew, because he *knew* the script perfectly before he ever got into the booth or started rehearsals.

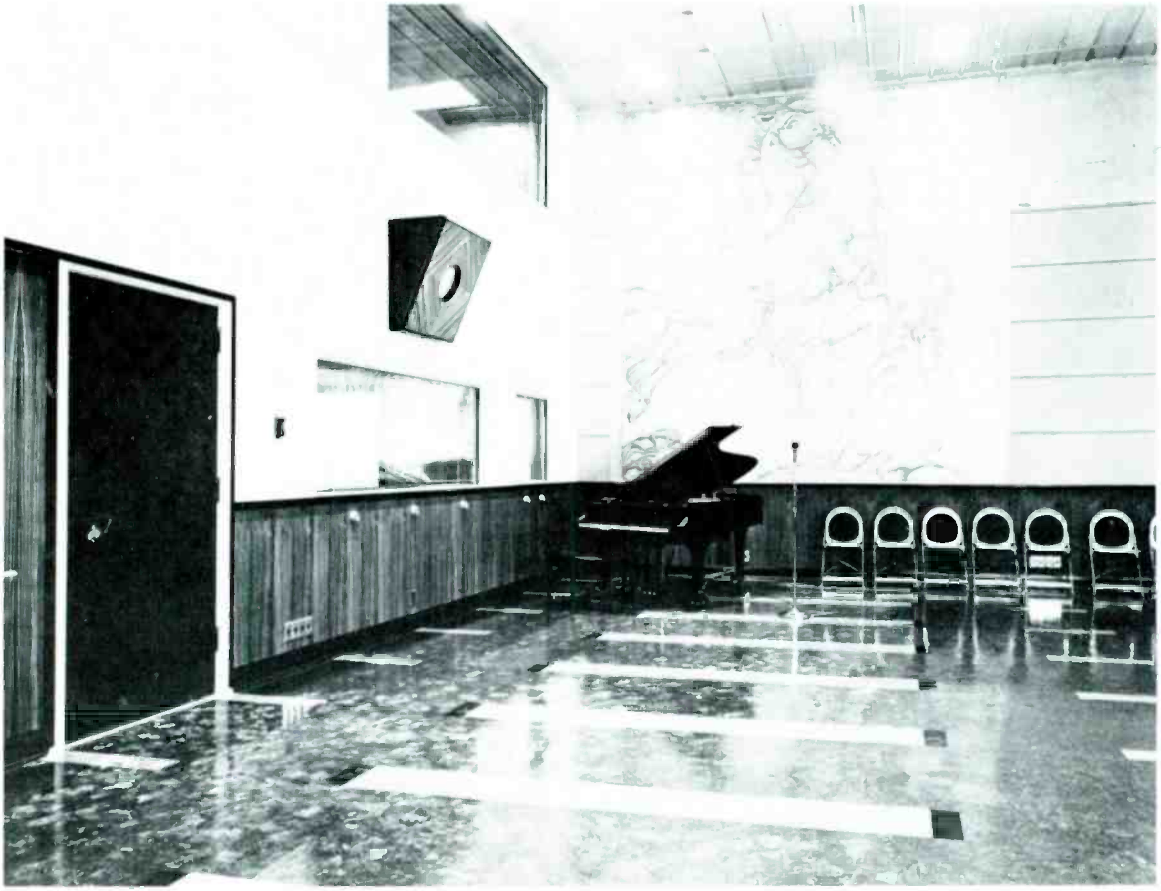
I think the [closest] connection we ever had was when he decided that he would do one of the medieval Miracle plays at Christmastime. It was taken from the [cycle of plays] called "The Chester Mysteries." It had been done years before in Toronto, and Healey Willan had written the music. We used some of Healey Willan's music and I wrote the rest. It was one of the most beautiful and satisfying broadcasts I've ever done. Andrew approached it with such a wonderful religious feeling; you couldn't imagine that this was the happy chap you saw at parties. I suggested that they use the bells we use in the Catholic Church to indicate the transubstantiation. Andrew thought for a long time about this, and decided that during the actual birth of Christ there [would] be complete silence. When I heard the playback, I realized that this was one of the most significant silent periods I had ever come across in my life. It was never used so beautifully as it was in this particular area of the play.

DON HORNE: The work he did in those days; a producer today would just say "No way." For a half-hour show, I think we used to go in somewhere around three in the afternoon to do one at 8:30 at night. We'd go through a rough rehearsal and then one or two good dress rehearsals before we went on the air. At times, he was doing three dramas, and he'd [also] do "Stag Party," a musical-comedy show, "Songs of Empire" and "Music from the Pacific." He must have been doing at least seven shows a week, and working seven days a week many times.

KENNETH CAPLE: He didn't compromise. He wanted something and he went after it. He was a perfectionist. The stuff that came across wasn't phony; there was a "real" quality about it. I think that's what made him the leader in radio drama.

DON HORNE: [The studio set-up for] drama could vary tremendously. First, there was the producer and the studio mixer—which with Andrew was often myself—in the control room. We had a fairly good studio with an 18-foot ceiling, and we were up on the second-storey level, looking down.

CBR's studio A in the Hotel Vancouver was the home of most of the CBC's network drama and orchestral music programs from the west coast.



Down on the studio floor there would always be at least one sound effects man. Sometimes it would just be one man playing sound effects from records, or sometimes it might be just one man doing live sounds. [They] could be anything from supposedly putting a dagger into somebody's insides, hitting them over the head with an axe, opening and closing doors, footsteps—any sound of that nature. He had a big tank for water effects. He had a "glass machine," which was probably the most fun of all to play with, because you'd put in great big sheets of glass and there was a great big heavy weight, hinged. You'd just let it go and of course, the effect was beautiful. He would be completely surrounded with this stuff, and quite often you'd have to put up two or three mikes just to get the stuff that he had.

The record man had a unit that was popularly called a "cocktail bar." It was big enough to have three turntables. Some of the shows we did, particularly some of the "War in the Pacific" straight propaganda stuff, you can well imagine; the sound effects [men] just went berserk, because we were shooting down Japanese planes and sinking Japanese ships left, right and centre. On one show our sound man, Jimmy Gilmore, actually had five turntables going simultaneously with various effects.

The cast could be—you know, you could do some very small shows with only a couple of people, but generally we'd have half a dozen. Sometimes there'd be more than a dozen, depending on the size of the show. Quite often small parts would be doubled by an actor; [they'd do] two or three small roles if they were insignificant. And then, on the bigger shows, we did have an orchestra. Ricky Hyslop and Lawrence Wilson did a lot of them. They had eight or nine pieces as a rule, sometimes a little smaller.

Those days at the CBC—through the forties and in the early fifties—they were terrific. To me, *that* was broadcasting, because I liked the live stuff. If you did a live show, the adrenalin flowed and everybody was on their toes. There were mistakes, of course, but if you didn't have a script you didn't realize they'd made a mistake, in most cases. In the mid-fifties, we started pre-recording; to me that was the end of broadcasting. What used to be, say, a four-hour job to get a half-hour show on the air sometimes became a [full] day or two-day job.

In 1943 the CBC transferred Andrew Allan to Toronto to become Supervisor of Drama for the network. By that time, there was in Vancouver a large group of distinguished radio actors and writers which included Bernard Braden, John Drainie, Barbara Kelly, Alan Pearce, Lister Sinclair, and many others. Most of this group followed Allan to Toronto and were subsequently heard on his long-running Sunday night "Stage" series. Others, such as John Bethune, Bill Buckingham, Alan Roughton and Frank Vyvyan, remained in Vancouver as established figures in the local entertainment world.

Fletcher Markle was another actor-writer who worked closely with Andrew Allan in Vancouver. Markle made his start in radio drama at the age of 19 with his own weekly series. He wrote, produced and acted in "Imagine Please" for 65 weeks on CKWX.

ALLAN KLENMAN: We were all very enthralled with it and very proud to have that series. I was the operator for a number of those shows. At one time we had to hook up a third turntable, because we had background music and a sound effect, and Fletcher Markle wanted a gunshot right between two words in the dialogue. We were working on commercial sound-effects disks, and I had to hold it at the right spot. I remember holding two turntables; [the other] turntable was running on the air as background music. When the time came for the gunshot, I had to throw the switch with my nose and let the disk go, and still be holding the other sound effect [disk] to come in at a later time. That's the way we did it. Heaven forbid if we ever didn't do it right. He didn't have to scold us; we felt bad enough on our own.

LAURIE IRVINE: I [did] narration and bit parts for Fletcher Markle. There were lots of funny things that happened on that show. Like the time that Glen Robitaille got very mad at Fletcher because he had a bad habit of not giving him the script and the music for this complicated drama show—with all these wild cues, all on record—he wouldn't give him the stuff until he was ready, and he was often ready just ten minutes before dress rehearsal. So this particular day [Robitaille had] a real big knock-down drag-out verbal battle with Fletch. He finally goes through the dress rehearsal. He starts the show on the air, and there was a part where there was nothing in the music line for about six or seven minutes. Robitaille made a great show of getting out of his chair in the control room and coming around and sitting in the corner of the studio where Fletcher couldn't help but see him. The thing was getting closer and closer and closer to the next music cue, and Fletch is going up the wall. At the same time, he's acting in the show, and he's doing everything but screaming at Robitaille—which, of course, with the mikes on, he couldn't very well do. Robitaille had it timed right to [get] up and hit the cue just in time. Never a thing showed on the air. There was some pretty mad things that took place in those days.

Fletcher Markle (left) began his radio drama career in Vancouver. It eventually led him to the United States, where he worked with his idol, Orson Welles (right).

JOHN AVISON: Fletcher was a very gifted young man. He had every record that Orson Welles ever made in the old Mercury Theatre days. It was a remarkable repertory company for its time—brought to prominence, of course, by that scare which frightened everybody in the United States [the broadcast of *The War of the Worlds* in 1938]. At the beginning of his career, [Fletcher] was very heavily influenced by Welles. He could really do a first-class job in converting a novel or novelette or short story into radio. [He had] a very good ear for that sort of thing. As a matter of fact, I understand he developed in Hollywood into a very good director and producer.

On the way to Hollywood, Markle wrote and acted in several CBC drama productions, both in Vancouver and in Toronto. After several years in the U.S. as a writer and producer for film, radio and television, he returned to Canada to direct the Walt Disney film *The Incredible Journey*. Television viewers will remember him as the producer and host of the CBC series "Telescope" during the sixties.

Although radio drama was primarily a staple of network programming, some of the privately-owned stations continued to air their own amateur efforts locally.

DICK BATEY: We used to do a good deal of so-called dramas [at CJVI]. They would be quarter-hour or half-hour dramatic shows which we would write ourselves. We'd write four or five characters into a given piece and use the people around the station. You maybe got to rehearse it once or twice; the end broadcast was live.

ALAN RAMSDEN: Nelson had a good little theatre. In the early fifties we had a drama series [on CKLN] produced by David Scott, a local author who wrote a number of pieces for the CBC. We had a few experienced amateur actors here who enjoyed doing that sort of thing. We bought a series of scripts from a producer in the States—39, I think there were, in a series. We used those plus ones we thought we'd like to do, and for three or four years we had quite a going concern in drama.

Some of the radio scripts had absolutely no directions with them, so we needed a producer. In a small town it's hard to find somebody who is competent to make the judgments; well, somebody like Dave Scott could do it. He would get the actors together and they would just sit around at somebody's house with a pot of tea or a bottle of wine and just read through the script and kick ideas around. Then they'd come down to the studio and we'd have to decide on microphone placement and sound effects and lay the thing out. If we had one play a week going on live, we were pretty involved. And this was while they were doing a lot of other things at the same time.

One of the challenges of broadcasting from the old CKLN studio was the train going by several times a day. I remember one night we had [a play] going on; the story line was a detective one. There was a sound of rain on the roof, and a shoebox full of buckshot rolling slowly back and forth as the sound of the surf, and there was occasional thunder—a sheet of metal [being shaken]. So here they were, obviously out on the moor somewhere by the sea—and suddenly the train whistled! It was rather devastating.

Radio drama was the first type of programming to suffer from the arrival of television. Although many felt that radio was a superior vehicle for plays, radio drama could not compete with the novelty of television. Plays continued to be heard on the CBC network, but most commercial stations dropped drama from their schedules as the evening audience evaporated.

LAURIE IRVINE: Radio drama died immediately there was drama on the tube. Strange thing is, I think it just needs a little prodding to come back. For example, there are people down in the United States who are producing drama for radio again, but this time on tape—and what's more, in stereo. When you think of radio drama in the old days with the one little speaker, and what it and your imagination did for you, just imagine adding the breadth of stereo and the possibility of having people walk across a room and back, as well as in and out.

Drama could come back [to radio]; I wonder if the audience would come back. [On television] now, you've got pictures and drama. But television drama has one great drawback to me; it leaves nothing to the imagination.

NO FREE TIME

Don Laws: When radio started, it was entertainment, primarily. When TV came in, radio lost its entertainment status to TV and became information.

The "official" arrival of television in British Columbia took place in 1954 with the CBC's inauguration of CBUT-TV Vancouver. However, American programming from Seattle was being received in Vancouver and Victoria prior to that time. Regardless of the date or point of origin, television had an enormous impact on the world of radio broadcasting.

Alan Ramsden: We had television competition [in Nelson] before anybody in B.C. had it. In January 1952, the first community antenna [television] service connected in here. Vancouver had a few people putting antennas up and watching stations across the line, but we had three American stations from Spokane, each one carrying a network, piped into Nelson in 1952. The first hook-up was seen downtown in the hardware store that owned the cable system. They had already arranged for "pony" rights on the telephone poles and were distributing the cable around town. The main part of the town, within two months, had several hundred subscribers, and television sets were just sold as fast as any dealer could get them in. In a community like this, with a very limited amount of alternate types of entertainment, television was a marvel. People grabbed it up very quickly. Of course, because the pick-up was for three network stations, we were very early in getting all the variety of stuff. You had three choices at any given time.

Murdo MacLachlan: I think at first we just hoped [television] would go away. I think most radio people tried to ignore it, and then they discovered they couldn't. You see, radio during the thirties and forties got most of its prestige from the big network shows—"Fibber McGee and Molly," Bob Hope, and all that type of thing. We [CHWK] were lucky; we carried all of those, and had good audiences as a result. The erosion that followed, as shows like that went into television, left a lot of voids for radio. It meant that there was a real challenge for radio to come up with something to replace them.

Alan Ramsden: It really hit us in the night time right away. Our nighttime listening just dribbled off to next to nothing. Certainly once the 7 o'clock news was over, television took over. [Live radio programming declined] almost completely—certainly no dramas or anything of that nature, nothing serious anymore. Radio lost that.

Murdo MacLachlan: That's when most of us started thinking, "Well, this early morning time looks good; the mid-morning time looks good." When I first joined CHWK in '45, we didn't sign on till 7:30 or a quarter to eight. We probably had morning devotions and then news at eight; that sort of got our day off to a leisurely start. I guess our first move to combat TV started in the late forties or early fifties, when we started expanding our morning time. We gradually backed it up to a 6 o'clock start and started

This 9" General Electric television set, ca. 1948, is in the collection of the British Columbia Provincial Museum.

bringing in farm activities and things like that. A lot of other stations were doing something comparable. We started using the mornings, because we knew we weren't going to have too much activity in the evening. I think we were among the first to start the open-line type of program; we started ours about 1950, a morning show, and it caught on very quickly. Most of the other stations followed later in the fifties. Today, an awful lot of broadcast radio is the open-line type of show. [It's popular] because it has audience involvement.

Alan Ramsden: Nighttime became a network slot. The daytime was concentrated a little more on local news. [In Nelson] the local sports news was developed more. And, of course, the switch from the broad spectrum of music programs to a very definitely pop music format became more and more in demand.

Murdo MacLachlan: I don't think radio's deteriorated. I think, actually, that it generally has been forced to improve. Some of the best programs being produced today are produced on radio—for instance, Barbara Frum's radio show ["As It Happens," on CBC]. When she was doing her night show, I think that there was very little that could touch it for a long time. There are a lot of private radio programs like that which are excellent from the point of view of communication, audience involvement—that type of thing. I'm not really a devotee of a lot of the rock shows and some of the more pop music type, but I think even they are appealing to a cross-section of the audience that some of our earlier radio shows probably didn't manage to do.

Rudy Hartman: Of course, radio took a much different direction when television came in; it became the music medium. But radio is communication, and it's companionship for the listener. It's not as dynamic as it was, of course, when radio was creating "sound pictures" with drama and so forth. I know there's a resurgence of drama to a certain extent, but naturally radio will never be the same as before television.

Dick Batey: With all respect to those who are presently in it, I'm glad I have nothing to do with AM broadcasting today. It has dropped into a necessary and comparatively comfortable slot as a comparatively minor source of news and, if you wish, background music—music which is very narrowly channelled to certain segments of the population. In my time, it wasn't radio that was scared; it was the newspapers that were scared of radio, because we were challenging them for the dominance in the news field. Whilst radio now appears to be doing a fairly competent job in spot news, there's little if anything, to the best of my knowledge, in any depth. [It's become,] through these open-line programs, an escape valve for neighbourhood busybodies who like to hear themselves yak on the air. In my day, radio was an all-around source of entertainment and news.

DON LAWS: If I had a choice between having a TV station or a radio station, I still think I'd choose a radio station. It's less of a headache, it's less problems. It's more flexible. You can get information on the air faster. If you're trying to sell an idea or a product, you can paint a word-picture which will be more satisfying to the listener than seeing it bare-faced in front of you.

FRED BASS: In the first place, we had a challenge. Something hadn't been done before; "Well, let's do it and see if it works." We were learning and building the business. We explored. We tried to find a way that we could interest people in what was actually happening. We were very close to the public. They knew us all personally, and yet they'd never met us. We were characters in their lives.

I really think that this is one of the things that we've lost in radio. We have lost that personal contact with our listeners. Today [radio is] so commercial and everything that you haven't got time. It takes a lot of free time, and there's no free time anymore.

DON LAWS: Radio was glamourous. People listened to radio. You know, you had these big sets in the living room and it was the centre of your living room. It was a different era, and I don't think you can go back to it.

SOURCES

INTERVIEWS

The original tape-recordings of most interviews quoted in *Imagine Please* are held by the Sound and Moving Image Division, Provincial Archives of British Columbia. The interviews recorded by Kenneth Bambrick are held by the National Film, Television and Sound Archives of the Public Archives of Canada, and the interviews by John Peter Shinnick are held by the Okanagan Historical Society.

The interviews themselves have been extensively edited for publication. Sentences and paragraphs have been shortened or rearranged for the sake of brevity, clarity and readability. In a few instances, relevant statements from different parts of an interview (or separate interviews with the same person) have been combined. In every case, care has been taken to ensure that the printed version accurately represents the intention and character of the interviewee's comments.

JOHN AVISON performed on almost every Vancouver radio station during the 1920s and 1930s. He has written music for radio, television and films, and was conductor of the CBC Vancouver Chamber Orchestra for more than 40 years. (Interviewed by D. J. Duffy, February and December 1982, PABC No. 3946, and by Emmanuel Ronse, November 1982, PABC No. 4030:1.)

JOHN BALDWIN started in radio as an advertising salesman for CHWK Chilliwack in the early 1930s. He later managed the Vancouver office of All-Canada Radio Facilities Ltd. (Interviewed by Kenneth Bambrick, November 1976.)

FRED BASS has been active in show business since 1923. He was with CKWX from 1928 to 1961 as an announcer, staff pianist, writer, music director and program manager. (Interviewed by Kenneth Bambrick, November 1976; by students of Simon Fraser University, PABC NO. 3842:14 & 15; and by Emmanuel Ronse, November 1982, PABC No. 4030:2.)

DICK BATEY joined CFCT (now CJVI) as an announcer in 1939 and remained with the station until 1967 in the role of production manager. (Interviewed by D. J. Duffy, January 1982, PABC No. 3938.)

JIM BROWNE has been involved with CKOV Kelowna since it was founded by his father in 1931. (Interviewed by John Peter Shinnick, 1981).

TRYPHENA BROWNE is the widow of CKOV founder J. W. B. Browne. (Interviewed by John Peter Shinnick, 1980.)

KENNETH CAPLE began the CBC's British Columbia Schools Broadcasts under the auspices of the Ministry of Education in 1940. He joined the CBC as regional program director in 1944. From 1947 to 1968, he was the Corporation's Regional Representative for British Columbia. (Interviewed by D. J. Duffy, March 1982, PABC No. 3951.)

ALBERT CARRICK, an amateur radio enthusiast, was involved with CJCE in the early 1920s. (Interviewed by Emmanuel Ronse, November 1982, PABC No. 4030:3.)

IAN CLARK entered radio through CKMO in 1934 and managed CKFC in the latter part of the 1930s. He joined CFJC Kamloops in 1940, became manager in 1943, and later bought the station from the *Kamloops Sentinel*. (Interviewed by D. J. Duffy, March 1982, PABC No. 3950.)

EARLE CONNOR started at CKMO in 1930 as an announcer-engineer. He worked at CKWX and at CJAT Trail before becoming technical director for the Taylor, Pearson and Carson chain in 1938. (Interviewed by Kenneth Bambrick, November 1976.)

JACK GILLMORE directed more than 100 live radio plays on CNRV between 1927 and 1932. He also wrote and directed "Radio Artists' Revue" on CKWX. (Interviewed by Emmanuel Ronse, May 1982, PABC No. 3842:26 & 27.)

STANLEY GOARD, as an employee of the Sparks Company in Nanaimo, helped to start CFDC and move it to Vancouver, where it became CKWX. In 1927 he moved to Oregon to open a radio shop and eventually started AM and FM radio stations in Portland. (Recorded self for Emmanuel Ronse, 1980, PABC No. 3842:19.)

RUDY HARTMAN started in radio at CJAT Trail in the late 1930s. He is presently manager of CJVB in Vancouver. (Interviewed by D. J. Duffy, March 1982, PABC No. 3952.)

DON HORNE graduated from the Sprott-Shaw School in 1935. He worked for CKMO and CFCT before joining the staff of CBR, where he ultimately became Technical Director. (Interviewed by Robert D. Turner, December 1981, PABC No. 3933.)

HOWARD HUME is the son of Fred Hume, who operated CFXC in New Westminster from 1924 to 1926. (Interviewed by Emmanuel Ronse, 1979, PABC No. 3842:23.)

LAURIE IRVINE was an announcer-engineer for CKFC Vancouver and CFJC Kamloops during the 1930s. In 1941 he went to CKWX, where he became program manager. For several years he headed the Broadcast Communications program of the British Columbia Institute of Technology. (Interviewed by Kenneth Bambrick, November 1976.)

ALLAN KLENMAN joined CKWX in 1938 as a technical operator. He later sold advertising for CKWX, CKMO and CKNW and served as vice-president of CKDA Victoria. (Interviewed by D. J. Duffy, November 1981, PABC No. 3890.)

JIM LAURIE was hired as a technician by the CNR Radio Department in Winnipeg in 1925 and was later transferred to CNRV Vancouver. He joined the technical staff of CBR in 1937 and remained with the CBC until 1970. (Interviewed by Imbert Orchard and Derek Reimer, March 1978, PABC No. 3186, and by Emmanuel Ronse, 1979, PABC No. 3842:13 & 18.)

DON LAWS joined the CJOR sales staff in 1933 and was the station's commercial manager until 1964. (Interviewed by Kenneth Bambrick, November 1976, and by Emmanuel Ronse, 1979, PABC No. 3842:23.)

ROSS MACINTYRE (1908–1981) entered broadcasting in 1924, working for CFXC and CFYC as well as KEX Portland. He was chief engineer at CKWX from 1928 to 1943, and went on to similar positions at CKNW New Westminster and CHUB Nanaimo. (Interviewed by Kenneth Bambrick, November 1976, and recorded self for Emmanuel Ronse, 1979, PABC No. 3842:22.)

MURDO MACLACHLAN was involved with CHWK Chilliwack as a volunteer during the 1930s. He joined the staff in 1945 and was part-owner of the station from 1954 to 1968. (Interviewed by D. J. Duffy, February 1982, PABC No. 3947.)

HAROLD PAULSON entered radio in 1925 as an announcer and managed CKWX from 1930 to 1932. He later worked as a commercial representative for CBR. (Interviewed by Emmanuel Ronse, 1979, PABC No. 3842:24 & 25.)

JACK PILLING (1908–1977) joined CHWK in 1929 and remained with the station until 1958 through the roles of radio repairman, engineer, announcer, salesman, manager and part-owner. (Interviewed by Dennis Barkman of CHWK, 1977, PABC No. 3953.)

BARNEY POTTS has been active as a performer on stage and on radio in Vancouver since the early 1920s. (Interviewed by Emmanuel Ronse, November 1982, PABC No. 4030:5.)

ALAN RAMSDEN joined CKLN Nelson as an announcer in 1945. After a few years at CJAT Trail, he returned to manage the Nelson station from 1950 to 1967. (Interviewed by D. J. Duffy, February 1982, PABC No. 3948.)

ERNIE ROSE was trained as a wireless operator at the Sprott-Shaw School. He engineered for CKMO from 1934 until 1940, when he was hired by CBC radio as an engineer-operator. In 1953 he transferred to CBC television, and later joined CHAN-TV in Burnaby. (Interviewed by Kenneth Bambrick, November 1976, and by David Mattison, May 1981, PABC No. 3847.)

SAM ROSS (1905–1977) was first involved with radio as a newspaper reporter in Regina. He worked for the Canadian Press news service and Press News Ltd. before joining CKWX as news director in 1944. (Interviewed by Kenneth Bambrick, November 1976.)

ESTHER ROUGHTON (1895–1980) was frequently heard on radio in Vancouver during the 1930s with her husband, actor Alan Roughton. (Interviewed by Tom Hood, October 1978, PABC No. 3842:20.)

MILTON STARK was involved with two of Vancouver's earliest radio stations, CFCQ and CFYC, during the mid-1920s. He subsequently went into the electronics industry in Ontario. (Interviewed by Derek Reimer, June 1981, PABC No. 3857.)

CYRIL TROTT operated CKFC Vancouver for the United Church from 1925 to 1936, in addition to running his own radio repair firm. (Interviewed by Emmanuel Ronse, 1979, PABC No. 3842:21 & 22, and November 1982, PABC No. 4030:4.)

CASEY WELLS (1902–1967) founded CHWK Chilliwack in 1927 in partnership with a local hardware store. He remained active in the control of the station until 1954. (Recorded by CHWK, 1967, PABC No. 3953.)

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Above: A publicity photo depicting the cast of a wartime Civil Defense program produced by the CBC in Vancouver. From left to right: Actor/sound effects man Frank Vyvyan, Al Pearce, unidentified, Claire Murray, Bernard Braden. (Don Coltman photo: PABC no. 95731)

Back Cover: CFCT logo, ca. 1932.

Dennis J. Duffy is a free-lance writer and researcher living in Victoria. He is co-author of two previous books in the Sound Heritage Series and has produced three sound programs for the Series. He is presently compiling information on motion picture production in B.C. on behalf of the Public Archives of Canada and the Provincial Archives of British Columbia.

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