

February 2014



Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Newsletter

Broadcast Pioneer, Belford "Sinky" Hendricks

In 1927 the G.B. Finke Furniture Company began operating WGBF, a 25-watt radio station, from their downtown store in Evansville, Indiana. From the beginning the station used local talent to staff and operate the station. By 1947 WGBF was broadcasting at 1,000 watts, still using local talent and apparently unaware they were making broadcast history. Here is the story, written by Rebecca Bibbs, the grand-niece of Belford "Sinky" Hendricks.



In 1947 when Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in baseball, Belford "Sinky" Hendricks broke the color barrier in radio by joining "Toast and Coffee", a popular variety show hosted by Pat Roper on WGBF in Evansville, Indiana. The program featured the smooth piano and singing voice of Belford Hendricks. The pairing likely made it the first interracial radio program in the state and possibly the second in the nation.



"Sinky" as a mailman
in Evansville



Hendricks walks
the streets of N.Y.

Born in 1909 the Evansville native and graduate of the former Frederick Douglas High School went on to study music and science at the Indiana State Teachers College, now Indiana State University, graduating in 1935. It took a decade for him to complete his studies as he took time off to travel as a musician so he could save up for tuition.



Belford Hendricks and
an early band

Following his graduation, Hendricks secured a coveted position as a mail carrier in Evansville, a job that at the time was open only to white citizens.

In 1943 Hendricks was drafted to serve in the U.S. Army. Though assigned to a medical unit, he also performed at the popular "Stage Door Canteen" in New York city and appeared in the movie of the same name.

When the "Toast and Coffee" program ended in 1950, Hendricks continued to entertain radio audiences although this time it was on the national level. He became a composer, arranger and conductor at Mercury Records. During his tenure at Mercury, he arranged "What a Difference a Day Makes" which reached No. 4 on the Hit Parade and won singer Dinah Washington a coveted Grammy Award in 1959. "It's Just a Matter of Time", on which he collaborated with Brook Benton and Clyde Otis, remains No. 88 on BMI's list of "Greatest Hits of the 20th Century", just ahead of John Lennon and Paul McCartney's "Let It Be".

Though most well known for his collaborations with Nat King Cole, Hendricks also was composer, arranger and conductor on Aretha Franklin's first album at Capitol Records. His compositions have been recorded by everyone from Elvis Presley, to Randy Travis and The Beach Boys. Hendricks died in 1977.

Why he was called "Sinky" by friends and family is unknown.



Belford C. Hendricks 1909-1977

Broadcast Pioneers Receive Grant

Pioneer board member Sid Weedman recently met with Leonard J. Betley, Chairman and President of the Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation. Sid asked if they would consider future funding to assist the Pioneers with costs related to the annual Pioneer Hall of Fame event. We have now received word that the request has been approved. The grant from Fairbanks is \$50,000, \$5,000 per year for 10 years. The grant is to be used for the Production of the event that celebrates and honors broadcasters who have demonstrated significant dedication to the broadcast industry.

The Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation, Inc. was established in 1986 by the founder and owner of Fairbanks Communications, Inc., a privately held company.

For over 50 years, Mr. Fairbanks was a leader and innovator in broadcasting. His company owned and operated 20 radio stations around the country, a television station in Atlanta,



Richard M. Fairbanks

cable television systems, a charter airplane company, and had interests in real estate. Mr. Fairbanks established the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Radio Network when he owned and operated WIBC radio. The Foundation is also the sponsor of The Richard M. Fairbanks Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame exhibit located in the Indiana State Museum.

The Indiana Broadcast Pioneers are deeply appreciative of the generous support for our organization and our goal of preserving broadcast history and recognizing and the Pioneers who led the way in those early years.

The King Don't Care !

When WISH TV signed on the air in July of 1954 one of the station's first advertisers was Ed Clark, the self proclaimed "King" of the used car business in Indianapolis. At that time "The King" claimed to be grossing "about a million dollars a year. One year later he said it was now between five and a half to six million. The program he sponsored was the station's "Saturday Night Late Show" and Ed was the only sponsor. His co-host for the commercial



"The King" & Gene

breaks was WISH TV announcer Gene Allison who was hosting the show before the King became the sole advertiser. What

hooked the viewers was the King himself. He was a showman whose motto was "The King Don't Care". He used catch phrases like, "You don't need a lot of cash to get a car from the King; just bring me an honest face." He used a chalkboard to list cars and prices and in his terms would, "Schneid ", (cut) the price) on each one. He also would allow Allison to "schneid" one vehicle and then complain "Gene. you're killin' me!"

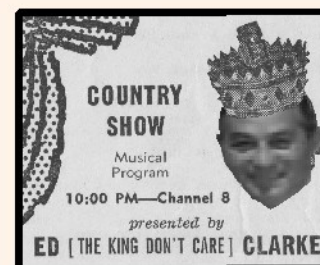
With the money rolling in Clark asked WISH TV salesman Howard Bunnell to find more programs for him to sponsor.



Bunnell, Clark and Allison

The King was soon underwriting "Rasslin'", "Grand Ole Opry" "Amos 'n Andy" and "Country Show" hoping to convince more folks to....

"Swing to the King"!



June 1957 TV News Magazine

In 1933 a beautiful young Austrian woman took off her clothes for a movie director. She ran through the woods, naked. She swam in a lake, naked. Pushing well beyond the social norms of the period. The most popular U.S. movie in 1933 was King Kong. But the talk was about a scandalous movie with the young Austrian woman. The film was banned practically everywhere which of course made it even more popular and valuable. The star of the film, called "Ecstasy," was Hedwig Kiesler. She said the secret of her beauty was "to stand there and look stupid." In reality, Kiesler was anything but stupid. She was a genius. She'd grown up as the child of a prominent Jewish banker. She was a math prodigy. She excelled at science. As she grew older, she became ruthless, using all the power her body and mind gave her. Between the sexual roles she played, her tremendous beauty, and the power of her intellect, Kiesler confounded the men in her life, including her six husbands, two of the most ruthless dictators of the 20th century, and one of the greatest movie producers in history. Her beauty made her rich for a time. But her greatest accomplishment resulted from her intellect and her invention continues to shape the world we live in today. You see this young Austrian starlet would take one of the most valuable technologies ever developed right from under Hitler's nose. After fleeing to America, she not only became a major Hollywood star, but her name sits on one of the most important patents ever granted by the U.S. Patent Office. Today when you use your cell phone or over the next few years as you experience super-fast wireless Internet access via something called "long-term evolution" you'll be using an extension of the technology a 20-year-old actress first conceived while sitting at dinner with Hitler. At the time she made "Ecstasy" Kiesler was married to one of the richest men in Austria. Friedrich Mandl was Austria's leading arms maker. His firm would become a key supplier to the Nazis. Mandl used his beautiful young wife as a showpiece at important business dinners with this group. One of Mandl's favorite topics at the gatherings, which included meals with Hitler and Mussolini, was the technology surrounding radio-controlled missiles and torpedoes. Wireless weapons offered far greater ranges than the wire-controlled alternatives that prevailed at the time. Kiesler sat through these dinners "looking stupid" while absorbing everything she heard. As a Jew Kiesler hated the Nazis. She abhorred her husband's business ambitions. Mandl responded to his willful wife by imprisoning her in his castle. In 1937 she managed to escape. She drugged her maid snuck out of the castle wearing the maid's clothes and sold her jewelry to finance a trip to London.

She got out just in time. In 1938 the Nazi's annexed Austria and seized Mandl's factory. He was half Jewish. Mandl fled to Brazil and became an adviser to Argentina's populist president Juan Peron. In London Kiesler arranged a meeting with Louis B. Mayer. She signed a long-term contract with him becoming one of MGM's biggest stars. She appeared in more than 20 films. She was a co-star to Clark Gable, Judy Garland and even Bob Hope. Each of her first seven MGM movies was a blockbuster. But Kiesler cared far more about fighting the Nazis than about making movies. At the height of her fame in 1942 she developed a new kind of communications system for sending coded messages that couldn't be jammed. She was building a system that would allow torpedoes and guided bombs to always reach their targets. She was building a system to kill Nazis.

By the 1940s, both the Nazis and the Allied forces were using the kind of single-frequency radio-controlled technology Kiesler's ex-husband had been peddling. The drawback of this technology was that the enemy could find the appropriate frequency and "jam" or intercept the signal. Kiesler's key innovation was a way of encoding a message across a broad area of the wireless spectrum. If one part of the spectrum was jammed, the message would still get through on one of the other frequencies being used. But she could not figure out how to synchronize the frequency changes on both the receiver and the transmitter. To solve the problem, she turned to perhaps the world's first techno-musician, George Antheil. Antheil achieved some notoriety for creating intricate musical compositions. He synchronized his melodies across twelve player pianos, producing stereophonic sounds no one had ever heard before. Kiesler incorporated Antheil's technology for synchronizing his player pianos allowing her to synchronize the frequency changes between a weapon's receiver and its transmitter.

On August 11, 1942 a U.S. Patent was granted to Antheil and Hedy Kiesler Markey which was Kiesler's married name at the time. Most of you won't recognize the name Kiesler. And no one would remember the name Hedy Markey. But it's a fair bet than anyone reading this newsletter of a certain age will remember Hedy Lamarr, the name Louis B. Mayer gave to his prize actress.

Lamarr was one of the great pioneers of wireless communications. Her technology was developed by the U.S. Navy which has used it ever since. You're probably using Lamarr's technology, too. Her patent sits at the foundation of spread spectrum technology which you use every day when you log on to a Wi-Fi network or make calls with your Bluetooth enabled phone. It lies at the heart of the massive investments being made right now in so-called fourth-generation LTE wireless technology. This next generation of cell phones and cell towers will provide tremendous increases to wireless network speed and quality, by spreading wireless signals across the entire available spectrum. This kind of encoding is only possible using the kind of frequency switching that Hedwig Kiesler invented.



Submitted by Dave Smith

Death Notices:

Annette L. Anderson 64, passed on January 6th. She was an alumna of Emmerich Manual High school and IUPUI. Annette worked at TV stations 6 and 8 before becoming a long-time reporter at The Indianapolis Recorder. She leaves to cherish her memory sons, Larry, Delon, and Toby; sisters Charlene, Carol, and Jan; and brothers Fred, Curtis, and Richard; and great aunt Catherine Johnson.

GEORGE R. CASTLE, 90, passed away Friday, Jan. 24, 2014 at home. Born in Sioux City, Iowa, George was the owner of Transmitter Repair Service Inc. He also worked at WPTA-TV for 20 years and WKJG-TV 15 years.



He also worked on equipment at Huntington High School Radio Station and PBS 39, Access Fort Wayne and Worship For Shut Ins. He was a U.S. Army World War II veteran of the 505th PIR, 82nd Airborne and earned his Eagle Scout in 1940. Surviving are his daughter, Jeannette E. (Charles E.) Hite of Wilmington, N.C.; six grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; step-daughter, Cynda Clark of Fort Wayne. He was preceded in death by his parents, Ralph Waldo and Georgia B. Castle; spouse, Marilyn K. Castle; daughter, Marilyn Foster; brothers, Robert and Ralph Castle.



1959, WKJG-TV engineers Gene Chase and George Castle.

BILL DONNELLA, 83, of Indianapolis, Indiana., a frequent voice on the public address at USAC racing events for many years, has passed away at age 83.



In the late 1950's Donnella was the news anchor for the noon newscast for WISH TV. Those days when local programming was live and visuals were limited still pictures and 16mm film. He was also a news anchor and sports broadcaster for several Indianapolis radio outlets including announcing the Indianapolis Indians baseball games and the Indianapolis 500. Bill announced many USAC events, including indoor races in Fort Wayne and Indianapolis, including the first USAC race ever held, in January of 1956 at Fort Wayne. Bill was also the original p.a. announcer for the Indiana Pacers basketball team and the Pacers' original public address announcer. Donella's booming baritone was one of the memorable features of Pacers games in the franchise's early years. He moved with the team from the Fairgrounds Coliseum to Market Square Arena in 1975.



Donella at the Track

Donella also worked at Channel 13 for several years as a backup sports anchor and a political reporter, as well as at local radio stations WIFE and WIBC. He also was the track announcer at the Winchester Speedway and Indianapolis Raceway Park, as well as for some events at the Fairgrounds track. He is survived by his wife Margie, whom he met at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway during the Month of May. Donella was known as a talented, congenial but stubborn man. One veteran Pacers stat crew member recalled him reading a public service message advising fans not to smoke in the building while cradling a cigarette underneath the scorer's table.

Warren W. Perney 92, Indianapolis, passed away September 12, 2013. He was born April 7, 1921 in Cleveland, OH the son of Adolph and Ruth Cooley Perney, who preceded him in death. Warren was an Indiana University graduate, and worked for WTTV as film director.



l to r Dave Smith, Warren Perney, Bob Petranoff and Doug Brown at WTTV.

He was supervisor of caseworkers for the Marion County Welfare Dept. for 25 years, retiring in 1986. He received the Sagamore of the Wabash (the highest award which the Governor of Indiana bestows), and a Kentucky Colonel. He was founder and past president of the Indianapolis affiliate of Habitat for Humanity. Warren was a WW II veteran, landing on Omaha Beach on D-Day and earning the Bronze Star.



Warren at the D.C. Memorial

Recently, Warren was chosen as part of the "The Honor Flight Program". The non profit organization flies World War II veterans to Washington, DC to see the memorial dedicated to them. Warren

died just days after he participated in the event. He is survived by his wife of 65 years: Jean Wilson Perney, daughter: Patricia Diane Perney, son: David W. (Beth) Perney, brother: Gordon (Cleo) Perney, grandchildren: Dana (Doug) Thompson, Nathan (Rachael) Perney, Christi Hillary and Ben Perney and great-grandchildren: Dylan and Olivia Thompson and Miles and Lucas Hillary.

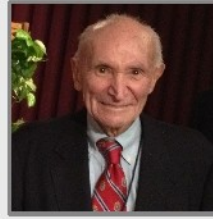
Pioneer Contact Information

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Bernie Wise, a broadcast pioneer with 60 years experience in the design and manufacture of broadcast transmitters died December 13, 2013 at age 87.



Pioneer Bernie Wise

Born in Philadelphia he was the founder of FM transmission supplier Energy-Onix, He founded Energy-Onix in 1987. The firm makes AM, FM and

shortwave broadcast transmitters, STL gear, translators and other products. He was credited with bringing the "Grounded Grid" design to FM broadcasting.

"Wise began designing transmitters as an engineer with RCA, where he worked on the design team for their first UHF TV transmitter. His frequency studies and spectrum analyses were used by the Federal Communications Commission to allocate the UHF TV band in the United States."

In 1962 Wise founded CCA Electronics Corp. Inc. of Gloucester City, N.J. "At CCA he designed, developed and introduced the Grounded Grid Transmitter to FM broadcasting." That company was sold in 1974.

Wise was a fixture for years at the NAB convention and other shows. In the past decade he was, among other things, also an advocate of spread-spectrum STL's and a critic of the HD Radio system. He wrote in a letter to Radio World in 2010 that he had attended every NAB convention since 1957 but would miss the event that year as "an expression of 'non-support' for the HD Radio system promoted by the NAB, iBiquity, CBS and several of the large radio groups."

In 2005 Energy-Onix installed an encoder from Digital Radio Express at WBUZ(FM) in Nashville to demonstrate the multicasting ability of FMeXtra digital subcarrier technology.

Wise also received an award from the International Broadcasters Idea Bank for his contributions to the broadcasting industry and his longtime support of the Idea Bank.

Wise is survived by his son Jack and Jack's wife Mary Wise, three grandchildren and four great grandchildren.