

WSMB Signals

Western States Museum of Broadcasting

WSMB PRE-DESIGN NEAR COMPLETION

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A committee of JPR staff, and community volunteers began working with architects Skelton, Straus and Siebert in October, 2005 on the pre-design of the new Jefferson Public Radio (JPR)/Western States Museum of Broadcasting. Since that time the committee has met to establish the general design and layout of the building and to help the architects address the technical and operational issues whose successful consideration is essential to achieving our goals for the building. The committee also devoted considerable attention assuring that the building would successfully integrate with the neighborhood.

The committee's work was

completed in July, 2006 and has resulted in a building design of approximately 42,000 square feet including the Museum, JPR, a research library, auditorium, café and associated parking. The preliminary building footprints are now being transformed into architectural renderings of the building and construction cost estimates in order

that a timeline for both the capital campaign—which is anticipated to begin in December—and building construction can be established.

(Below) The Electric Word—a WPA-art style mural commissioned from Evergreen Painting Studios, New York, will be produced in fired tile and grace the WSMB's entrance.



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **NEW** WSMB Website now at www.wsmb.org
- New members of the Vision and Leadership Committee add strength to the WSMB's long-term planning

NEW TO THE VISION/LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

The WSMB is pleased to welcome three new members to its Vision and Leadership Committee.

John Frohnmayer, Corvallis OR, now teaches at Oregon State University. He was for-

merly Chair of the National Endowment for the Arts (1989-1992).

Maynard Orme, Portland OR, served as Executive Director of Oregon Public Broadcasting from 1985 to 2005.

Fred Schneier, President, FSA Film Enterprises, Beverly Hills CA, has a distinguished career in broadcasting at Mutual Broadcasting, NBC, and eventually President of Viacom International.

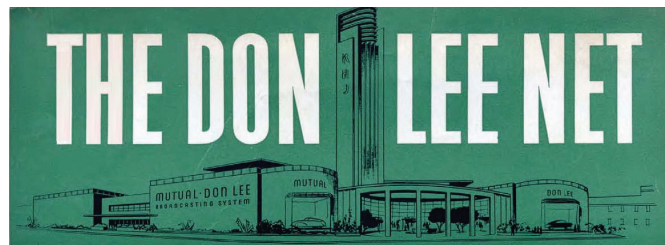
DON LEE BROADCASTING — THE WEST COAST'S OWN NETWORK

A wealthy Californian who owned the Cadillac automobile sales franchise for his state, in the mid-1920's Don Lee became interested in radio and purchased San Francisco station KFRC on November 15, 1926. On November 14, 1927 he purchased Los Angeles station KHJ from the *Los Angeles Times*. Committed to a delivering radio in a grand, elegant style, Lee built new studios for his two stations and leased a phone circuit to allow them to share the extensive programming resources he had developed. In December, 1928 he extended this phone circuit to create the Don Lee Network which also con-

nected to KMJ, Fresno ; KFBK, Sacramento; KOIN, Portland ; KOL, Seattle; KVI, Tacoma; KPFY, Spokane.

Lacking western stations the fledgling Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) established a programming relationship in January, 1930 under which the Don Lee network carried the Columbia programs on its stations under the name Don Lee - Columbia. At the same time Don Lee purchased KGB, San Diego and KDB, Santa Barbara plus added several others stations to the network.

Don Lee died in 1934 and his son, Tommy Lee, took over.



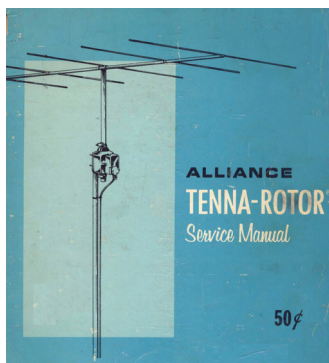
(above) Masthead from the Don Lee Network's bi-monthly internal newsletter for its affiliated stations, Jan-Feb 1947 issue. [WSMB Smullin Collection]

In 1936, when Columbia terminated this relationship, Tommy forged a new relationship with the Mutual network under which Don Lee carried the Mutual programming to the Don Lee stations and the network was renamed Don Lee—Mutual.

Even when carrying CBS or Mutual, the Don Lee was a

major western presence and created its own distinct programming for West Coast listeners. Don Lee also pioneered West Coast television. The network was sold to General Teleradio/RKO general in 1951, and while its identity briefly survived, it disappeared entirely when purchased by ABC in 1959.

TOUCH THAT DIAL! EARLY TV WAS A HIGHLY TECHNICAL AFFAIR



(above) Alliance Tenna-Rotor service manual cover, c. 1950. (below) Matching Alliance set-top control box. [WSMB Collection]



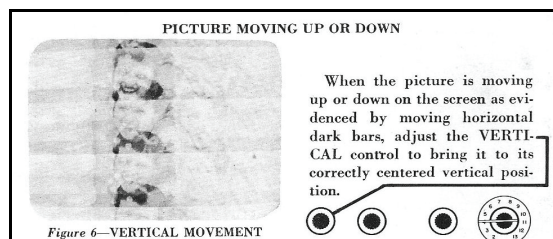
Early television sets were large, expensive and were built with radio tube technology. These TV's weren't particularly sensitive, generally required an external ground connection, and nearly always needed an outside, roof-top antenna to secure an adequate signal. Viewers living at any distance from TV stations sometimes needed motorized antenna "rotors," such as the Alliance Tenna-Rotor) to aim their roof-top antenna in the direction of TV stations.

These early sets also required considerable adjustment to secure an adequate picture and learning to "tune" your TV was an important element of set ownership. Just as the earliest radio had numerous dials, early TV's had many separate knobs to control the vertical and horizontal elements of the picture, brightness

and contrast and a "fine tuning" collar (usually on the TV's main central channel selector). Set owners needed to master the setting of all of these adjustments, an array of "manual" activity that could users of our contemporary, all-electronic, largely automated tuning TV's couldn't begin to imagine. Just as many Americans never mastered programming the clocks on their VCR's, many Americans watched TV sets whose pictures reflected less than perfect adjustment.

To help set owners adjust their sets, early TV stations daily broadcast "test patterns," often for several hours. Such patterns gave viewers a set of standard geometric shapes which allowed adjusting the set's various knobs so the picture wasn't too skinny, fat, tall or short. Television being so new, it wasn't uncommon for people to watch the test pattern itself before programs began.

(below) Portion of a page from RCA Victor 9-inch "Eyewitness TV" instruction manual, c. 1947. [WSMB Collection]



RECENT ADDITIONS TO OUR COLLECTION



WSMB is constantly adding to its collection. In addition to the pictured items, we have recently added several important items related to the Mutual Broadcasting System including an unpublished history 1948—1960. Other recent arrivals include early

(Left) A Holiday countertop standup card from KIHR, Hood River, circa 1970. [WSMB Walden Collection]
(Right) The Mutual Broadcasting System annually created suspenders, as a promotional item for its advertisers, which featured the "Mutual Man" logo in various poses. circa 1955. [Gift of Fred Schneier]

unpublished photographs from the Don Lee Broadcasting's experimental Los Angeles TV station, W6XAO; an autographed copy of writer/director Norman Corwin's landmark multi-network broadcast which ended World War II, *On A Note Of Triumph* and various promotional newspapers issued by networks and stations including items from the legendary Don Burden's Portland KISN Radio and Portland's KOIN, as well as early network programs like *Girl Alone*.



A CONVERSATION WITH GREG WALDEN

Cong. Greg Smith (R-OR) is a second generation Oregon broadcaster and the only broadcast station owner in the Congress. He entered radio as a 15-year old working for his father, Paul Walden (1917-2003) who got started in radio at KORE, Eugene, and KUJ, Walla Walla. Following later stints at KUMA and KWRC, both Pendleton, Walden went to KODL, The Dalles, in 1947 and remained for 20 years—

eventually managing the station. In 1967 he purchased KIHR, Hood River, and then put FM companion station KCBG on the air in 1978.

Walden is widely remembered as a two-time Oregon Association of Broadcasters president who served as a revered mentor to many younger broadcasters.

One of them is Paul's son, Greg, who took over his father's business in 1986. Greg

subsequently added stations KACI AM-FM, and KMSW, The Dalles, to his company.

Beyond just "hanging out" at the family's stations, Greg Walden started early working in radio as a janitor at KIHR. At 15, he graduated to vacation relief announcing there and went on to a full career.

(Right) Paul Walden (left most holding microphone) interviewing the manager of the Dalles 4-H Show, c. 1955. [WSMB Walden Collection]



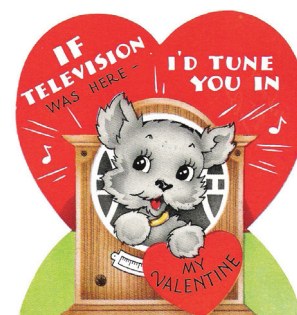
"Community service is the heartbeat of radio. If you do that, you'll be fine regardless of the competition."

WSMB VISION AND LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

Individuals who are assisting in establishing the WSMB through service on the Vision and Leadership Committee include:

- Les AuCoin, former Congressman
- John Frohnmayer, former Chair, National Endowment for the Arts
- Diane Gerard, member of the JPR Foundation Board
- Kevin Klose, National Public Radio, President
- Ron Kramer, JPR Foundation Executive Director
- Maynard Orme, Oregon Public Broadcasting, Executive Director (ret)
- Patricia Smullin, California Oregon Broadcasting
- Fred Schneier, Viacom International, President (ret)
- Greg Walden, United States Congressman
- Ron Wyden, United States Senator

(Right) America was anxious for television's introduction—which had been discussed for two decades. That anticipation is reflected in this 1940's valentine card. [WSMB Collection]



Western States Museum of
Broadcasting

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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.

RADIO AND TELEVISION ADVENTURES IN AIR AND SPACE

Radio and television programs, for both children and adults, often revolved around exploration of the newest 'frontier.' With the Wright Brothers' first airplane flight having occurred only 17 years before the beginning of the radio industry, air travel fueled the imagination of radio listeners in the 1930's and early 1940's (likely stimulated by Lindburgh's 1927 solo Atlantic flight).

During the Depression few Americans had traveled by air and, because air travel therefore lent excitement to program-

ming, network schedules abounded with aircraft-centered programs such as: *Jack Armstrong*, *Air Adventures of Jimmie Allen*, *Captain Frank Hawks*, *Hop Harrigan*, *Air Stories of the War Years*, *The Flying Family*, *Howie Wing*, *Phantom Pilot Patrol*, *Flying Time*, *Speed Gibson of the International Secret Police*, *Sky Blazers*, *Captain Midnight*, *Wings of Destiny*, *Wings to Victory*, *Don Winslow of the Navy* and *I Fly Anything*.

As late as early television, programs like *Sky King* - in which a rancher, with his own private plane, battled crime and evil from the air on both radio and TV - were, still pursuing the theme.

World War II stole much of the

mystery from of air travel, however, while simultaneously introducing the "Space Age" to America. Companies like TV set manufacturer Zenith marketed "Space Command" tuning for their line of television receiver and space themes also became prominent in 1950's programs like: *Sky King*, *Captain Video*, *Tom Corbett*, *Space Patrol*, *X Minus 1*, *Rocky Jones Space Ranger*, *Flash Gordon*, *Rod Brown of the Rocket Rangers* and *Men Into Space*.



(Far left) Don Winslow Secret Code Manual, 1953. (Above) Space Patrol *Man from Mars* totem mask given by sponsor Ralston Purina, 1952. (Below) Autographed photo, Jimmie Allen in his plane Monsoon, 1937. [WSMB collection]