WSM Radio and Television Collection

1928 – 1966

Collection Number: MSS 535

Size: 5.46 linear feet

Special Collections and University Archives
Jean and Alexander Heard Library
Vanderbilt University
Nashville, Tennessee
WSM RADIO & TV

PROVENANCE

President of National Life and Accident Insurance Company, the parent company of WSM, Inc., Jesse Wills appreciated the research value of the wide variety of material related to the activities of WSM Radio and TV. In May 1967 he donated to Vanderbilt University an assortment of this material and added to the collection in July 1968. Jesse Wills also donated the Grand Ole Opry Collection, which complements the WSM RADIO & TV material.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The WSM RADIO & TV collection is composed of correspondence, photographs, scripts of radio programs, and promotional material. It is stored in thirteen manuscript boxes, eight of which contain scripts of radio programs. Dates of the collection range from 1928 to 1966 with a large portion of the material dated in the 1940s.

WSM Radio is probably best known as the station that broadcasts the Grand Ole Opry. Scripts from Opry broadcasts together with autographs and photographs of Opry stars are among the collection's documents.

During World War II, Variety magazine sponsored a SHOWMANAGEMENT Award. In entries to the contest, WSM Radio outlined its contribution to the "war effort," using photographs to illustrate several points. The Federal Communications Commission Clear Channel Hearings of 1947 also serve as a good profile of WSM Radio during the 1940s.

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WSM RADIO & TV
CHRONOLOGY

October 5, 1925......First radio broadcast over the National Life and Accident Insurance Company's radio station.

November 28, 1925......The "WSM Barn Dance," forerunner of the Grand Ole Opry is launched.

1927.....................The "WSM Barn Dance" becomes the Grand Ole Opry.

1932.....................WSM is awarded a clear channel at 650 kilocycles. Its power is increased from 5,000 watts to 50,000 watts.

November, 1939.......The Grand Ole Opry is carried by the NBC Radio Network.

1941..............WSM becomes first American commercial frequency modulation radio station, W47NV, a forerunner of WSM-FM.

1943.....................The Grand Ole Opry moves to the Ryman Auditorium and stays there for the next 31 years.

September 30, 1950......WSM-TV debuts as the first television station in Nashville, building its own microwave relay system to Louisville, KY

1951....................."The Waking Crew," the second longest running live radio broadcast, goes on the air under the name, "8 O'Clock Time."

1955....................."Grand Ole Opry," WSM's first network show, is televised on ABC-TV.

August 29, 1964......WSM-TV becomes the first television station in the United States to receive satellite weather map photos transmitted from NASA's Nimbus satellite.

1965.....................WSM-TV brings color programming to Nashville.

1968.....................WSM-FM makes its debut with 100,000 watts.

June 30, 1970...........Opryland U.S.A., an amusement park with a musical theme, has its official groundbreaking.

May 27, 1974...........Opening of Opryland U.S.A.

March 16, 1974...........The Grand Ole Opry moves into the Grand Ole Opry House situated on the grounds at Opryland.

1974...............Opryland Productions television and commercial production operation goes into business in the Grand Ole Opry House.

1975.....................WSM-TV becomes the first Nashville television station to broadcast an hour-long local news program.
November, 1977........The Opryland Hotel, Tennessee's largest convention hotel property, opens.

March 4, 1978........The Grand Ole Opry is televsied live over the Public Broadcasting Service annually through 1981.

September, 1980........WSM forms Opryland Radio Productions to produce and market syndicated and network radio programming.

March 11, 1981........NLT Corporation, parent company of WSM, Inc., announces plans for the sale of WSM-TV to make way for WSM's entry into satellite and cable television programming.

September 12, 1981...."Nashville Alive," the first live cable television series to be telecast from Nashville, premieres from the Stagedoor Lounge of the Opryland Hotel, being telecast on WTBS from Atlanta.

November 3, 1981.....WSM-TV is sold to Gillett Broadcasting Company and becomes WSMV-TV.

December 8, 1981.....WSM and the Associated Press announce the Music Country Network, an overnight satellite radio network, with WSM-AM as the flagship station.

January 19, 1982.....WSM announces a venture between Opryland Productions and Group W Satellite Communications for the Nashville Network satellite and cable operation.
## WSM RADIO & TV

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Kirkland, Ellis, Hodson, Chaffetz, & Masters. 31 Mar 1961; 14 Sept 1961

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Prevention of Blindness and Conservation of Vision. 8 Dec 1938; 6 June 1939

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Taishoff, Sol. 27 June 1946
Thomas, Jean. 21 Mar 1948; 23 Apr 1948; 26 Apr 1948; 17 May 1948; 26 May 1948
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W
Weakley, Mrs. Harry R. [1944]
White, Billy. 15 Oct 1947
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Winkler, Thomas R. 38 Aug 1967
Woodman, H.A. 20 Mar 1928; 6 Apr 1928; 9 May 1928; 20 June 1928
Outgoing Correspondence

1944

Jan 27, VARIETY

1946

Apr 9, Charlie Tobias
June 11, [form letter]; June 11, Syd Eiges; June 20, Bill Caldwell; June 21, Sol Taishoff; June 25, Sol Taishoff
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Feb 17, Bradford Kress
Apr 18, Chattanooga Times
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May 27, Nashville Tennessean

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N.D., "Dee Jay"

1955

May 4, Flamingo Films

1958

Nov 8, "Music Vendor"

1961

Jan 12, MSgt. William D. Kirkpatrick

1964

May 4, John Langridge; May 7, Johnny Johnson
WSM RADIO & TV
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[1946]
[June 21-23], Memo, re: Broadcast from the Idlewild

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Scripts for WSM radio programs held in the collection. Dates do not necessarily denote a complete series.

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American Education Week, 1948  
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In Memoriam
Interview on Acting Career
Is It The Truth
It Can Be Done

Andrew Jackson's Birthday

Let's Go To Town
Long, Long Ago With The Old Timers

6-3

Lullaby Time, 13 Dec 1939 - 5 Jan 1942
Lullaby Time, 12 Jan 1942 - 24 June 1942
Lullaby Time, 1 July 1942 - 30 Dec 1942
Lullaby Time, 6 Jan 1943 - 28 Apr 1943

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Making the Most of It, 6 Mar 1944 - 1 Dec 1945
Making the Most of It, 4 Apr 1946 - 30 Aug 1946

6-5

Minnie Pearl and Maria
Abe Martin
The Methodist Church in Nashville
More than Before
Morning Percolator

6-6

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Morning Reflections, 11 Nov 1939 - 30 Dec 1939
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WSM RADIO & TV
REGISTER - APPENDIX #2

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Anglin, Jack (see Wells, Kitty)
Atkins, Chet
Brasfield, Rod
Carlisle, Bill
Carter, June
Carter, Maybelle
Cash, Johnny
Cooper, Stoney
Copas, Cowboy
Cousin Jody (see Summey, James C.)
Cutrer, Thomas
Dickens, Jimmy
Flatt, Lester
Hawkins, Hawkshaw
Haynes, Inez (see La Dells)
Hazelwood, Adelaid (see Woods, Del)
Hill, Eddie
Husky, Ferlin
Jackson, Stonewall
Jones, George
Jordanaires
La Dells
Lance, Helen C. (see La Dells)
Lonzo and Oscar
Louvin Brothers
Martin, Benny
Monroe, Bill
Newman, Jimmy
Old Hickory Quartet

Pearl, Minnie
Pinson, Dolores D. (see La Dells)
Price, Ray
Reeves, Jim
Robbins, Marty
(?)Scruggs, Earl (see Flatt, Lester)
Sharpe, Hank (see Old Hickory Quartet)
Shepard, Jean
Summey, James C.
Snow, Hank
Stoker, Gordon (see Jordanaires)
Sullivan, Oscar (see Lonzo and Oscar)
Temple, Preston (see Louvin Brothers)
Tubb, Ernest
Tubb, Justin
Wagoner, Porter
Wells, Kitty
Wilburn, Teddy
Wood, Del
Wright, Johnny (see Wells, Kitty)
Young, Faron
Photographs - 1st Annual Pet Milk Talent Contest, 1958

1) Audience
2) Unidentified pianist, Margie Bowes
3) Ken Runyard, Sid Wolf, Bob Cooper(WSM), Tommy Cutrer, Bob Piggott(Pet Milk), Ed Peterson(Keystone), Margie Bowes - front row: Bob Piggott, Margie Bowes, Tommy Cutrer
4) Back row: 6 unknowns
5) Margie Bowes; Bob Piggott(Pet Milk) - center; 6 unknowns
6) Bill Sacho(Billboard), Margie Bowes, Sid Wolf
7) Bob Cooper(WSM), Chuck Forbes, Margie Bowes, Ken Runyard
8) Ed Peterson(Keystons), Emerson Pryor and Nadine Wright(WDVA Danville, Virginia), Tommy Cutrer, Margie Bowes, Sidney Wolfe (Keystone), Bob Piggott(Pet Milk), Ernest Tubb, Champ Humphrey (Gardner), Roy Acuff
9) Margie Bowes, Tommy Cutrer, Melba Montgomery
11) Margie Bowes, Bob Piggott(Pet Milk)
12) Far left: Hank Garland; Margie Bowes - at microphone; Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass; Ernest Tubb
13) Margie Bowes, Tommy Cutrer, Melba Montgomery
14) The Drifters(?), William Harris, Margie Bowes, Glenn Johnson, The Treys
15) Ray Edenton-guitar, Margie Bowes, Ernest Tubb, T. Tommy Cutrer
16) Pauline Hotze, Tommy Cutrer, Alice Morris
17) The Drifters, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass, [June Webb?] guitar
18) The Drifters-microphone, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass, Tommy Cutrer
19) Unknown-bass, Drifter, Roy Acuff, Drifter, [June Webb?]
20) Unknown-bass, Drifters, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass, [June Webb?]
21) [Executive's wives](7 women)
22) [Executive's wives] (2 women)
23) Group loading bus
24) Ray Edenton-guitar, William Harris-microphone, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass, Roy Acuff
25) William Harris, Bob Piggott(Pet Milk)
26) Ray Edenton-guitar, William Harris-microphone, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass
27) William Harris-microphone, Ray Edenton-guitar, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass, Bob Piggott(Pet Milk)?, T. Tommy Cutrer
29) Emerson Pryor(WDVA), Sid Wolf, Bob Cooper(WSM), T. Tommy Cutrer, Bob Piggott(Pet Milk), Edwin Peterson(Keystone), Front: William Harris
30) Center: Glenn Johnson of Rocky Mount, NC
31) Sid Wolf, 2 unknowns, Glenn Johnson, Edwin Peterson(Keystone), Bob Cooper(WSM)
32) Bob Piggott(Pet Milk), Glenn Johnson
33) Emerson Pryor(WDVA), Sid Wolf, Bob Cooper(WSM), T. Tommy Cutrer, Bob Piggott(Pet Milk), Edwin Peterson(Keystone), in front: Glenn Johnson
34) Glenn Johnson at piano
WSM RADIO & TV - Photographs

13-12 Photographs - 1st Annual Pet Milk Talent Contest, 1958

35) Glenn Johnson-piano, Ray Edenton-guitar, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass
36) Glenn Johnson-piano, Ray Edenton-guitar, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass, Ernest Tubb
37) The Jordanaires
38) The La Dells, Pauline Hotze?, unknown, Alice Morris, Ferlin Husky
39) 2 Unknowns, Melba Montgomery, Johnny Tillotson, Ed Peterson, Sid Wolf
40) 2 Unknowns, Melba Montgomery-seated, Ed Peterson, Sid Wolf, Johnny Tillotson-kneeling
41) 2 Unknowns, Melba Montgomery, Bob Piggott(Pet Milk)
42) Melba Montgomery, 3 unknowns
43) Panel: Ernest Tubb, Del Kirkpatrick, Bob Cooper(WSM). Bob Piggott(Pet Milk)
44) Unknown, Bob Piggott(Pet Milk), 2 Unknowns
45) Unknown-bass, Howdy Forrester-fiddle, [June Webb?]—guitar, Brother Oswald (Beecher "Pete" Kirby)—guitar, unknown, T. Tommy Cutrer.
46) Howdy Forrester-fiddle, [June Webb?]—guitar, Roy Acuff, Brother Oswald (Beecher "Pete" Kirby)—guitar. Background: Johnny Tillotson—guitar, seated
47) Unknown woman—guitar, Othell Sullivan—guitar, Roy Acuff, Tommy Cutrer
48) Johnny Tillotson—microphone, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass, [June Webb?]—guitar
49) Ray Edenton—guitar, Roy Acuff, Johnny Tillotson, [June Webb?]—guitar, Treys(Pet Milk); Edwin Peterson(Keystone), Front: Johnny Tillotson
50) Johnny Tillotson, 2 unknown men looking at magazine
51) Johnny Tillotson—guitar, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass, [June Webb?]—guitar
52) Johnny Tillotson—guitar, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass, [June Webb?]—guitar, T. Tommy Cutrer—behind music stand
53) Emerson Pryor(WDVA), Sid Wolf, Bob Cooper(WSM) Tommy Cutrer, Bob Piggott(Pet Milk); Edwin Peterson(Keystone) In front: The Treys
54) Ray Edenton—guitar, The Treys—microphone
55) Unknown—fiddle, Unknown—Steel guitar, The Treys—microphone, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass
56) Ernest Tubb—guitar, Ray Edenton—guitar, Margie Bowes—microphone, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass
57) Unknown—guitar, Ray Edenton—hidden, Ernest Tubb, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass, The Treys
58) Ernest Tubb, Margie Bowes, Tommy Cutrer
59) Hank Garland—dark suit, far left, Ernest Tubb—guitar, Margie Bowes, Glenn Johnson, unknown
60) Gordon Stoker (Jordanaires)—far left, Ernest Tubb, Margie Bowes, Ray Edenton—guitar
61) Jordanaires(2), Ernest Tubb, Margie Bowes, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass
62) Ernest Tubb, Margie Bowes, Tommy Cutrer
63) Ernest Tubb, Ray Edenton—guitar, (2) Treys
64) Faron Young, Margie, Ray Edenton—guitar, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass
65) Ray Edenton, Faron Young, Unknown, Margie Bowes, Tommy Cutrer, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance
66) Faron Young, Margie Bowes, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance-bass
67) Ray Edenton, Faron Young, Margie Bowes, Floyd "Lightnin" Chance, Tommy Cutrer
68) 2 unknown men, unknown woman, Bob Cooper(WSM), unknown woman, unknown man
69) 4 unknown men
70) Front row: 3 unknown men Back row: 4 unknown men, Bob Cooper (WSM)
71) Unknown man, Phil Craig, unknown man

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13-12 Photographs - 1st Annual Pet Milk Talent Contest, 1958

73) Emerson Pryor(WDVA), Sid Wolf, Bob Cooper(WSM), Tommy Cutrer, Bob Piggott (Pet Milk), Edwin Peterson(Keystone); In front: 5 unknowns
74) 3 unknown men, Edwin Peterson(Keystone), 2 unknown men, Sid Wolf, 2 unknown men
75) Unknown, Sid Wolf, Unknown, Edwin Peterson(Keystone)

13-13 Photographs - 2nd Annual Pet Milk Talent Contest, 1959

1) 3 unknown women, Ernest Tubb, Tommy Cutrer
2) 2 unknown men, 3 unknown women - at piano
3) Tommy Cutrer, 2 unknown women, Edwin Peterson, unknown woman
4) At microphone: 3 unknown women and [Wilburn Brothers?]
   Far right: Tommy Cutrer
5) 2 unknown men at microphone, [Little Jimmy Dickens?], Tommy Cutrer
6) 3 unknown women, 2 unknown men - on steps

13-14 Photographs - 3rd Annual Pet Milk Talent Contest, 1960

1) Jordanaires(4)-seated; Pete Drake-steel guitar; Hank Garland-electric guitar; Jimmy Day-steel guitar; 3 unknowns, Tommy Jackson-fiddle, Ray Edenton-guitar; Cathy Morrison, Bill Morrison; 3 unknowns; Tommy Cutrer-microphone; Teddy Wilburn, Doyle Wilburn


1) Jim Dodge and Ken Runyon
2) Bob Cooper, Jim Dodge-with plaque
3) Unknown man, Bob Piggott, Jim Dodge
4) Bob Piggott(Pet Milk), Cliff Thomas(WSM)
5) Unknown-guitar, Tommy Cutrer, Roy Acuff
6) Bill Gentry, unknown woman-guitar, Roy Acuff
7) Unknown woman and man putting up sign
8) Faron Young and Bonnie Rose Martin of Vidalia Georgia
9) Cliff Thomas and Ralph Hartinagel with straw cowboy hats
10) 2 unknown men, Bob Piggott(Pet Milk)-behind podium
11) Bill Gentry, unknown, Ray Pillow, Jim Dodge
12) 5 unknown men in white jackets, Jim Dodge
13) Bill Gentry, unknown man, Bill McDaniel, unknown man, Jim Dodge
14) Othell Sullivan, Unknown woman, Bill McDaniel, Bill Gentry, Jim Dodge
15) Sid Wolf, Ken Runyon, Bob Cooper, Bob Piggott
16) Sid Wolf, Al?
17) Unknown man, Ruth Dodge, Jim Dodge
18) Jim Dodge, Ruth Dodge
19) Bob Piggott, Jim Dodge
WSM RADIO & TV – Photographs


20) Bob Piggott
21) CF Roberts, Johnny Rose, Jim Dodge
22) The Grell Family, in background–Cliff Thomas pointing finger
23) Othell Sullivan—with plaque, unknown woman, Jim Dodge
24) Unknown woman, unknown man, Bonnie Rose Martin, Jim Dodge, Bob Piggott—behind podium
25) Allen ?, Ken Runyon, Jim Dodge, Bob Cooper
26) Johnny Rose, Roy Acuff
27) Johnny Rose with guitar
28) Johnny Rose, C.F. Roberts
29) Johnny Rose, C.F. Roberts
30) 4 unknown men at podium

13-16 Photographs – Various

1) Roy Acuff, photographer [Old Hickory Lake]
2) Roy Acuff, unknown man, Tex Ritter
3) Military band and troops at train depot [194?]
4) Stage with band, military speaker [194?]
5) Broadcast News Awards
6) Camel Caravan at Parthenon, Nashville, Tennessee [194?]
7) Camel Caravan performing for troops [194?]
8) Company Band, Camp Jackson
9) June Carter [?]
10) unknown, Bill Clairborne—in WSM studio?
11) Patsy Cline
12) Francis Craig—2 copies
13) Francis Craig and Orchestra
14) Francis Craig and Orchestra; Francis Craig—far left, Dinah Shore—seated on piano
15) John DeWitt, Jr.
16) [Ohio River Flood, 1937?] Unknown man on house, 4 unknown men in boat
17) [Ohio River Flood, 1937?] two unknown men in boat by gas pump
18) John Gordy and the Dixielanders [Hank Snow on banjo?]
19) Snooky Lanson
20) Unknown man, Cliff Thomas, Ray Pillow
21) Radar screen
22) Radar screen
21/22 Supplement: explanation of contents of radar screens
23) Tex Ritter, Patsy Wagoner, Grant Turner—Studio A, 5th floor National Life Building, Nashville, Tennessee
24) Johnny Tillotson, unknown man
25) unknown man—piano, Dinah Shore
26) Soldiers loading truck
27) Audience watching "Sunday Down South" [radio program]
28) Audience watching "[Sunday Down South]?"
29) Audience watching "[Sunday Down South]"
30) Orchestra for "[Sunday Down South]"
31) Audience watching "[Sunday Down South]"

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BOX-FOLDER

13-16 Photographs - Various

32) Audience watching ["Sunday Down South"]
33) Orchestra for "Sunday Down South", [June Carter?] at microphone
34) Troops in action, composite picture
35) Audience at hangar [194?]
36) WHBQ - 2 unknown men
37) Front row: 5 unidentified girls (sisters?)
    Back row: unidentified man, Cliff Thomas
38) Front row: 5 unidentified girls (sisters?)
    Back row: 3 unknown men, Jim Dodge, Edwin Peterson, Sid Wolf
39) [WSM executives?]
40) [WSM executives?]
41) [WSM executives?] at dinner
42) [WSM orchestra?]
43) Faron Young on paddle boat [Old Hickory Lake?]
    unknown people on dock
44) Unknown man and woman
45) Unknown man and woman

Closed. No Box #

Sunday Down South East of Queen Bradley
Illustration of Uncle Dave Macon for "Nashville Scrapbook" feature in the Asheville Banner 11/5/61