

WSMB Signals

Western States Museum of Broadcasting

CONTRACT FOR WSMB CONSTRUCTION NEAR

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At the invitation of Southern Oregon University (SOU), the JPR Foundation began negotiations in November, 2002 for an agreement leading to the construction of a new 50,000 square foot headquarters for Jefferson Public Radio (JPR) and the Western States Museum of Broadcasting (WSMB). JPR will occupy approximately 1/3 of the proposed structure with the WSMB utilizing the balance of the space.

Principles developed in those negotiations are currently being formalized in an agreement between SOU and the Foundation. Under the terms of the parties' understandings, the

University will lease land to the Foundation, as well as the right to design and construct the building, and the JPR Foundation will donate the facility to the University upon completion. The agreement also provides for the University to lease back to the Foundation permanent use of the facility for WSMB's and JPR's operations.

The University will also construct appropriate parking for the facilities on the lot. The parties expect to sign these contracts before June, 2003.



Approved lot design for the WSMB at the corner of Highway 66 and Walker Street in Ashland. JPR/WSMB is on the bottom right side of the lot.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Archives of the ChevronTexaco Metropolitan Opera International Radio Network have been deposited with the WSMB.
- One of the nation's oldest public radio stations, KBPS, has donated its archives to the WSMB.
- Some of Oregon's broadcasting pioneers are involved in chronicling broadcasting history for the WSMB.

CHEVRONTEXACO DONATES MET OPERA BROADCAST ARCHIVES

In March, 2002 ChevronTexaco (CT) donated virtually its entire archive of memorabilia associated with the Metropolitan Opera radio broadcasts to the WSMB. The Saturday afternoon Met broadcasts began in 1931 and assumed sponsor-

ship by Texaco in 1940. The Texaco Met partnership is the longest surviving sponsorship in American broadcasting history as well as the oldest arts sponsorship in America.

The broadcasts, which have

received various awards for contribution to American culture and broadcast history, continue to reach millions of American listeners each week and now are heard on four other continents. (continued on page 2)



RADIO STATION KBPS (PORTLAND) ARCHIVES DONATED



Two students in a KBPS control room in 1947

KBPS-AM (then KFIF) signed on in May, 1923 when Portland Public Schools' Benson Polytechnic High School purchased the equipment of an abandoned radio station, KYG. Renamed KBPS in 1930, the station had been acquired with student body funds as a technical training facility and to provide public service programming to Portland. KBPS was, and remains, one of the only high school owned and operated radio stations in the nation and is now one of the oldest surviving radio stations in

America. KBPS, which added an FM station in 1983, has trained many of the broadcasting industries most successful members, been a national leader in broadcast education, and provided vital programming service for the region for 80 years. The station was guided by Dr. Patricia Swenson, who served as KBPS' general manager from 1946 until 1994, who is a participant in the WSMB's History of Broadcasting in Oregon project (see page 3).

Recently KBPS donated its archives to the WSMB. The collection consists of over 750 photographic images, FCC licensing documents and correspondence—all dating back to 1935—as well as a large collection of recordings, scripts, sound effects artifacts, newspaper clipping files and other promotional materials. Because KBPS has been a major influence for instruction by radio, the collection of Instructional Radio files is of special importance.

AMERICAN JOURNALISM REVIEW NOTES WSMB

“The AJR article is the first nationally published reference to planning for the WSMB and could stimulate interest in the undertaking.”

The April, 2003 issue of American Journalism Review (AJR) includes a feature article, written by San Francisco writer James Risser, on Jefferson Public Radio's growth into one of the U.S.'s largest public radio operators. The article, which includes extensive interviews with JPR personnel and representatives of the JPR Foundation, includes a description of

the planning for construction of the new JPR headquarters and the WSMB in Ashland.

The AJR article is the first nationally published reference to planning for the WSMB and could stimulate interest by new parties in the undertaking.

AJR is published monthly by the Philip Merrill College of Journalism at the University of

Maryland.

AJR, and the April 2003 issue, can be found online at www.ajr.org.



MET BROADCAST ARCHIVES DONATED

(con't from page 1)

The CT Met collection consists of awards, artwork, recordings, commemorative programs from the broadcast's 25th, 27th and

Photograph of original serigraph by internationally known artist Richard Lindner which was commissioned in connection with a 1966 Met production of Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier*.

40th seasons and other memorabilia and chronicles the growth of the Met's radio outreach from 100 American radio stations to an international presence. The Met broadcasts are generally credited with significantly fostering the growth of American interest in opera. The collection is the largest col-

lection of Met broadcast memorabilia located outside of New York City and is currently in storage in Medford, Oregon.

NBC ORGAN TO COME “HOME” TO RADIO?

JPR and WSMB will share a 150-seat auditorium in their new headquarters. This lecture and performance space for the Museum, will also serve as a live-audience studio for JPR’s radio productions.

Early radio and television made extensive use of pipe organs for music and sound effects. Most radio stations had studio organs between 1925 and 1950, although they were gradually retired as radio abandoned formal programs in favor of recorded music and news offer-

ings.

Because plans for the WSMB have included locating, acquiring and installing a “radio station” organ, research on surviving instruments has been conducted. A major accomplishment was locating the organ from NBC’s San Francisco “Sutter Street” studios. All of the nation’s network radio production centers held an estimated 25 instruments so this 4-rank Robert Morton instrument is quite rare. The organ, which is currently being restored, is

owned by a private party and negotiations for its acquisition by the WSMB are in progress. We are pleased to report that the instrument’s owner has already made provision in their will for the organ’s donation to the WSMB.

We continue to explore the possibilities for securing this instrument on a time frame that would allow its installation concurrent with dedication of the WSMB’s headquarters.

OREGON BROADCAST HISTORY BOOK PROJECT

The JPR Foundation, on behalf of WSMB, and the Oregon Association of Broadcasters (OAB) have agreed to jointly undertake the research and publication of a book devoted to the history of radio and television in Oregon. WSMB has agreed to underwrite the costs of necessary research. WSMB Executive Director Ron Kramer is donating his time to

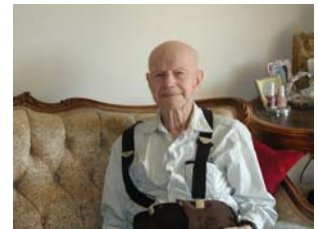
research and write the book, and the OAB will sponsor the publication costs.

Research to date includes various interviews with longtime Oregon broadcasters, scouring of the National Archives in Washington, D.C. for documents, and detailed review of more than 20 Oregon newspapers. The project’s video inter-

views/oral histories will become part of the WSMB’s permanent research collection.

The book is expected to take approximately two years to complete and, when finished, will tell the story of radio and television’s contribution to Oregon’s growth and the tales of the individuals who made it all happen.

Interviewed in November, 2002, for the History of Broadcasting in Oregon book, Wilbur J. Jerman, 101, began his career in radio in 1922.



“The book...will tell the story of radio and television’s contribution to Oregon’s growth.”

WSMB VISION AND LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

Individuals who have agreed to participate in establishing the WSMB through service on the Vision and Leadership Committee are:

- Les AuCoin, former Congressman
- Diane Gerard, member of the JPR Foundation Board
- Lenn Hannon, Oregon State Senator
- Ron Kramer, JPR Foundation Executive Director
- Patsy Smullin, California Oregon Broadcasting
- Greg Walden, United States Congressman
- Ron Wyden, United States Senator



Elementary school students gathered to listen to a lesson delivered by radio in September, 1947 (KBPS Collection).

**Western States Museum
of Broadcasting**

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WE'LL SOON BE ON THE
WEB AT:
WWW.WSMB.ORG

**Preserving and Interpreting the History of
Radio, Television and Recording Industries**



The WSMB is an affiliate of the non-profit JPR Foundation and is dedicated to preserving and interpreting the history of the radio, television and recording industries. When completed the WSMB will include a research library and archive, displays of equipment and artifacts, including radio and television receivers and broadcast equipment, displays of typical historical radio and television programming and a variety of interactive exhibits.

In addition to the Museum's exhibits and collections, its programs will include an active education program including visiting lectures and performances by persons drawn from the broadcasting industry.

FROM THE WSMB COLLECTION—IT'S HOWDY DOODY TIME!



(above) A Howdy Doody hand puppet c. 1950. (below) Magic Kit, offered by sponsor Mars Candy, c. 1951.



Television was in its infancy when an unusual looking wooden puppet, Howdy Doody, came to television in 1947. For 2,543 programs through 1960 Howdy Doody, emcee Buffalo Bob Smith, and an assortment of characters including Princess SummerFall-WinterSpring, Phineas T. Bluster and Clarabell the Clown made the Howdy Doody show the nation's top-rated children's program and a major NBC-TV attraction.



Howdy Doody pinback, c. 1970

The program's famous Peanut Gallery accommodated 40 children who could sit live on the program's set and parents—from heads of state to expectant mothers—across America vied for the coveted spots. Toppled from popularity by time and the Mickey Mouse Club in 1956, the Howdy Doody cast became a "nostalgia" juggernaut in the 1970's by which time the children who grew up with the little puppet had moved on to become captains of industry—and parents!



(above) Bandana c. 1988. (below) Comic book, c. 1949.

