

# The History of ABC's West Coast Television Studios

## Part 2 of 2

By Bobby Ellerbee and *Eyes Of A Generation.com*

### Preface and Acknowledgement

**This is the second part of a unique historical report on the creation of the broadcast facilities and studios used by The American Broadcasting Company. The first part of the story takes place in New York, and is covered in Part 1. This second part of the ABC studios story lays out the history of ABC's growth on the West Coast and is about the Los Angeles studios.**

As ABC's official historical archives are actually quite scarce, it took an extra deep dive to come up with some of the ultra-rare texts, photos, personal recollections and memoirs that are included in this report. For much of the network's history, photos in the studios, except for a few rare publicity shots, were not permitted by anyone, so there will not be as many as in my NBC and CBS reports, but there will be some exceptionally interesting information presented here that only a handful of people have ever seen.

As has been the case with my four prior historical reports on NBC New York, NBC West Coast and CBS New York, CBS West Coast, this effort would not have been possible without the help of many current and former ABC staffers from every area of the network and every era. I would like to offer my thanks to those dozens and dozens that helped, but especially veteran west coast cameramen Chuck Pharis, Jan Lowry, Don "Peaches" Langford, and ABC vets David Elliot, Galen Augustus and Brett Henry.

This story is told to the best of our abilities, as a great deal of the information on these facilities is now gone...like so many of the men and women who worked there. I've told this as concisely as possible, but some elements are dependent on the memories of those who were there many years ago, and from conclusions drawn from research. If you can add to this with facts or photos, please contact me as this is an ongoing project.

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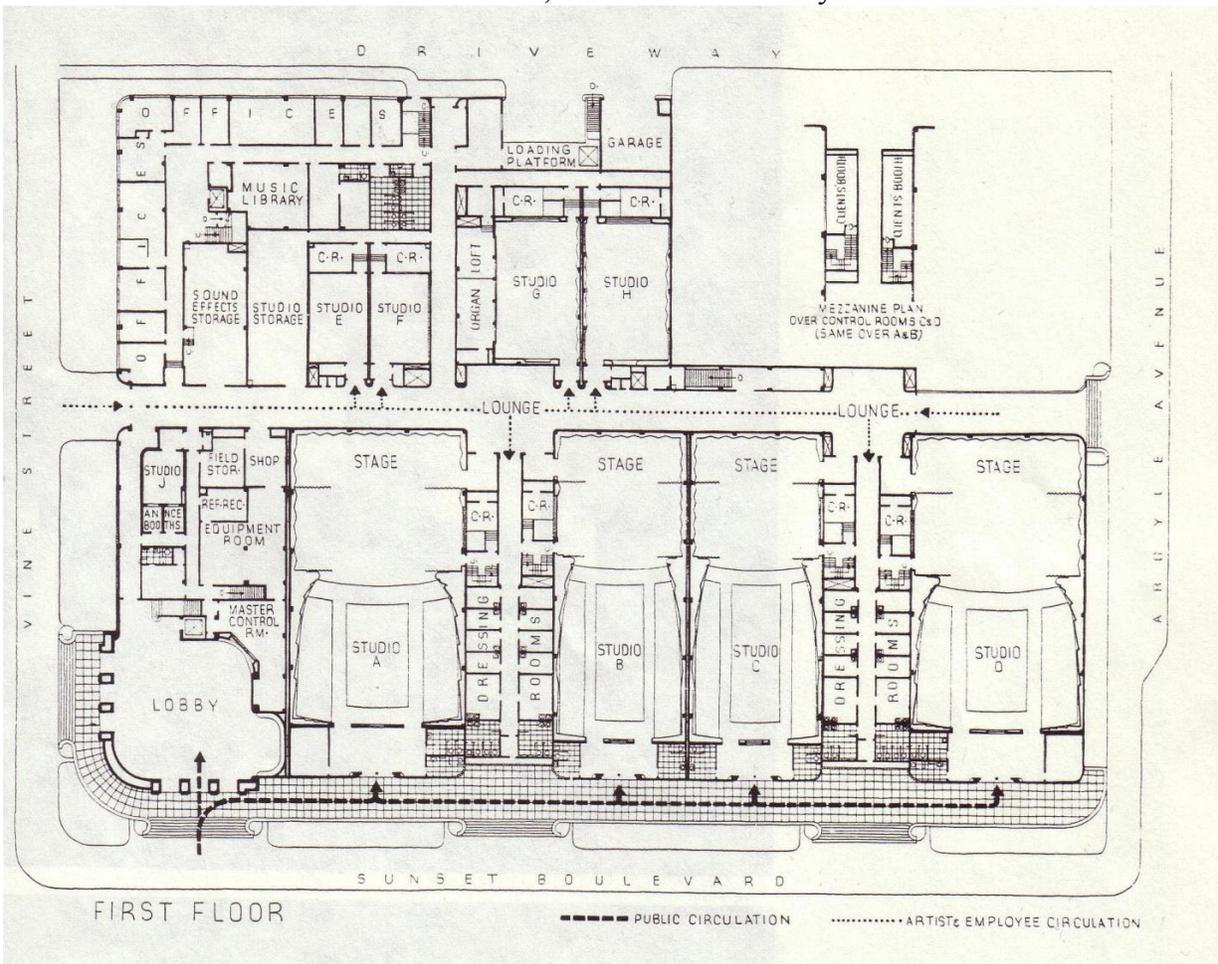
ABC West Coast Shows And Studios...Page 65



# ABC's First Home In The West...NBC's Radio City West



This was ABC's first home in California, at the corner of Hollywood and North Vine Street



See Studio E? That's where ABC Radio's *Ozzie & Harriet Show* came from, and the network's youngest staff announcer, Roger Carroll (below left), usually announced the show from Studio J, which was an announce booth down the hall.



In 1946, Bing Crosby left as host of NBC Radio's weekly *Kraft Music Hall Show* to sign with ABC, in order to produce and star in *Philco Radio Time*. **That was the first radio show ever recorded with audio tape, and ABC was the first radio network to use audio tape. The first ever Ampex tape recorders were used to record Bing's Philco shows on ABC.** For the full story on Bing's contributions to audio and videotape technology, go to this firsthand account. [http://ethw.org/First-Hand:Bing\\_Crosby\\_and\\_the\\_Recording\\_Revolution](http://ethw.org/First-Hand:Bing_Crosby_and_the_Recording_Revolution)



This is Bing Crosby Enterprises Chief Engineer Jack Mullin at NBC Radio City West in an ABC control room, which is most likely Studio G. On the left are the first two Ampex 200 audio tape recorders, and in the foreground is the first Ampex 300.

Remember... when ABC bought the Blue Network in 1943, NBC agreed to a 10 year deal that give them office and studio space, three radio stations (WJZ New York, WENR Chicago and KGO San Francisco), AT&T long line leases, sixty affiliates, and technological help, so ABC was operating inside NBC properties in New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

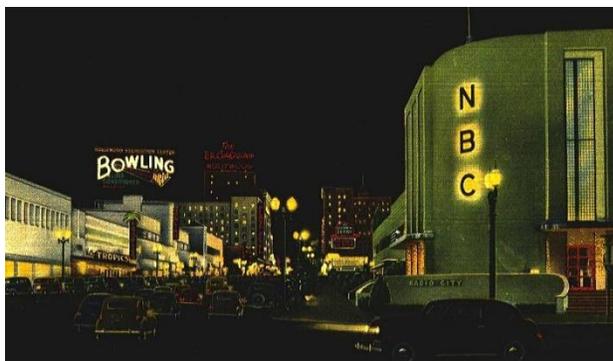
As stated in Part 1 of this report, ABC in New York began to move out of the NBC shadow when they bought the Durland Riding Academy at 7 West 66<sup>th</sup> Street in 1948. It would take another year or so for them to have the ability to expand out of NBC's Hollywood location, but when they did, they didn't have to go very far. As a matter of fact, they went just across the street and about a half block north to 1539 North Vine Street to Tom Breneman's Hollywood Restaurant. The news article is from a July 4, 1949 *Broadcasting Magazine*.

**ABC STUDIOS**  
**Space Added on West Coast**  
TO ACCOMMODATE increased Hollywood origination of audience participation programs, ABC Western Division has taken over the former Tom Breneman Restaurant at 1539 N. Vine St., on a five-year lease. Recently remodeled, setup includes two large studios, each seating 300 persons. A third studio of greater capacity, to accommodate both radio and television audiences, will also be constructed according to Frank Samuels, vice president in charge. Audience promotion department also will be housed.



### The ABC Radio Center...1533-44 North Vine Street, Hollywood

Did you know America's first network disc jockey shows were broadcast from this building? Or, that this was ABC's first owned and operated studio on the west coast? All that and more is true, but let's start with the building itself.



As you see in the first (above left) photo from 1944, this was a bowling alley but not just any bowling alley. When the Hollywood Recreation Center was built in 1940, this was claimed to be

the largest and most modern in the nation with 22 lanes, and it was open 24 hours to accommodate all the people working at NBC just down the block. CBS's Columbia Square was only a block east of NBC on Hollywood Blvd, just past the Hollywood Palladium.

Tom Breneman was host of the radio show *Breakfast In Hollywood*, which aired on the Blue Network owned by NBC and later ABC. The show aired from 1941 to 1948. By 1947, Breneman had ten million listeners on ABC. The popularity of the radio program was such that he created his own magazine, and in 1945 he opened his own establishment and broadcast his show live from Tom Breneman's Restaurant. In this cued up clip from his movie *Breakfast In Hollywood*, you can see him arrive at this location. <http://youtu.be/yTVzsovp358?t=10m16s>

On April 28, 1948, just before the daily morning broadcast was to begin, Breneman had a heart attack and died. Garry Moore took over hosting duties but the show quickly failed without Breneman. Here's a sample of the show from 1947. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOZ9IEUV9gs#t=168>

According to our friend Joel Tator, the radio studios there were initially called studios X, Y and Z, but were later changed to A, B and C when ABC took over. There were not any dedicated television studios in this building, but occasionally, live broadcasts were done with a remote unit from Studio A which was the largest radio studio. B and C were smaller audience radio studios.

Now called The ABC Radio Center, Eddie Cantor and Frank Sinatra are reported to both have become "disc jockeys", and are believed to be the first network radio DJs. In actuality, it is thought they were the first singing stars to play recordings of other artists on their shows. The first real DJ is thought to be Martin Block of New York's WNEW where he created *The Make Believe Ballroom* in 1935. ABC's west coast radio operations remained here until at least 1962.



In 1944, ABC's new owner Edward J. Noble bought Earl C. Anthony's Los Angeles station KECA and it operated from the pictured Highland Avenue location until the network bought the North Vine building.

## The ABC Television Center...4151 Prospect Avenue

### Large - Scale Plans For ABC Coast TV

#### Woods Tells How Vitagraph Lot Acquisition Aids Network

ACQUISITION by ABC of what is reportedly the largest radio-television production site in the world will enable the network "to embark on its West Coast television operation early in 1949 on a scale enjoyed only by major motion picture companies," Mark Woods, ABC president, commented last Thursday. ABC has purchased the 20-acre Vitagraph motion picture lot in Hollywood from Warner Bros. [BROADCASTING, Oct. 4].

Work already has started on conversion of the lot to full TV production, Mr. Woods said, and television personnel will be moved into the new center as soon as the property is released by the escrow agent. Although several buildings stand on the lot, only two sound stages, measuring 200 by 175 and 100 by 175 feet, are expected to be permanent. Other buildings are expected to be razed to make way for new construction.

This site eventually will be the operating base of KECA-TV, owned outlet of ABC and ultimately the origination point for the bulk of ABC network programming. Of the 20 acres, 10 are clear, allowing ample room for outside shooting.

Although some reports have it that the site will ultimately house the total ABC Hollywood operation, ABC Hollywood officials insist this has not been determined.

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This is quite a historic street corner! At the bottom is Talmadge Street, and on the right is Prospect Avenue. Take a good look at this photo from 1928 at what was then the Warner Brothers East Hollywood Annex. Notice that the main gate at the corner and, that in the large center building, which was Warner Studio 2, there is no fly loft yet; that was added in 1929 for *On With The Show*.

This site began life as Vitagraph Studios in 1915, three years after the Brooklyn Vitagraph Studios were built. One of the first actors to work on the lot was Stan Laurel, long before pairing up with Oliver Hardy. Hundreds of Vitagraph silent films were cranked out here during that decade - before it was acquired by an upstart company called Warner Brothers. In 1925, WB took their biggest gamble to date in acquiring Vitagraph. The purchase gave them the lot here at 4151 Prospect Avenue, and Vitagraph's first studios which were in Brooklyn, but best of all, it gave them partial ownership of the Vitaphone motion picture sound recording and projection technology.

Some of the first to work at Vitagraph included the silent legends Mary Pickford and John Barrymore. As a matter of fact, take a look at this *Broadcasting* article from November 28, 1949. Although we are skipping ahead just a bit with this article about the KECA-TV studios opening at ABC's new Prospect lot, **there is some history here you will not find anywhere else...including how the streets got their names!**

# Telefile:

## LOS ANGELES' SEVENTH OUTLET, KECA-TV GETS OFF TO FAST START IN THE TV RACE

**G**ETTING there "fastest with the mostest" is the generally accepted quote of Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest. But KECA-TV, Hollywood outlet of ABC, did a switch on this text by getting on the air "fastest with the mostest."

Though the last Los Angeles television station on the air, it is without question blessed with the "mostest" facilities of the city's seven operating stations. Housed on the old Vitagraph Lot, re-named as ABC Television Center, the station is located on a 2-acre site—a location rich in the lore of visual presentation, first for silent pictures, later for sound films and now for television.

Founded in 1912 as the world's then largest motion picture lot, it provided a stage for such silent stars as Maurice Costello, John Barrymore, Mary Pickford, Gloria Swanson, Antonio Moreno, Percy Marmont and William Duncan. On one of that lot's sound stages (now known as TV Stage 2), the first talking picture—Al Jolson's "Jazz Singer"—was filmed.

The lot was founded by Alfred E.

KECA-TV is proud of the magnitude and history of the Vitagraph lot. From station's archives is this 1920 shot (photo at right) of Albert Smith greeting Silent Star Antonio Moreno as the latter drives up to the Vitagraph gates. Nearly 30 years later (below) Mr. Moreno again drives up to be greeted by (l to r) Mr. Smith; Frank Samuels, ABC western division vice president; Phil Caldwell, western division technical director; Richard Moore, assistant general manager of the western division; and Paul Mowrey, ABC national director of television program sales.



Smith, now living in retirement in Hollywood. He named the lot Vitagraph, after one of the first motion picture projection machines which he had invented in 1896. Mr. Smith purchased the 23-acre site from a willing real estate agent for \$20,000.

By the time Warner Brothers purchased it in 1925 for \$1 million, the streets which bordered it had been named for some of the people who were active in moviedom. It is bounded on the west (to this day) by Talmadge St., the thoroughfare named after Norma Talmadge; on the south Prospect Avenue was derived from the street in Brooklyn where Vitagraph's old Flatbush studios were located; Russell Street, to the north, is a bow to William "Bill" Russell, an early leading man. (ABC advises that the hill to the east, still unnamed, will be identified by some aspect of television's growth).

ABC purchased the site from the Warners in October 1948 for \$350,000. Added costs to the network breakdown as follows, according



to ABC: Remodeling cost—\$650,000; technical equipment—\$1 million; construction cost—\$600,000.

Telecasting on Channel 7 ("Your Best Bet, A Natural" is the promotion slogan), the KECA-TV transmitter is located on Mt. Wilson, 5,999½ feet above sea level utilizing 30 kw visual power and 15 kw aural power. The actual height of the antenna above average terrain is 3,040 feet.

Coming on the air in a field of six other stations posed a program problem for Channel 7. But with a bid of \$77,000, KECA-TV came up with "the mostest" once again—the 11 (another lucky number) home football games of USC and UCLA.

This led to one of the most elaborate and diversified promotion programs seen in Los Angeles for the KECA-TV opening on Sept. 16. (This was the only number upset, but the station's opening had not been forsaken early enough by the football schedule markers).

Bombarding the city with a variety of promotion gimmicks including two million books of matches among other things, few citizens were aware that the L. A. Dodge Dealers Assn. and Hoffman Radio Corp. (TV sets) would sponsor the football games. Although the actual promotion budget did not reach a gradiose sum, every dollar was made to count. By coordinating all promotion activities through ABC's promotion department, then headed by Norman Nelson, Dodge and Hoffman money did not duplicate nor did either overlap network activity.

Thanks to the football games, a flow of audience interest was established for Channel 7 when it started programming. But it was the trade consensus that while



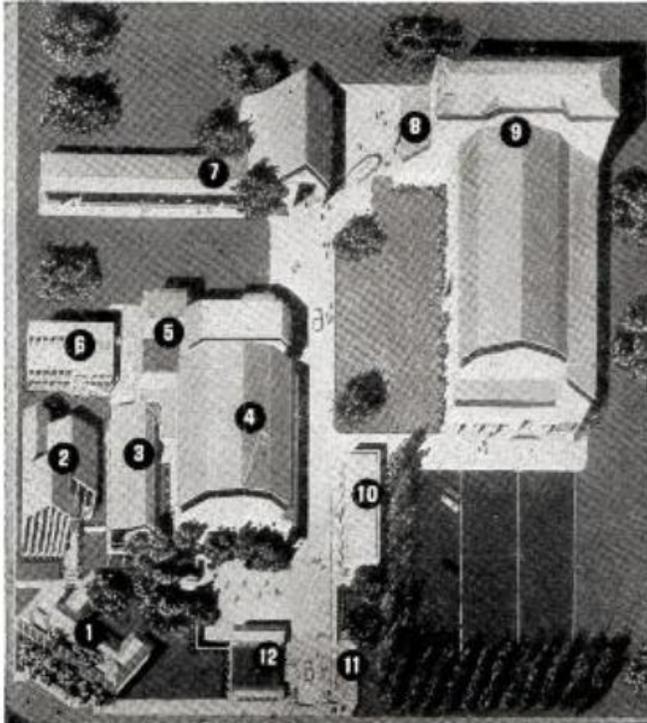
**MARKER** for video transactions is this signing of contract for Dodge Motor Cars, co-sponsor with Hoffman Radio Corp. of all home football games of USC and UCLA over KECA-TV exclusively in the fall of 1949. John H. Weiser (center), vice president and Pacific Coast manager of Ruthrauff & Ryan Agency, pass the contract for Dodge, while Frank Samuels (l), ABC Western Division vice president, and John Parsons, Hoffman sales promotion manager, smile their approval.

football would undoubtedly draw viewer traffic for the games, KECA-TV would still have a hard job to establish its programs otherwise.

**YET** when the first Los Angeles TV survey by The Pulse Inc. was released recently, it disclosed that KECA-TV had garnered four places among the first 10 one-weekly presentations. A football game finished second only to Milton Berle and three kinescope programs from New York—TV Teen Club, Think Fast and Blind Date—(Continued on Telecasting 18)

**TYPICAL** promotion job done by KECA-TV is this "elephants-always-remember" scene which took place at a luncheon observing the station opening, conducted by the Hollywood Advertising Club. Gathered are (l to r): Shirley Buchanan (c-g), designated as Miss KECA-TV, Los Hoffman, president of Hoffman Radio Corp.; Bert Carter, regional head of Dodge; Charles (Bud) Barry, network vice president in charge of AM and TV programs.





- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Executive offices                             | 7. Maintenance                          |
| 2. Sales, Auditing, Publicity, Promotion offices | 8. Auxiliary studio                     |
| 3. Dressing rooms, Wardrobe offices              | 9. Soundstage with theatre              |
| 4. Sound Stage                                   | 10. Master Controls                     |
| 5. Auxiliary Studio                              | 11. Guard House, PBX Room, Receptionist |
| 6. Programming and Production offices            | 12. Fireproof film vaults               |

Warner Brothers already had a small studio located in Hollywood at Sunset Boulevard and Branson, so the Vitagraph lot was a good buy because of the additional studio and back-lot space.

On the left is the original ABC plan for making this their Television Center in 1949.

**Notice #10, Master Controls; that is where Studio C was located. Just like TV-7 was the main network control room in New York, Studio C was the west coast equivalent.** The building it's in was built by Warner Brothers to house their Vitaphone Sound technology. Remember, parts of *The Jazz Singer*, the first major talking picture were made here.

Below is another great shot of the Prospect lot from 1950, just after ABC took over the property. I have added the studio numbers and letters to help you understand what was where. When Warner and Vitagraph were here, the stages were known as 1 and 2 and each building was a whole stage. ABC divided the buildings into two stages and first gave them letters and these (A B C D E) are the original letters. ABC eventually gave them numbers too, but flip-flopped back and forth with letters and numbers more than once in the '50s and '60s. Studio C is also annotated.

With Talmadge on the left and Prospect at the bottom, we see the old corner gate gone and a new main entrance at 4151 Prospect. Notice at the top left of the image below, there is a circular grassy area behind the long building that was once a set building shop. **When Studios 57 and 59 were being built there in 1976, this is where the marble decked Norma Talmadge swimming pool was discovered, covered by several feet of dirt.**

In case you didn't read page 9, there is a connection between Norma Talmadge and Talmadge Street, and I'll let you guess what it is. For those that do not know her name, she was a huge silent star, and in *Sunset Boulevard*, the classic in which Gloria Swanson plays Norma Desmond...well, I'll let you guess who that character is based on. Ready for your close-up?



Below are photos taken in the Warner days, probably around 1947. The one on the right is WB 2 and notice there is not even a paved parking lot yet. On the left we can see WB 2 or Studio 54 and 55 clearly and the back-lot sets have been torn down. With this in mind, I'll jump ahead again and show you a few interesting "before and after" pictures regarding this space, but looking the other way. Both rare photos below are courtesy of Chuck Pharis.



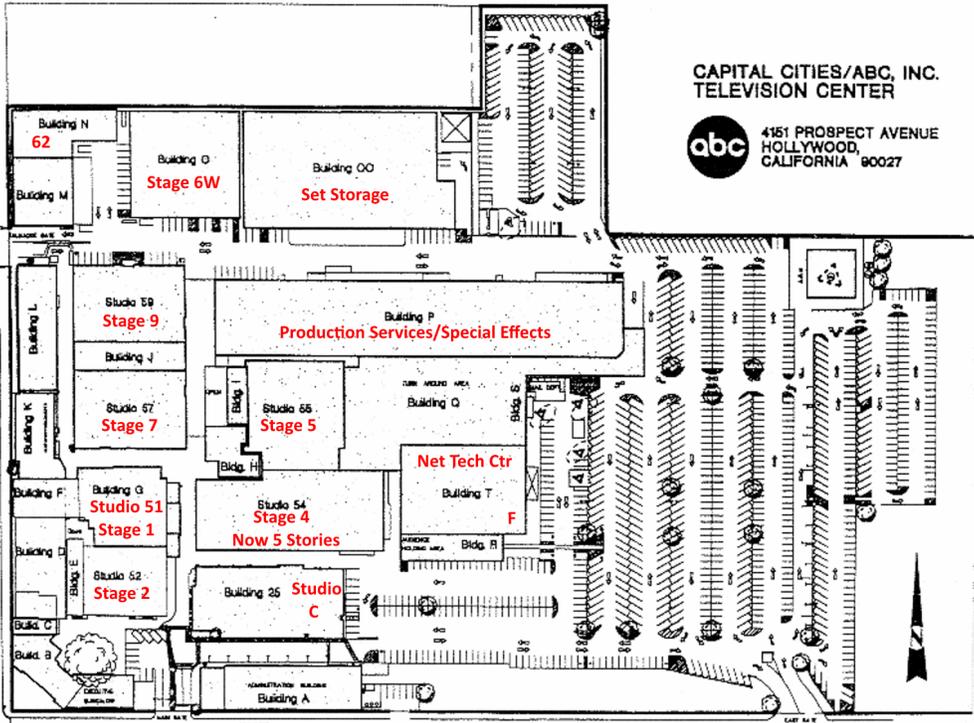


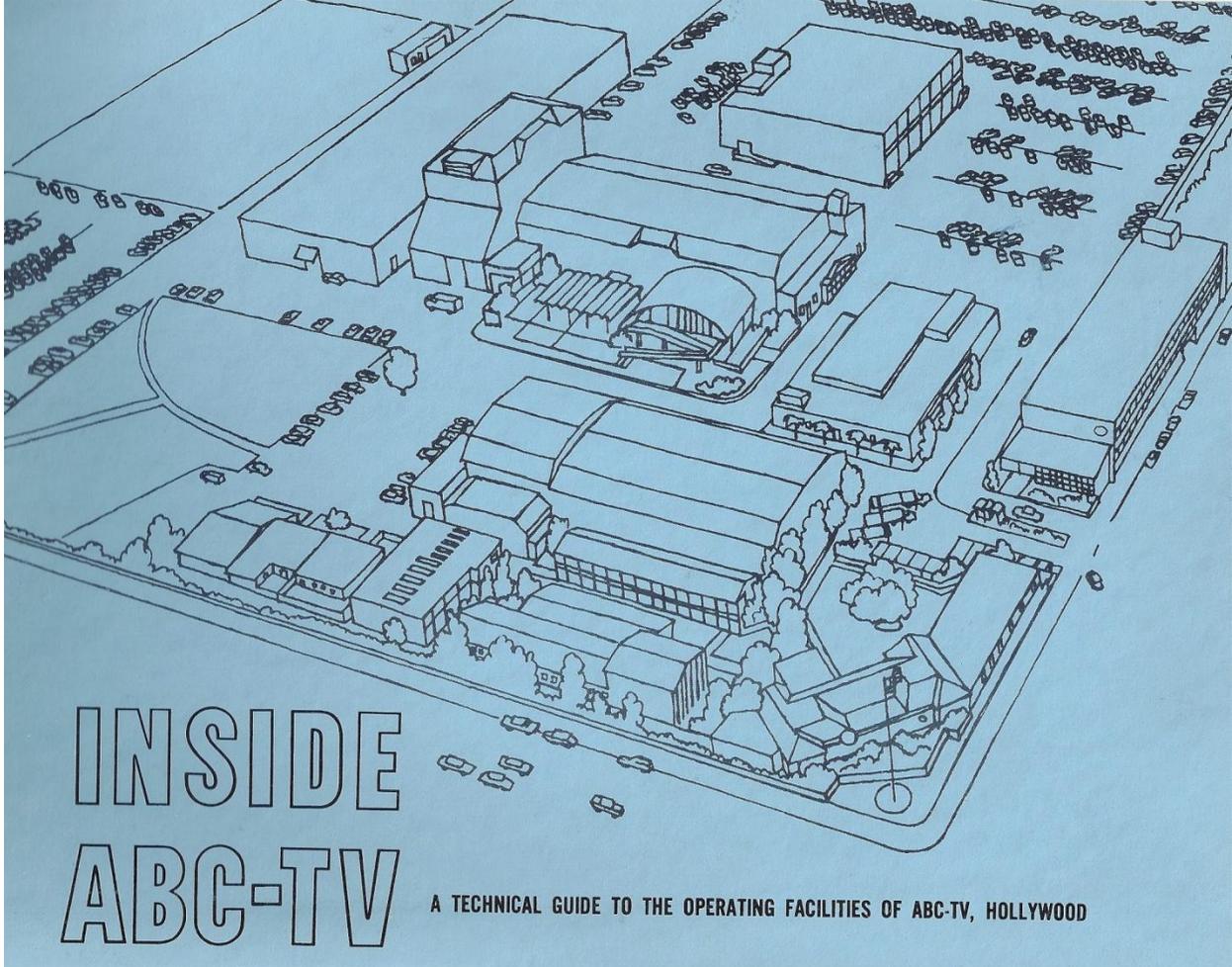
In the early '50s, KECA did a local western-flavored kids show and would occasionally spice it up a tad with a few outside live shots like the one above. Studio 54 would be behind us and we are looking North toward Franklin Ave. In the 1920s, D. W. Griffith shot some battlefield footage here. In the late '60s, ABC turned the back-lot area into the main parking lot, but with room to spare on this 20 acres.



**An Important Note:** The first network broadcast from The ABC Television Center in Hollywood was *Let There Be Stars* which aired at 9 EST on Sunday night October 16, 1949. All seven episodes are available for viewing at the Paley Center For Media.

To help visualize all of this, I have annotated a map and overhead view of the property, which includes the current designations... they are now called Stages, not Studios. As you've seen on Page 11, the only studios here at the start of ABC's ownership were WB Studio 1 and 2 which ABC made into 4 production studios. **The original lettering on each studio was as follows: Studio 51 was A, 52 was B, 54 was D and 55 was E.** Studio 62 was a tiny network cut in studio in Bldg. N, and F was a small studio in the Network Technical Center or NTC. Studio C was the main network switching studio, much like TV-7 was in New York. **Stages 57 and 59 were built in 1976.** Stage 6W is a former storage building.



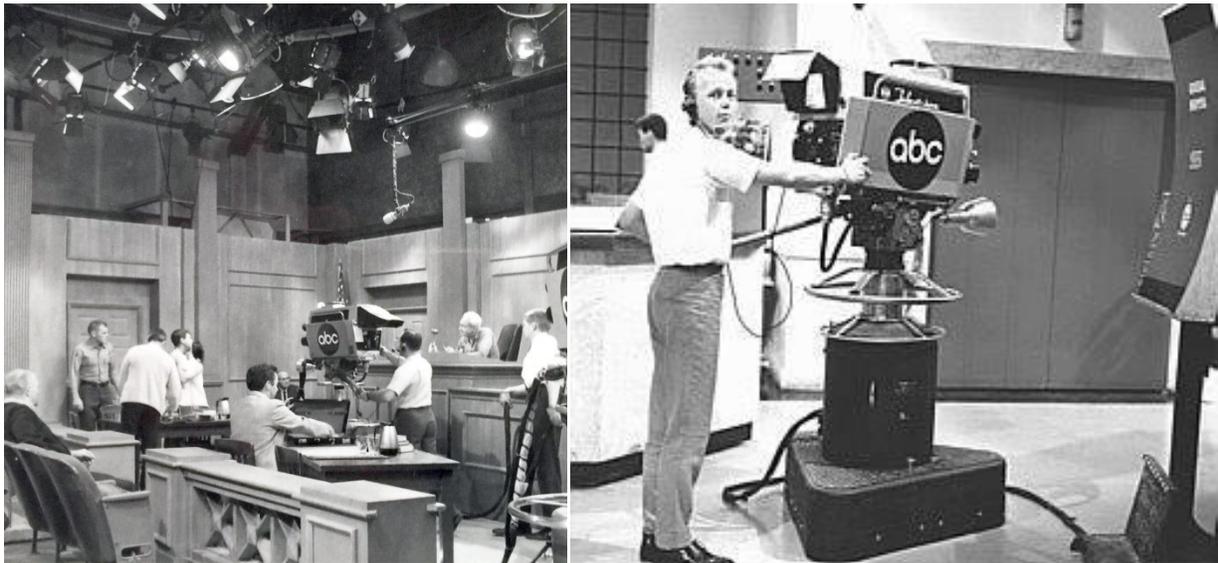


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Our luck is holding as we move west. We have once again found one of the un-findable *Inside ABC* technical booklets that describe each studio that ABC owned in Los Angeles, and could make available to producers. Published in 1963, we see the working studio list (left) that includes two outside properties and all the Prospect studios. Control room A is for Studio 51, B for 52, C for network station break switching, D is for Studio 54, E is for 55 and F is for a small live studio in the Network Technical Center. I will intersperse these rare images as we go through each location, like we did in the New York version. Many thanks to our friend Galen Augustus for the scans of these long lost television treasures.

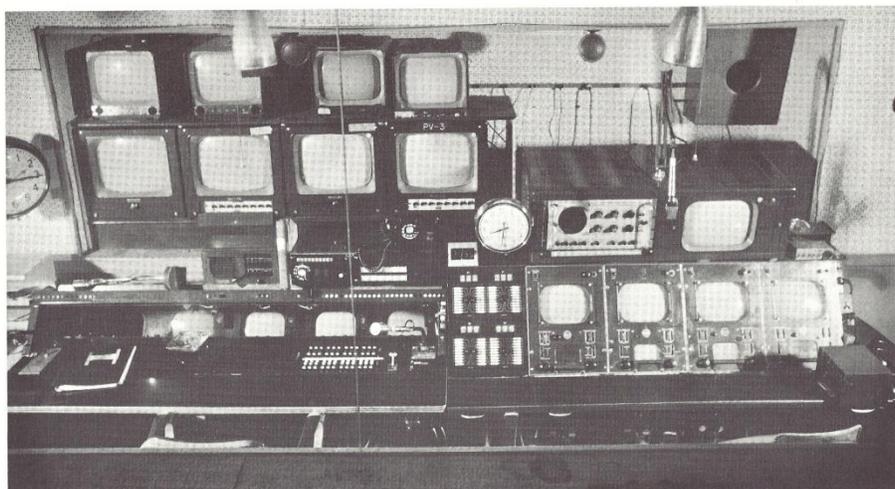
## Studio 51 (A)...Now Stage 1



This is now the home of *Grey's Anatomy*, but when *General Hospital* started in 1963, this was where it was done and Dale Walsh (above right) was there for many years. Once GH debuted in Studio 51, that was the only show this studio was used for until GH expanded from 30 minutes to 45 minutes in 1977. At that point, much more space was needed and they moved to the old Desilu Studios for a year, then on to Sunset-Gower Studios, and back to the new Studio 54. At the link is the entire first episode of *General Hospital*. The date was April 1, 1963 and the location was Studio 51. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-B62nlwPKM>

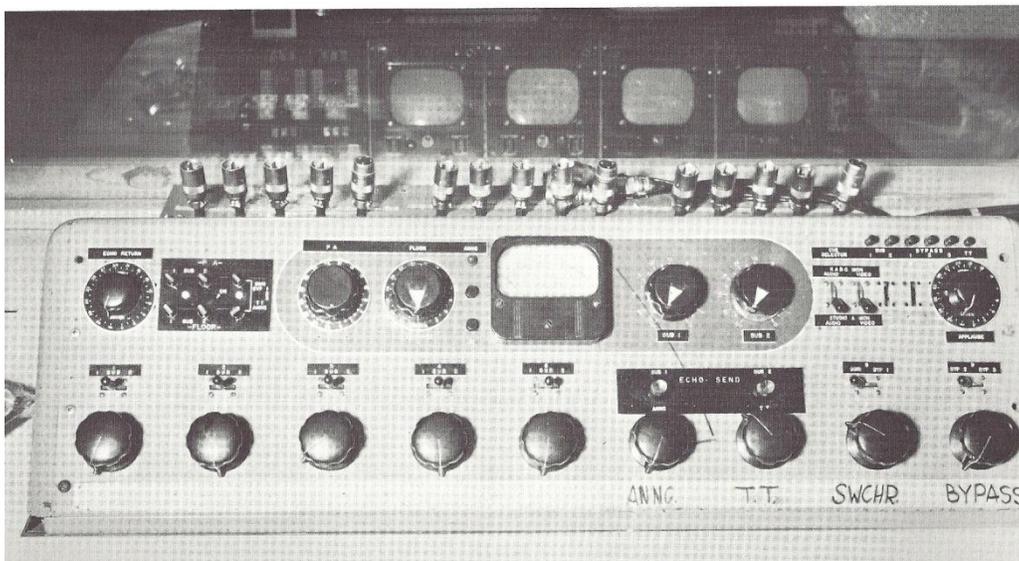
## 'A' CONTROL ROOM

VIDEO CONTROL  
DESK

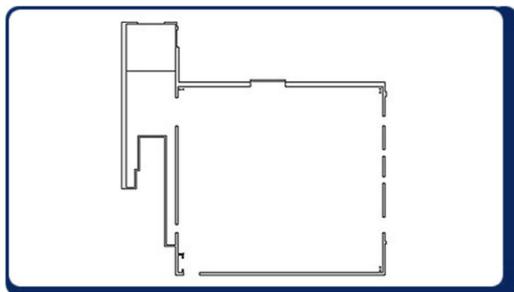


These are rare shots of the control room for Studio A, also known as Studio 51. The equipment here was close to being state of the art; ABC was just beginning the switch-over to the best black-and-white camera RCA had ever made, the new TK60. The old RCA Camera Control Units seen here would soon be gone and replaced by the same new equipment that we see in the Control Room B pictures on the next page.

AUDIO  
CONSOLE

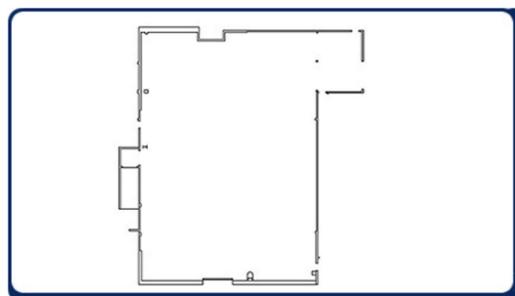


Stage 1



Gross Sizes: 74' x 68' (11,000 sq. feet)  
Height: 35'

Stage 2



Gross Sizes: 106' x 74' (7,800 sq. feet)  
Height: 22'/27'

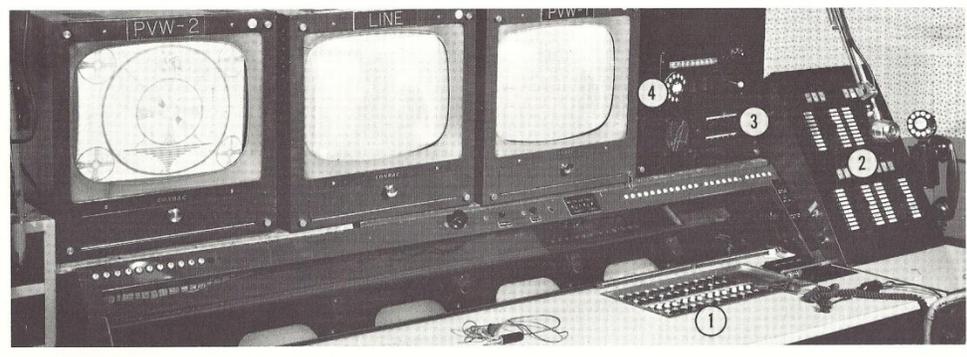
## Studio 52 (B)...Now Stage 2

Above, current diagrams of Studio 51 (Stage 1) and Studio 52 (Stage 2). Studio 52, the smaller half of the building, was the home of KECA/KABC's local TV news operation. Below are shots of the new TK60 equipped control room with the new Camera Control Units.

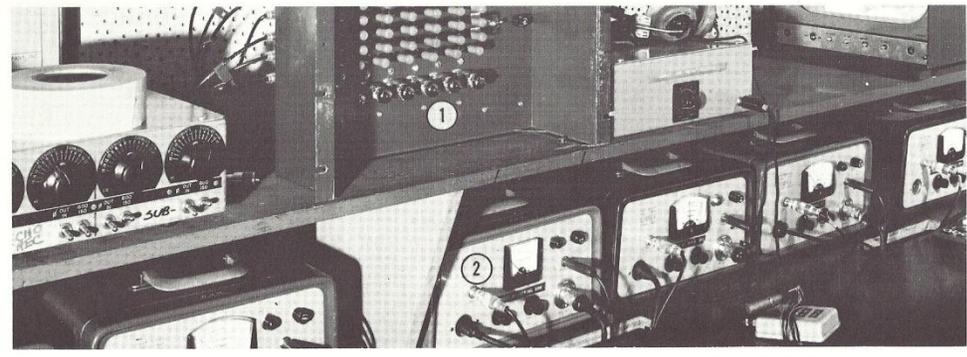
# 'B' CONTROL ROOM

- ① SWITCHER
- ② TELECONTROL FILM & VTR SELECTOR
- ③ AMPLIFIED INTERCOM
- ④ SPECIAL EFFECTS SELECTOR

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR'S POSITION



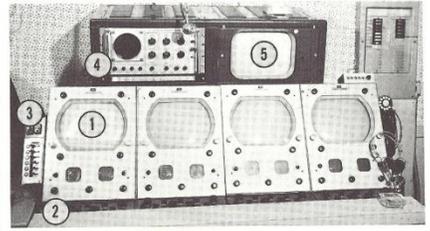
WIRELESS MICROPHONE RECEIVERS



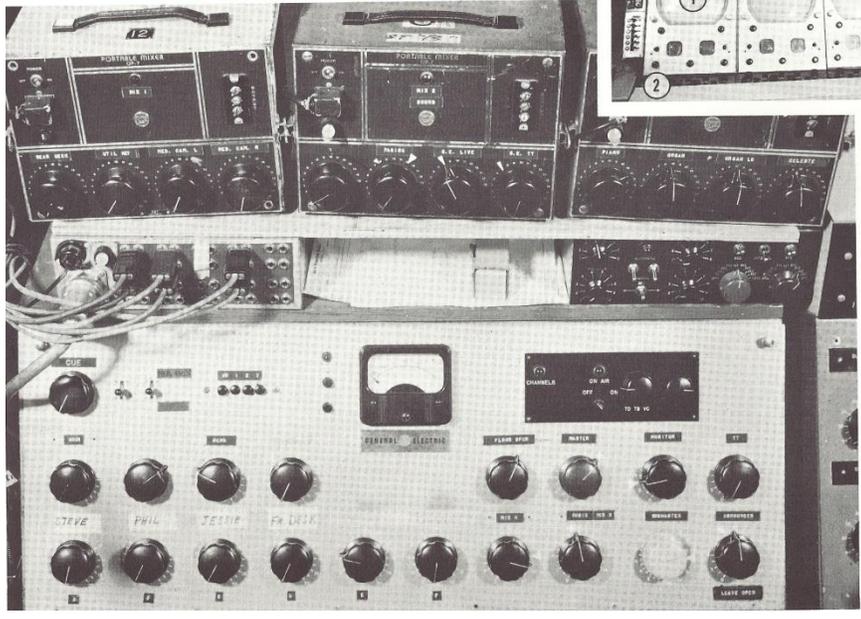
- ① RECEIVER ANTENNA SELECTOR
- ② RECEIVER UNIT

- ① CAMERA MONITORS
- ② CAMERA CONTROL PANELS
- ③ INTERCOM PANEL
- ④ CAMERA PREVIEW WAVEFORM MONITOR AND SELECTOR
- ⑤ CAMERA PREVIEW MONITOR

ASSOCIATED



CAMERA CONTROL UNITS



AUDIO CONTROLS

## Studio 54 (D)...Now Stage 4



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eKXkNhhcang&feature=youtu.be&t=1m14s>

We'll start this section with what happened to Studio 54 in 1988/89. The south end of the Studio 54/55 building was torn down, but the north end was left standing. Divided at the internal mid-wall, Studio 55 was updated, and Studio 54 was demolished to make room for a new five-story building. The new 20,000 square-foot Studio 54 is three stories tall with dressing rooms and offices above.

At the link above is the 1989 *AM Los Angeles* video of the building's first day in service as the new home of *General Hospital*. At the link below is a good new tour of Studio 54 on *Good Morning America*. You'll see Stages 7 and 6W as they enter the back door.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-GFs7JX2TaY>

This is still the home of *General Hospital*, but there is a long list of hit shows from Studio 54.

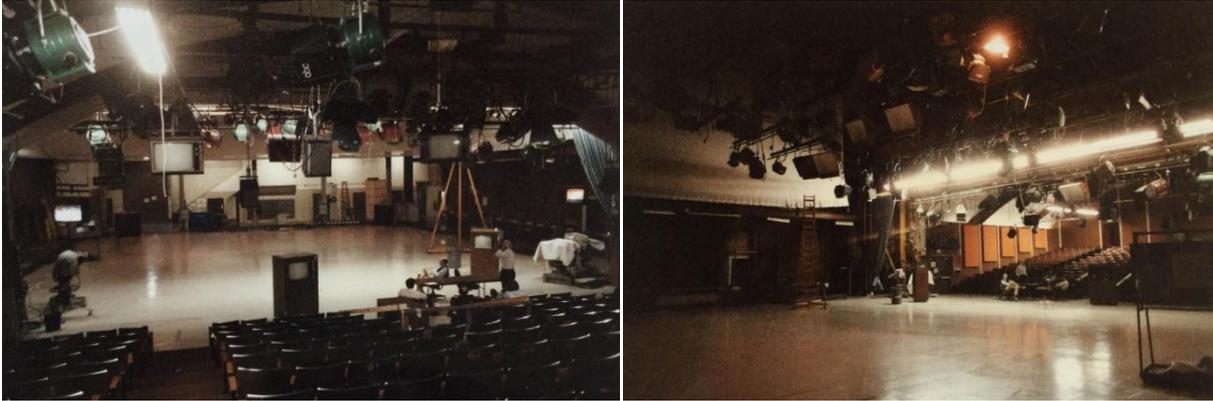


Above, *Family Feud* with Richard Dawson, who kept the studio at 55 degrees, and below, Monty Hall on *Let's Make A Deal* with Jan Lowry on camera. This was also the HQ studio for the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics.



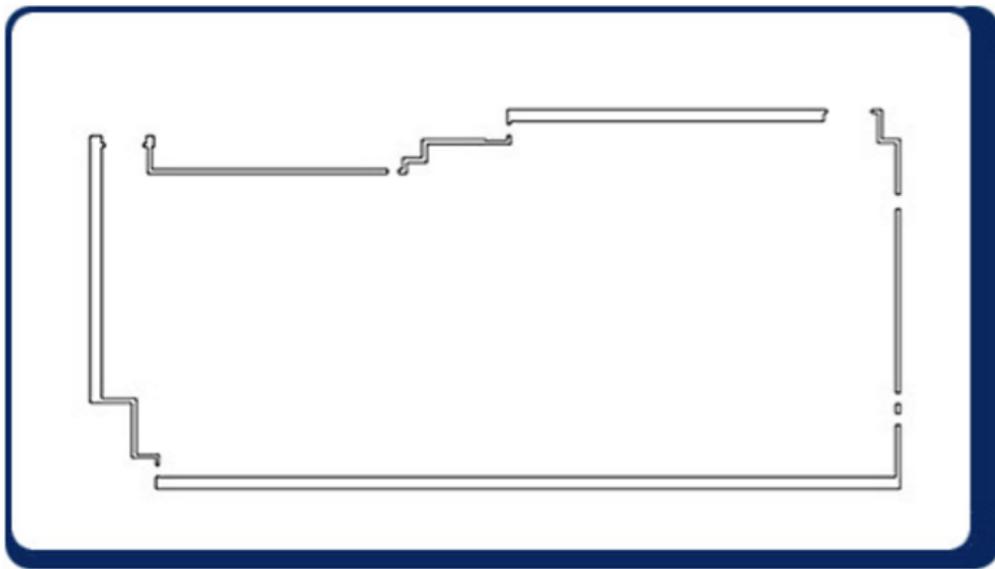
When *American Bandstand* moved to California in 1964, its usual home was Studio 54, but over the years, it bounced back and forth between 54 and 55. Below, our friend Jan Lowry again on the AB sets in the 60s and 70s. How cool was it to be a cameraman on AB?





These are very rare photos from inside Studio 54 from Chuck Pharis that were taken before the 1984 Olympics makeover of this studio.

#### Stage 4



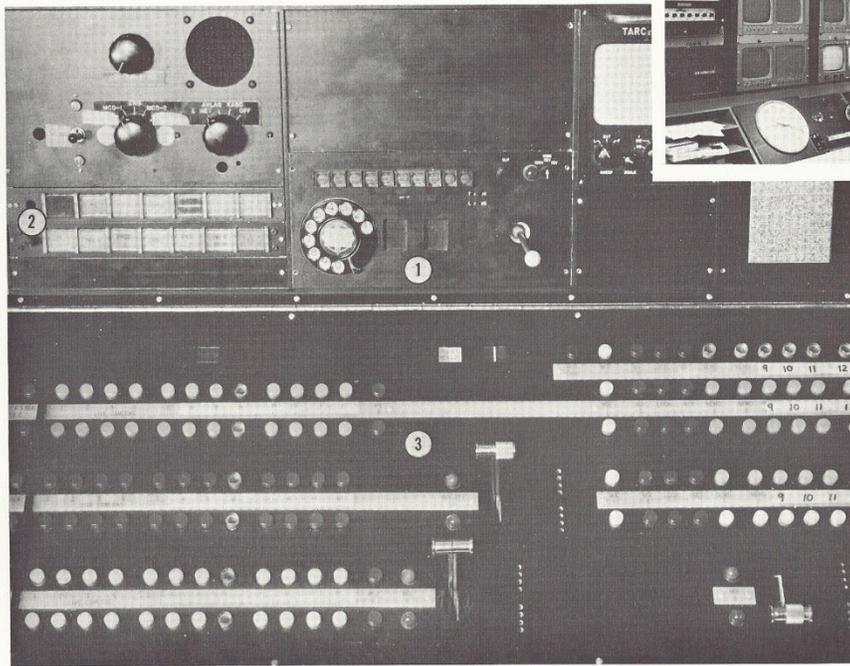
**Gross Sizes:** 216' x 97' (21,000 sq. feet)  
**Height:** 40'

Below, the Studio D Control Room highlights.

# 'D' CONTROL ROOM

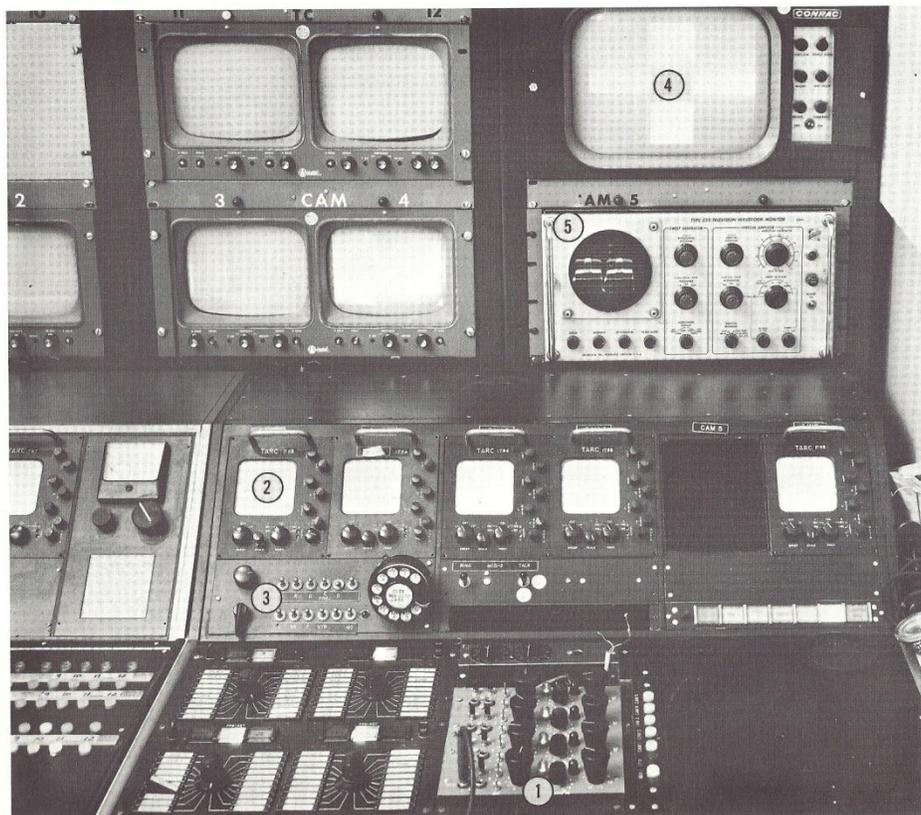


VIDEO CONTROL DESK



- ① SPECIAL EFFECTS SELECTOR & POSITION CONTROL
- ② INTERCOM PANEL
- ③ SWITCHER PANEL

SWITCHER



VIDEO CONTROL POSITION

- ① CAMERA CONTROL PANELS
- ② CAMERA WAVE - FORM MONITORS
- ③ AMPLIFIED INTERCOM
- ④ VIDEO PREVIEW MONITOR
- ⑤ VIDEO WAVE - FORM MONITOR

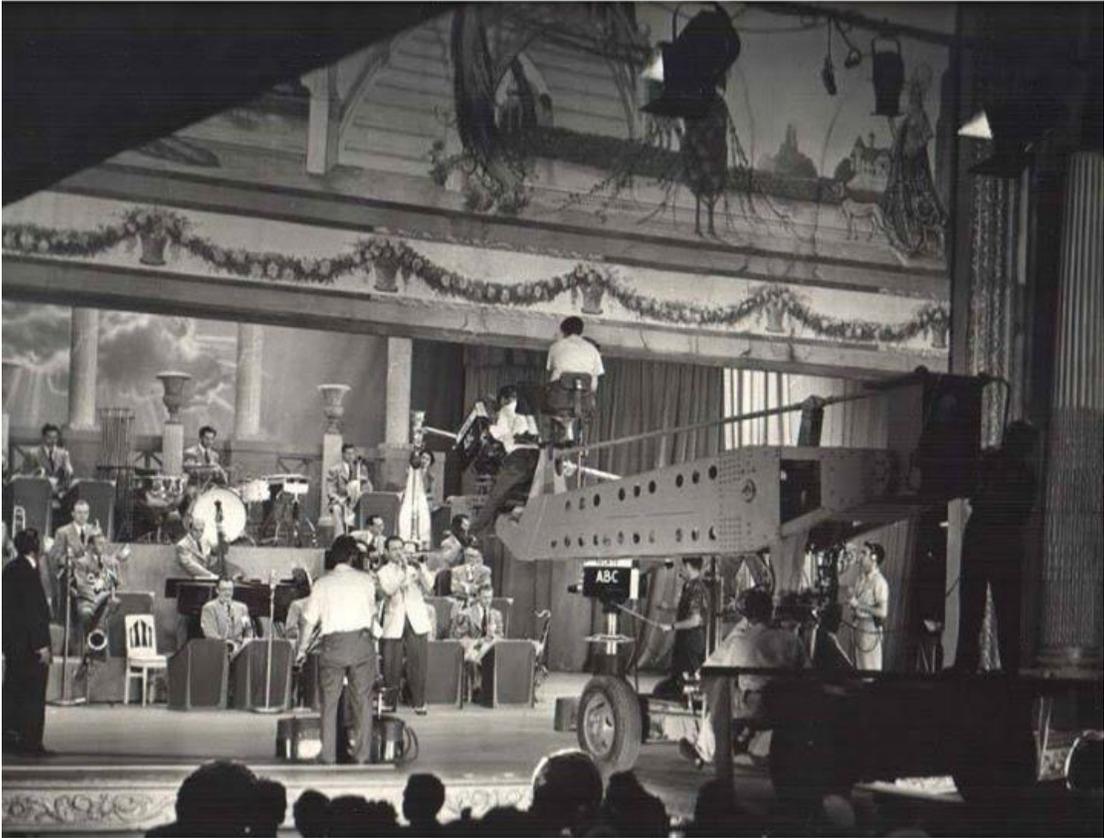
## Studio 55 (E)...Now Stage 5



**Studio 55** is on the far end of the building, and on this side of the roof break is **Studio 54**. As seen above, Studio 55 had a fly loft for theatrical productions that need a stage effect. This was added by Warner Brothers in 1929 when they were making *On With The Show*. Below is the inside of **Studio 55** which was the home of *The Lawrence Welk Show*. The huge Warner Brothers built crane is on a ramp, and above it is a painted drop down curtain which is leftover from *On With The Show*, as is the theater set along the walls of Studio 55 in the bottom photo.

Thanks to ABC veteran and history buff Galen Augustus, we see in the bottom photo, a rare look at Studio 55 in the very early days of ABC's ownership. Notice only wooden rafters and no light grid yet. The only lights at this point would have been over the theatrical stage area behind the proscenium. WB used this semi permanent set anytime they had a theater interior to shoot. Around 1955, ABC tore out the stage for a more flexible production space.

Some of the TV Shows shot in this Studio 55 stage were: *American Bandstand*, *Lawrence Welk*, *Dick Clark's Rockin' New Year's Eve*, *Fridays*, *Archie*, *Girls, Girls, Girls*, *America's Funniest Home Videos*, *Bloopers and Practical Jokes*, *Lie Detector*, *Almost Anything Goes* (for Playboy), and *Rona Barrett*.

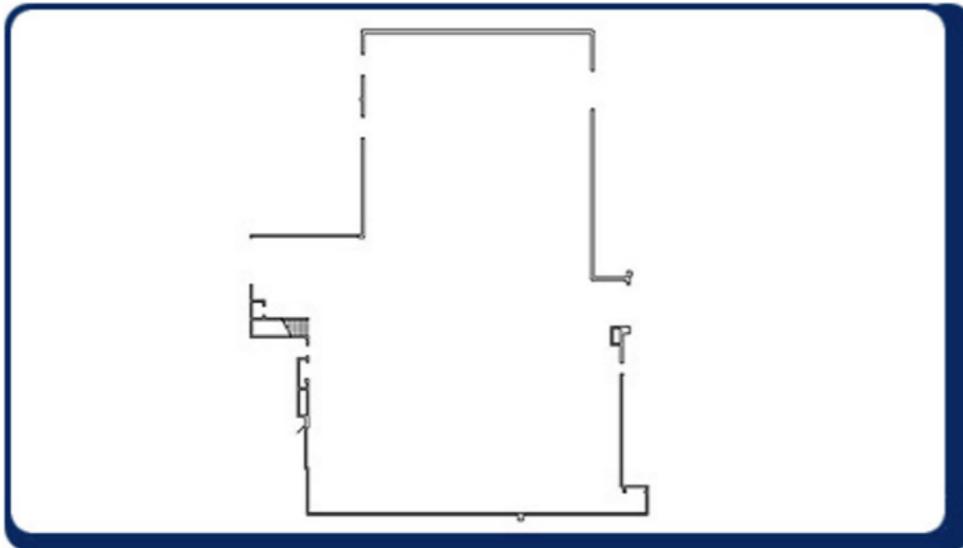




Above, *The Lawrence Welk Show* from Studio 55 sometime after the 1984 Olympics upgrade.

As mentioned, under Disney ownership, Studio 55 is now called Stage 5 and here is the layout, with the fly loft at the top. Studio E or Studio 55 or Stage 5...whatever you want to call it, all refer to the same piece of historic real estate, but that history changed dramatically in 1988/89 as we will see in the photos at the bottom of page 26.

### Stage 5



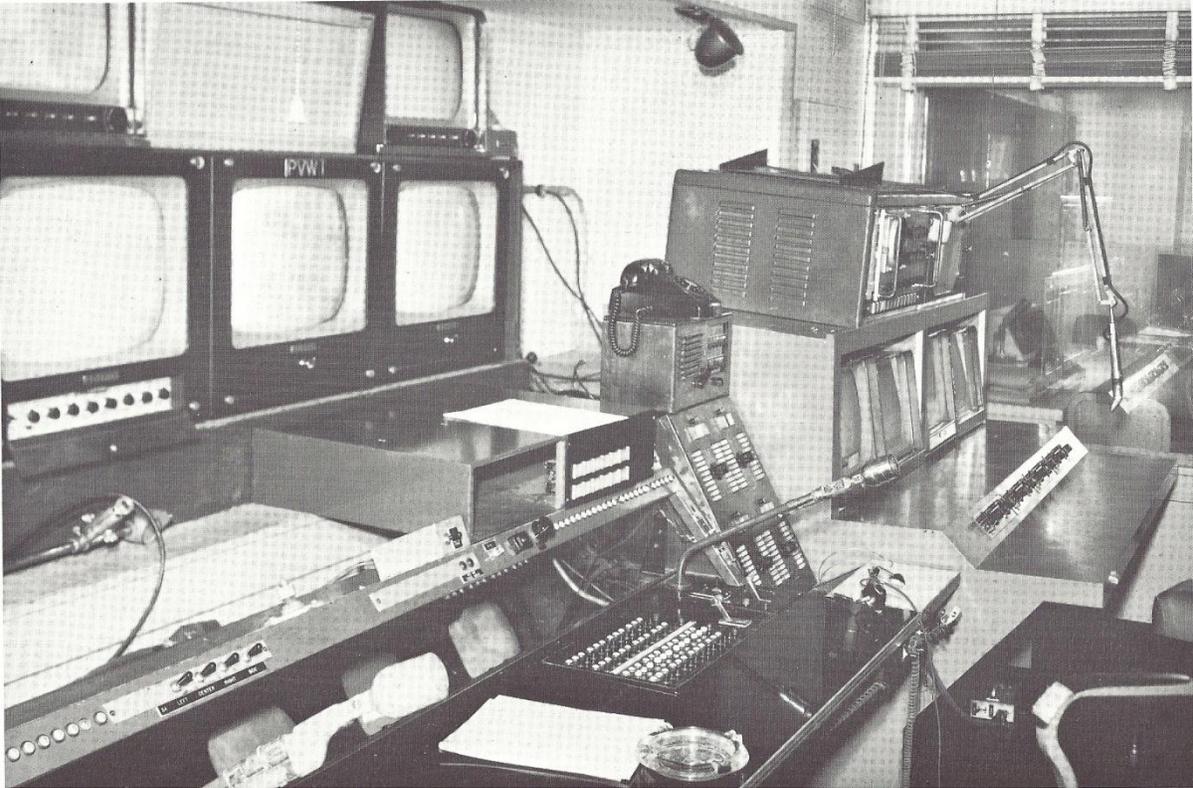
**Gross Sizes:** 87' x 121' (10,000 sq. feet)  
**Height:** 56'

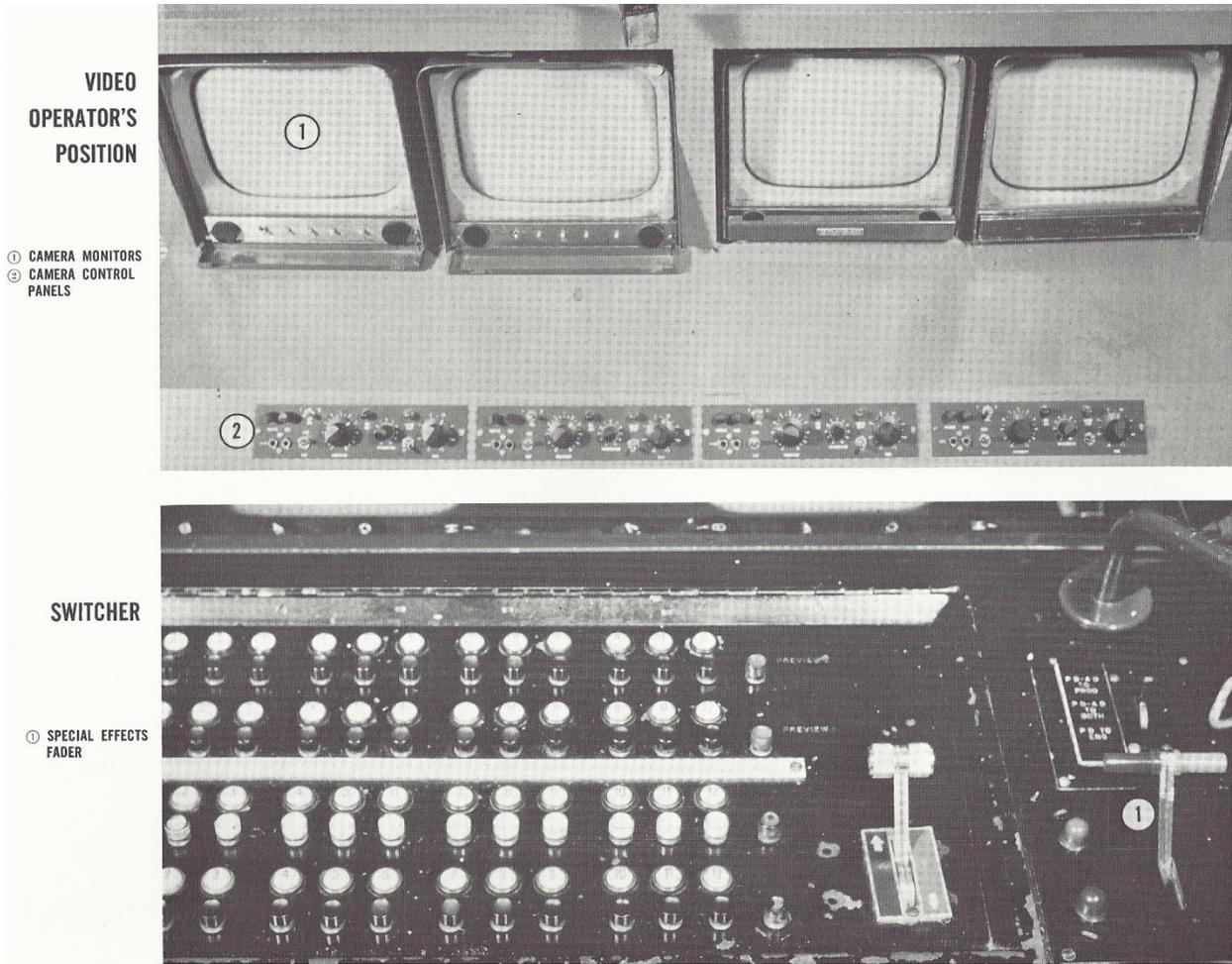


Another memorable show from Studio 55 was *Shindig*. On the left, Alice Cooper, and on the right, a couple of Rolling Stones getting ready for their January 20, 1965 *Shindig* debut. As you'll see later, they made their US TV debut on *The Hollywood Palace*.

# 'E' CONTROL ROOM

VIDEO  
CONTROL  
DESK





Below, a shot of the main gate from around 1970 on the left showing the original Studio 54 and 55. On the right is picture taken after 1989 with the new Studio 54 building on the same spot.



## Stage 6W

In the Stage 1 and 2 section above, I mentioned those were used for *Grey's Anatomy*, but Stage 6W, with almost 20,000 square feet, is also used for GA. Up until 2002, Stage 6W was Building O which was a storage and warehouse space. The first show to use this was *The Shield*, which shot here from 2002 till 2008.

Stage 6w

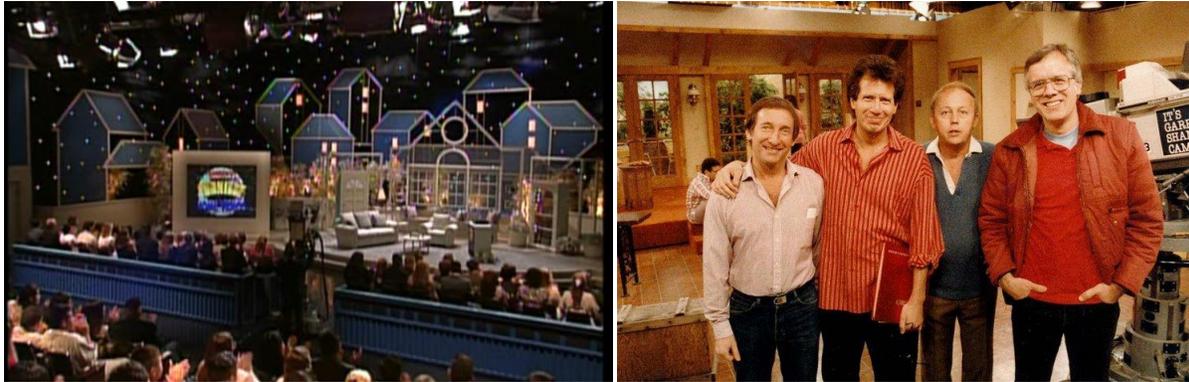


Gross Sizes: 144' x 127' (19,700 sq. feet)  
Height: 19'

## Studios 57 And 59...Stages 7 And 9



**Welcome Back Kotter!** (Above) One of the many great shows that came from Studio 57. This is Burt Lehman covering an Ikegami HK 312 on the *Kotter* set. *America's Funniest Home Videos* was done in Studios 57. In Studio 59 there were a lot of laughs on *It's Garry Shandling's Show*.



Built in 1976, both are identical and share a common core where control rooms, videotape, offices, dressing rooms and more are easily accessible from both halves of the huge structure. The soap opera *Port Charles* was also done here.

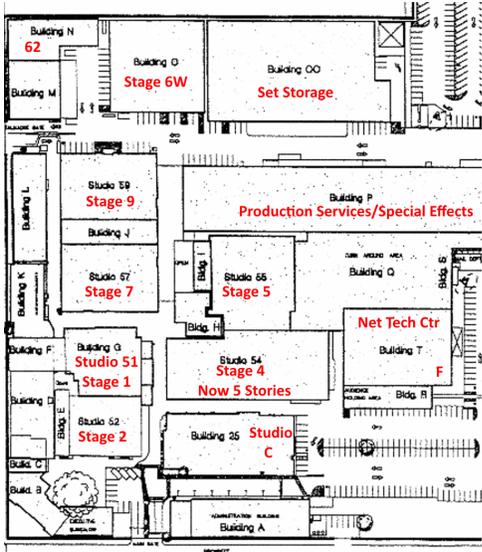


### Stage 9

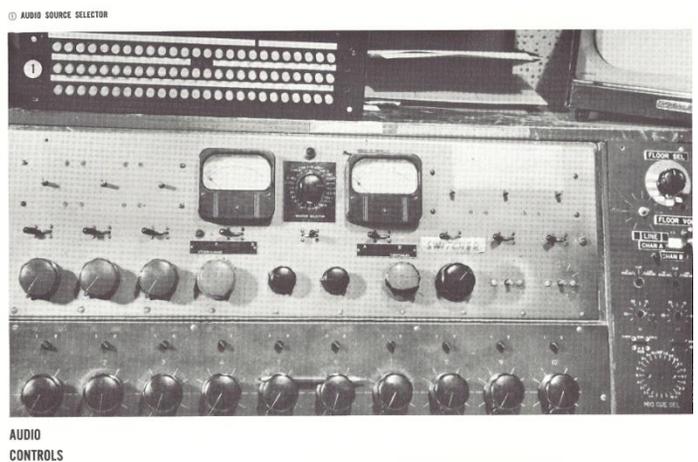


Gross Sizes: 150' x 100' (15,000 sq. feet)  
Height: 43'

### Studio C, Master Control, Telecine, Video Tape...



### 'C' CONTROL ROOM



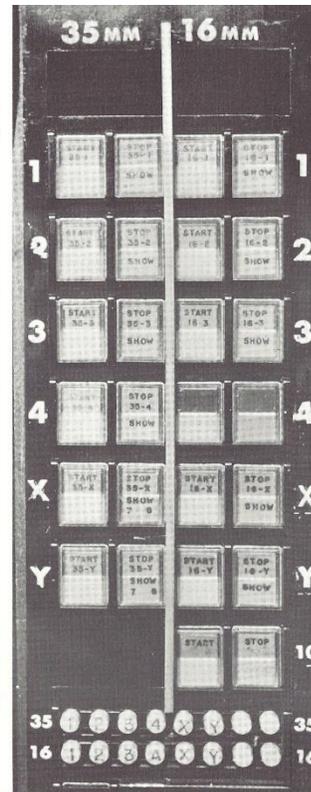
In case you have forgotten where everything is, here's a quick reminder. Studio C was the main network station break studio complete with an announcer's booth and, at one time, it had a tiny stand up studio for live on camera spots. Surrounding Studio C was Master Control, Telecine/Projection and Video Tape. In the photo below, you can see that all of the video controls are at the operator's fingertips, whether the source is videotape, film, slide or live.

- ① SWITCHER
- ② LINE MONITOR
- ③ PROJECTOR "STOP" "START" CONTROLS
- ④ TELECONTROL (FILM & VTR SELECTOR)
- ⑤ AMPLIFIED INTERCOM
- ⑥ AMPLIFIED INTERCOM TO SCREENING ROOM
- ⑦ TELECONTROL MONITOR SELECTOR

TD PROJECTOR CONTROLS



TD & AUDIO CONTROLS



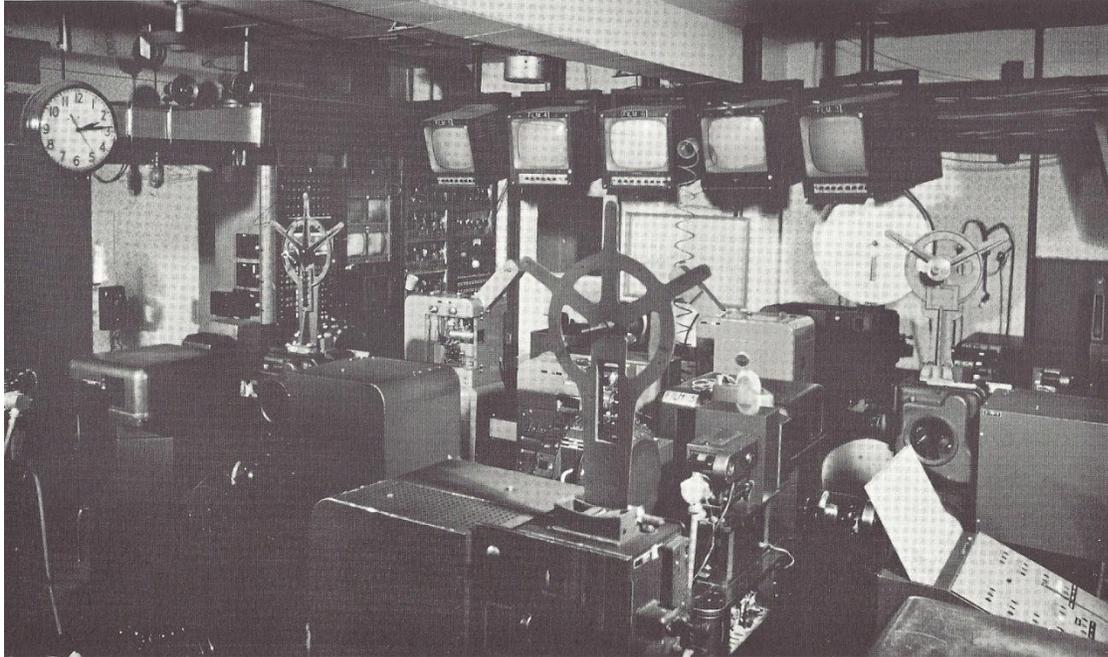
Here is a look at Master Control, Projection/Telecine and Videotape

# MASTER CONTROL ROOM



OPERATING POSITION

# PROJECTION ROOM



OVERALL  
VIEW

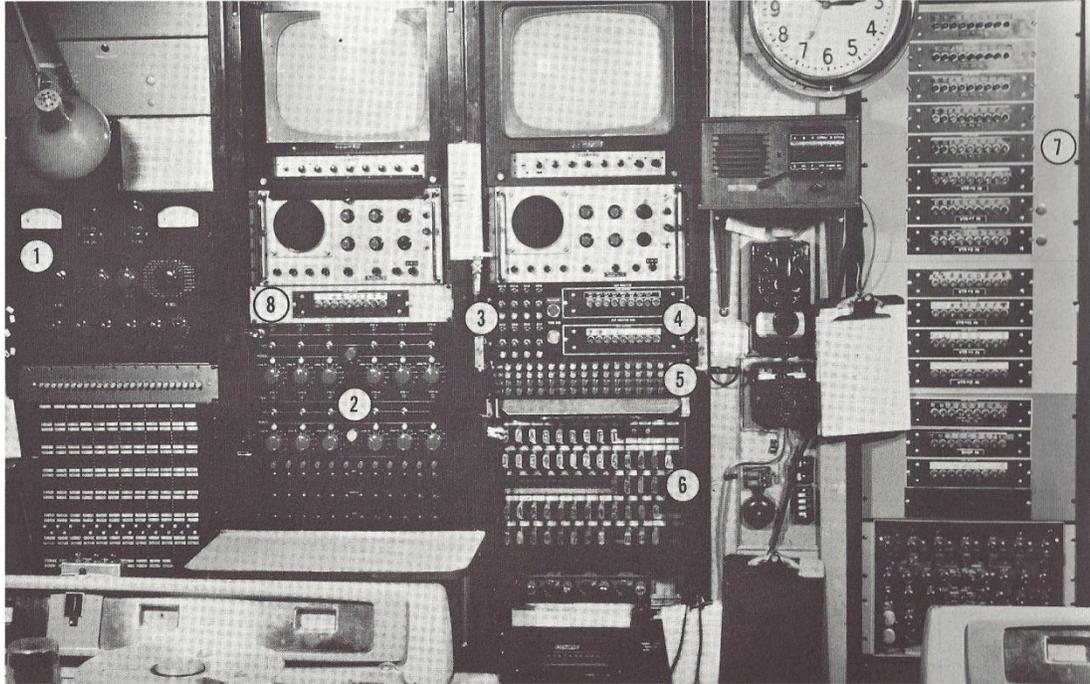
# VIDEO TAPE RECORDING



VIDEO TAPE  
ROOM

- ① AUDIO SUPERVISORY & PATCH PANEL
- ② MACHINE REMOTE CONTROL DELEGATION
- ③ CUE TONE SWITCHING
- ④ MONITOR SELECTOR MACHINE OUTPUTS
- ⑤ SUPERVISORY TALLIES FOR MACHINES
- ⑥ VIDEO PATCH PANEL
- ⑦ SOURCE SELECTORS FOR EACH MACHINE
- ⑧ MONITOR SELECTOR INPUT SOURCES

SUPERVISORY POSITION



AMPEX VIDEO TAPE MACHINE  
 VERTICAL MODEL  
(CONTROL PANELS IDENTICAL TO THOSE ON HORIZONTAL MODEL)



HORIZONTAL MODEL  
 AMPEX VIDEO TAPE MACHINE

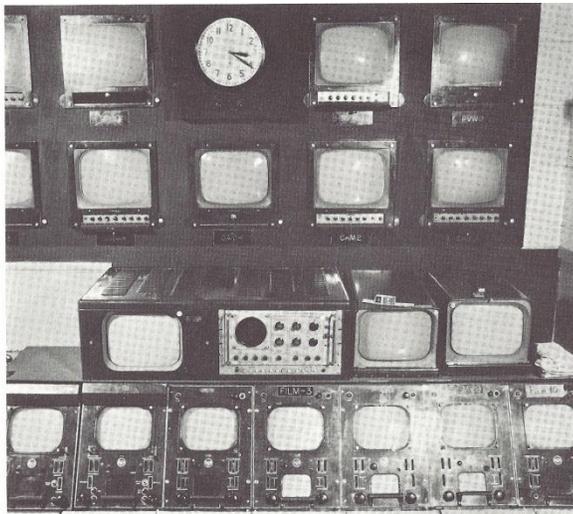
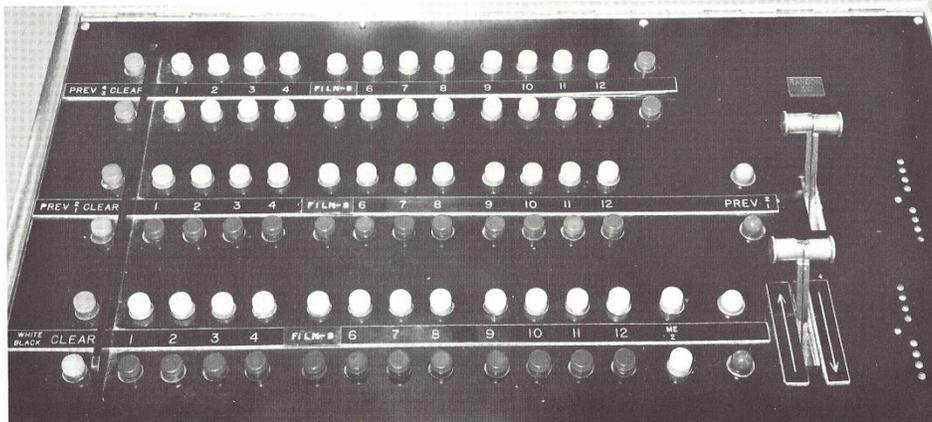
Below is F Control...F was a 4000 square foot utility studio where *The Soupy Sales Show* was done when it was based in LA in 1960-62. Promos and inserts were often done here and this was located in the Network Technical Center, but moved a few times.

# 'F' CONTROL ROOM

AUDIO  
CONSOLE



SWITCHER



VIDEO  
CONTROL  
POSITION

TECHNICAL  
DIRECTOR'S  
DESK

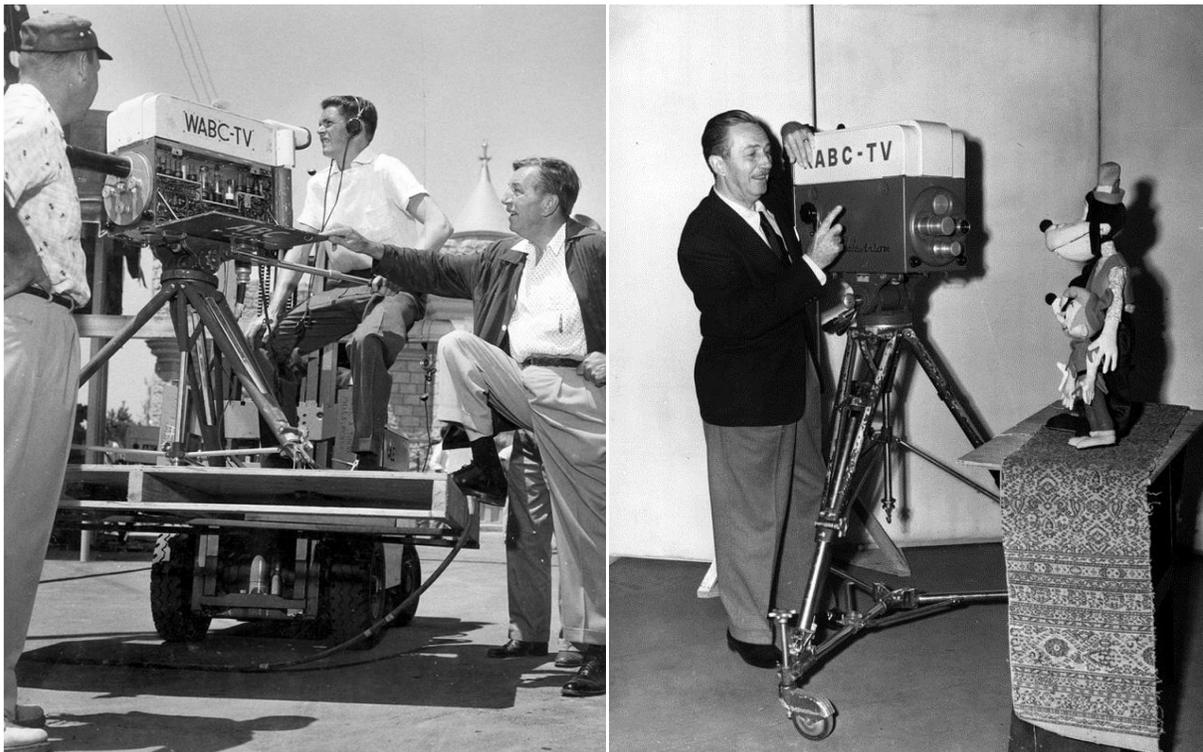


## A Final Note On Prospect...

In 1996, ABC was bought by The Walt Disney Company, the origins of which trace back to its first Studio in Silver Lake. In 2002, the property underwent a major renovation and was renamed, The Prospect Studios. The property is all rental now with no ABC network functions here anymore. Below, Walt and Roy Disney at their original studio location on Kingswell Avenue...just five blocks from Vitagraph. This is the corner in 2000, just before KABC and ABC moved to Glendale. The big tree is The Pepper Tree that was planted there by Norma Talmadge.



The story behind how Walt and ABC helped each other is a very interesting tale that we'll get to in the last few pages of this history.



1313 Vine Street...





<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdyDRjpPftU> At the link, we get a quick look at the stage and GE PE 350 color cameras in an opening bit of *The Joey Bishop Show* from 1313 Vine. Below, an interesting shot of *The Newlywed Game*, which along with a few other Chuck Barris shows, came from 1313. As you'll see a few pages down, this was a huge building.





Other big shows from 1313 Vine were *The Dating Game* and *Password*.



The building, originally dedicated on August 18, 1948, is the oldest surviving structure in Hollywood that was designed specifically with television in mind. This is now The Pickford Center for Motion Picture Study, and is one of three Los Angeles-area facilities of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

The facility was built by Don Lee, whose west coast stations served as the backbone of CBS radio in the west. With TV coming, CBS's Columbia Square was running out of space and after selling their half interest in KTTV-TV, CBS bought Lee's KTSL-TV on January 1, 1951 and renamed it KNXT. Lee sold all his other stations to General Tire and CBS TV's KNXT shared the building with General Tire's KHJ radio and TV.



**DON LEE BROADCASTING, 1948.** Studio 4 at 1313 North Vine Street is depicted on July 7, 1948

Above is the first hit show to be broadcast from this facility...*Queen For A Day*, which began in Studio 4 at KHJ-TV. CBS's KNXT had half of the building while General Tire's KHJ Radio and KHJ-TV had the other half. Surprisingly, the CBS Television Network west coast Master Control operated from here until moving to Television City in 1961.

As you can see in the photo on page 35, PBS station KCET used a portion of the building when ABC owned it. On the diagram below, that would be Studio 2, and I think they only used 2 TV studios and 3 of the smaller radio studios.

ABC bought the building around 1966 and used most of the studios as KCET only used a few. Notice there are four large audience able television studios on each side, and several small radio studios on each side too. This is a **huge** building.





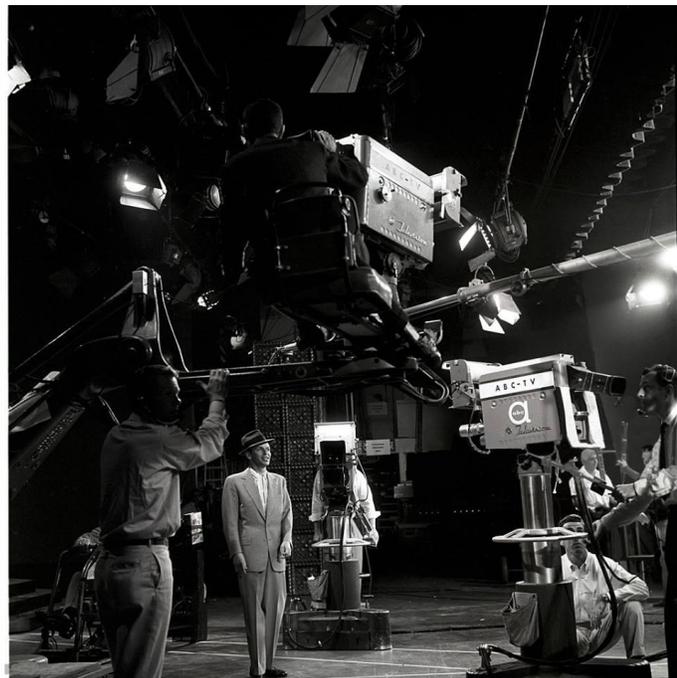
Until 1985, ABC still owned the 1313 Vine building and was using it for storage and rehearsal space. Above, I made mention of *Queen For A Day*, so this is a good time and place for a quick look there.

## The Moulin Rouge Theater...Home Of *Queen For A Day*

*Queen For A Day* ran on Mutual/Don Lee, NBC and ABC radio and TV, and from '48 till '55, the show was simulcast on radio and TV. It had such a large daytime audience, :30 second spots sold for \$4000. After it's first couple of years at 1313 Vine, the show moved to the **The Earl Carroll Theater**, almost across from CBS Columbia Square on Sunset Blvd. After Carroll died, the theater was sold and became The Moulin Rouge in 1953. This was a studio ABC used for *QFAD* as well as specials from Frank Sinatra.



Below is Old Blue Eyes at The Moulin Rouge in 1957. Some list Sinatra's show at The El Capitan Theater, but that was owned by NBC at the time and was quite busy.





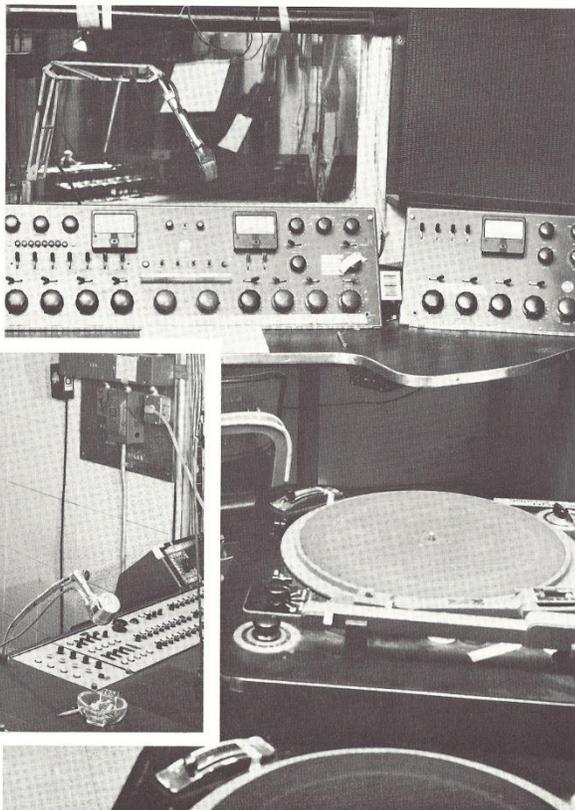
CBS, NBC and ABC all used this theater over the years, and if you take a look at the posh interior below, you'll understand why it was easy to use. There was a big stage, lots of dressing rooms and it was TV and radio ready. At the link are some openings of *Queen For A Day*, which ran on NBC from 1956-1960 and on ABC from 1960-1964, that show the interior of the venue. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KrViH3V6uEM>



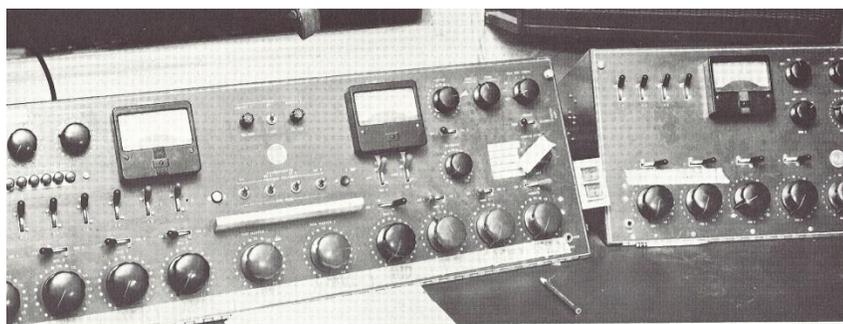
# MOULIN ROUGE

VIDEO  
CONTROL  
ROOM

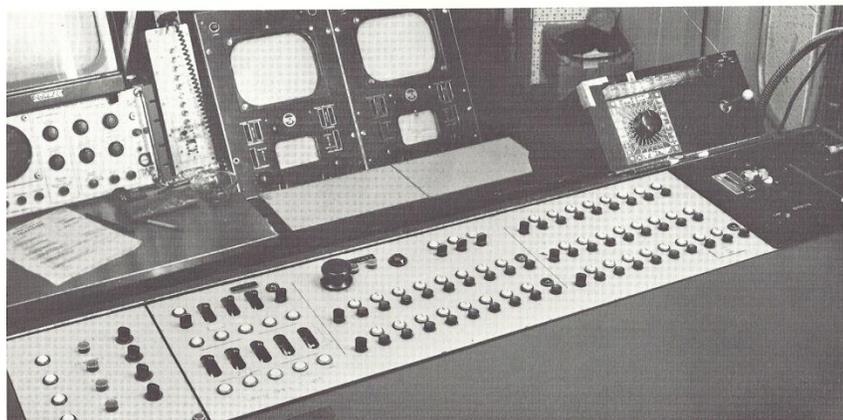
AUDIO  
BOOTH



From the *Inside ABC* booklet, here is the setup at The Moulin Rouge used on *Queen For A Day*



AUDIO  
CONSOLE



SWITCHER

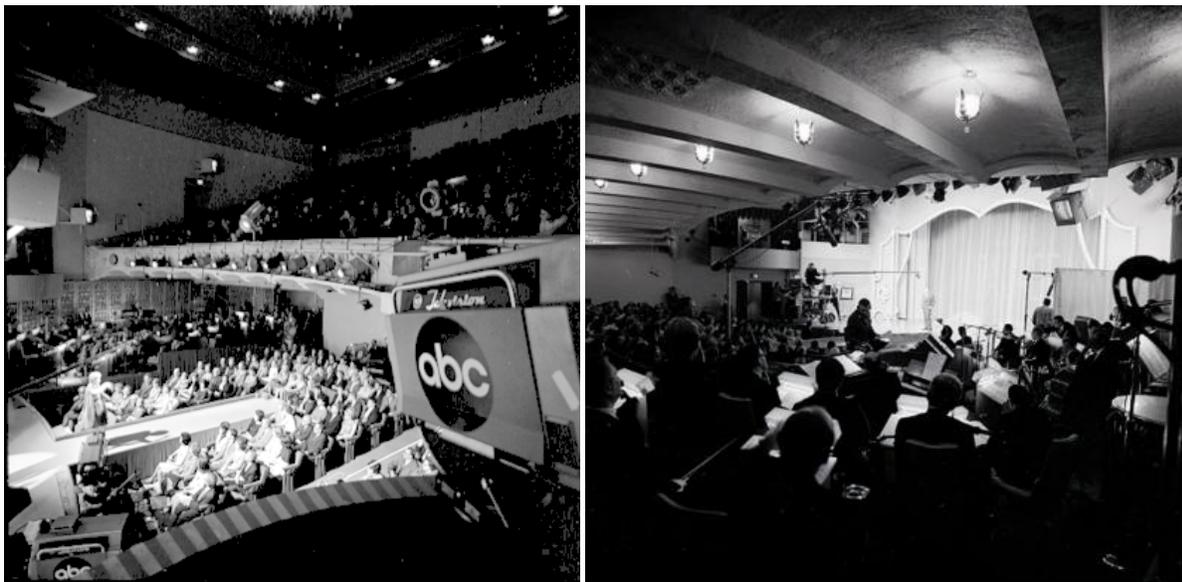
The El Capitan Theater/The Hollywood Palace...1735 North Vine



You'll never believe what happened here the fall of 1963! One of America's most successful funny men, Jerry Lewis, crashed and burned in just 13 weeks!

In the early 1963, ABC bought the El Capitan from NBC and spent \$400,000 on renovations for the hot new *Jerry Lewis Show* that was coming in the fall...the marquee actually read **ABC's Jerry Lewis Theatre**, but not for long. There were such high expectations of the two-hour Saturday night talk and variety show, that no one could have lived up to the hype. The show debuted September 21 and the final show aired 13 weeks later on December 21<sup>st</sup>.

At the link below, you'll see the opening, and our view is over the shoulder of the new control room. The clip is Jerry's show the day after the newspapers reported the cancelation, and there is a very odd vibe in the air. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GutZv\\_D7DKk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GutZv_D7DKk)



Above, show-night shots with a rare look at the audience space including the Les Brown Orchestra and their place in the theater. Below is how the theater looked when NBC was there. On April 1, 1951 the El Capitan Theatre was leased by NBC for ten years at a cost of \$30,500 per year. On Sunday, September 30, 1951, *The Colgate Comedy Hour* was NBC's first regularly-scheduled west-to-east television broadcast, and it came from The El Capitan.



By the way, in the photo on page 44, notice Dave's Barber Shop. When the theater went color, the barber shop and the 3 other small store fronts were eliminated and walled up to make space for the new color video tape area and control room. The cameras were four RCA TK41s, and this was the first ABC color facility on the west coast. [More on ABC's conversion to color below, as told to me by the men who did it.](#)

Just to clear up any confusion, the original El Capitan Theater was on Hollywood Blvd., but when it was sold to Paramount, its name changed to The Paramount Theater. With the famous name available, what had been known as The Hollywood Playhouse took the name. When ABC bought it for Jerry Lewis in 1963, it became the Jerry Lewis Theater, so Paramount took the name back to its original location. Jimmy Kimmel does his show at the Hollywood Blvd El Capitan Theater location, and 1735 Vine is now the Avalon Hollywood Theater, as seen below.



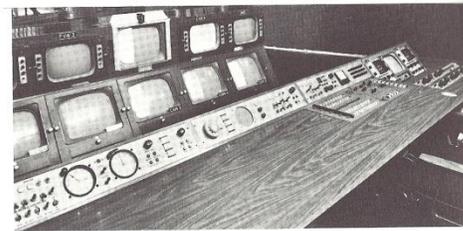
<http://www.americanradiohistory.com/Archive-RCA-Broadcast-News/RCA-69.pdf>

At the link above is a rare three-page article from RCA's *Broadcast News* on the renovation NBC did when it took over the El Capitan in 1952, complete with interior shots and diagrams. As small as it looks from the street, the outside is huge.

One more note on the Hollywood Palace Theater and show; with Jerry Lewis gone, millions invested in the theater purchase and renovation, and a big hole in the 1964 Saturday night schedule...well...what now? How about a big variety show with a new celebrity host every week, and call it *The Hollywood Palace*? Bingo! At the link is host Dean Martin introducing America to the Rolling Stones in their first ever US television appearance.

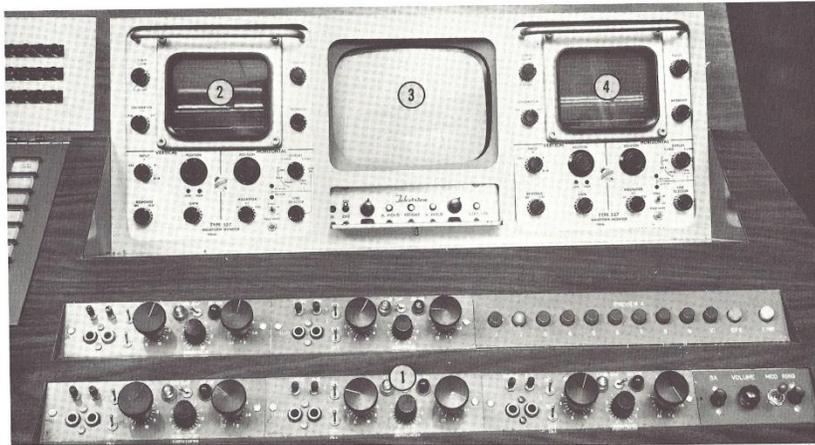
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqYEKYPX-uY>

# PALACE THEATRE



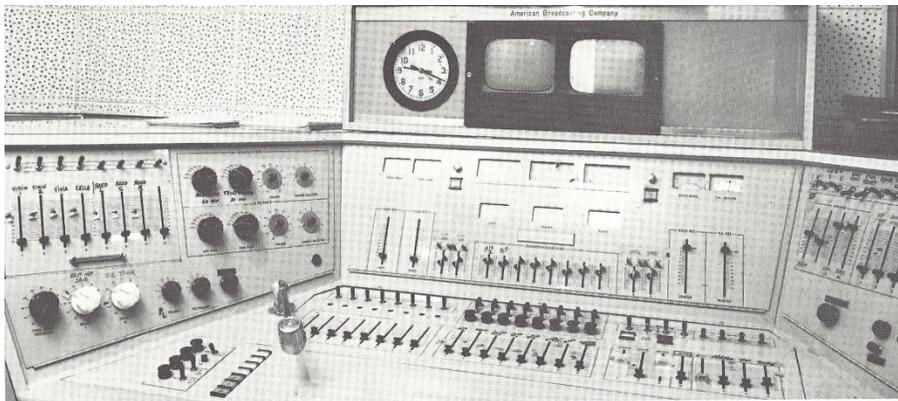
VIDEO CONTROL DESK

- ① TYPICAL CAMERA CONTROL UNIT
  - ② LINE WAVEFORM MONITOR
  - ③ CAMERA PREVIEW MONITOR
  - ④ CAMERA PREVIEW WAVEFORM MONITOR
- } ASSOCIATED

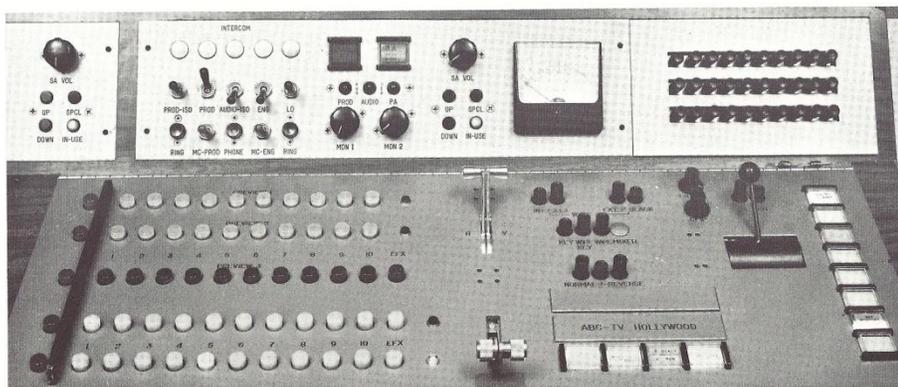


VIDEO OPERATOR'S POSITION

This is some of the new state-of-the-art equipment ABC bought for the *Jerry Lewis Show*



AUDIO CONSOLE

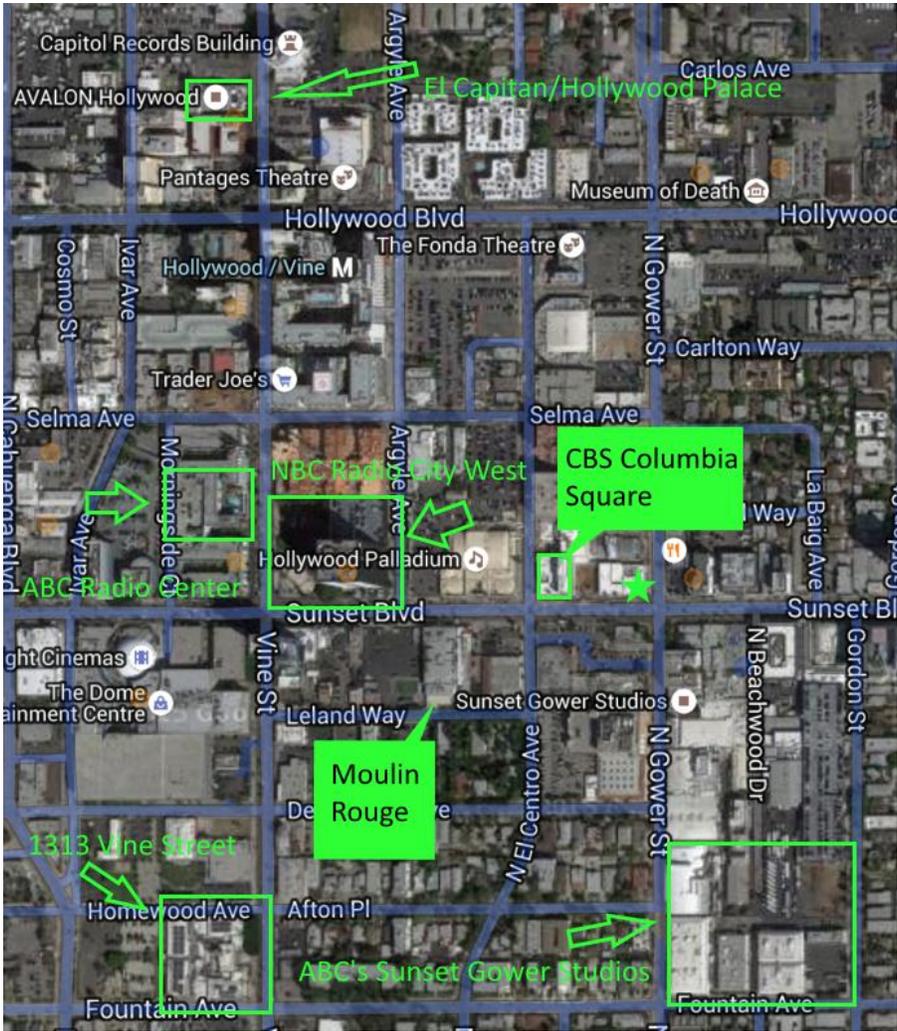


T. D. POSITION

### The Sunset Gower Studios...1435 North Gower at Sunset Blvd.

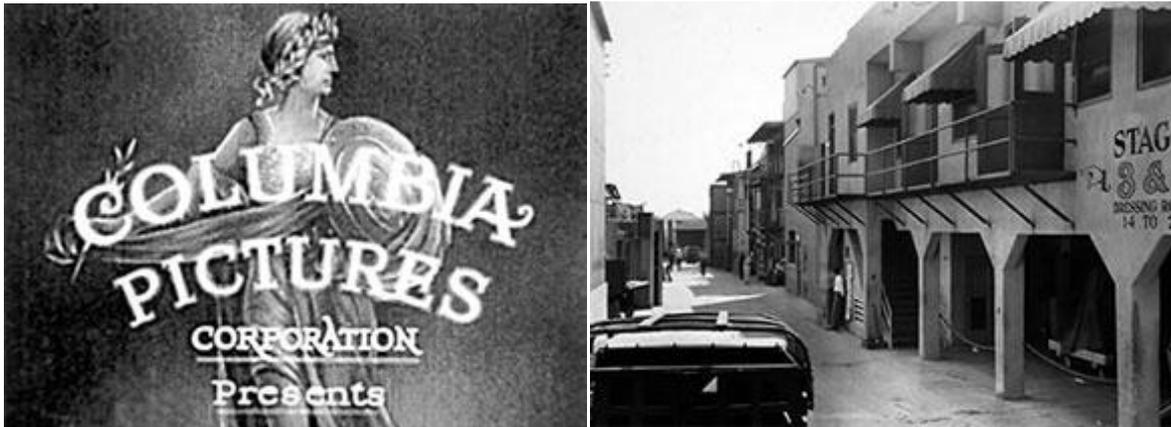


Above is a photo of the first movie studio in Hollywood. It is cattycornered and across the street from Sunset Gower. On the map below, this location is marked by the star at the corner of Sunset and North Gower. If you aren't familiar with the Sunset Gower history, you are in for a surprise!



For a little perspective, I hope the map above gives you a better idea of what the Hollywood area is like, and where some important television and production centers were/are located. Unfortunately, a bank bought NBC's Radio City West in the '60s and tore it down to put up a drive-in bank and parking lot. It now belongs to Chase Bank.

## The Original Home Of Columbia Pictures...



For a half-century, Columbia Pictures...the studio that made such Oscar-winning films as 1934's *It Happened One Night*, 1938's *You Can't Take It With You*, 1949's *All the King's Men*, 1953's *From Here to Eternity*, 1954's *On the Waterfront*, 1957's *Bridge on the River Kwai* and 1962's *Lawrence of Arabia*, was located on this lot.

This 14-acre TV and movie studio at the corner of Sunset Boulevard and Gower Street in Hollywood is currently home to such series as Showtime's *Dexter*, ABC's *Scandal* and *How to Get Away With Murder*, as well as the Technicolor Building on Sunset.

This is a part of Hollywood that, in the 1920s and 30s was known as "Poverty Row," bounded by Sunset Boulevard to the north, Fountain Street to the south, Gordon Street to the east and Gower Street to the west. It was an area where low budget producers could rent an office, a desk, a phone and maybe a small studio space. Companies sprung up overnight and folded just as fast. Warner Brothers' first "studio" was just a few blocks down the street at Sunset and Bronson.

Harry Cohn, his brother Jack, and Joe Brandt formed CBC Film Sales in 1918. In 1924, CBC became Columbia Pictures Corp. It didn't shake the Poverty Row label until *It Happened One Night* won Oscars for best picture, director (Frank Capra), actor (Clark Gable), actress (Claudette Colbert) and adapted screenplay (Robert Riskin). Among the many features shot here were *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, *Funny Girl*, *The Caine Mutiny*, and several Three Stooges episodes.

Some of the many TV shows made here include *News Radio*, *The Amanda Show*, *Deal or No Deal*, *City Guys*, *Six Feet Under*, *JAG*, *Married With Children*, *That's So Raven*, *The Donna Reed Show*, *Bewitched*, *Father Knows Best*, *The Monkees*, *The Golden Girls*, *I Dream of Jeannie*, *The Facts of Life*, and the final two seasons of *Silver Spoons*.

Harry Cohen died in 1958 and without his guidance, Columbia Pictures was not the profit-making company it once was. Between 1970 and 1972, Columbia moved from the 14 acre lot, and joined forces with Warner Brothers in Burbank. The lot, in the meantime, sat fallow.

In 1977 the property was purchased by the Pick/Vanoff Company for \$6.2 million. The name was changed to Sunset Gower Studios and the lot became a rental facility for independent film companies. ABC bought the A parcel at the Fountain Avenue end of the lot in 1978 and sold their part in early 1989. *General Hospital* was the last show to use ABC's studios here at Gower. In January '89 GH moved back to the new Studio 54 at Prospect.

Below, I have marked up the Sunset Gower lot to show you which buildings ABC owned. When *General Hospital* moved here around 1972, they used Studios 74 and 75. ABC used 77 and 79 for sitcoms like *Soap*, *Who's The Boss*, *The Gong Show* and more.



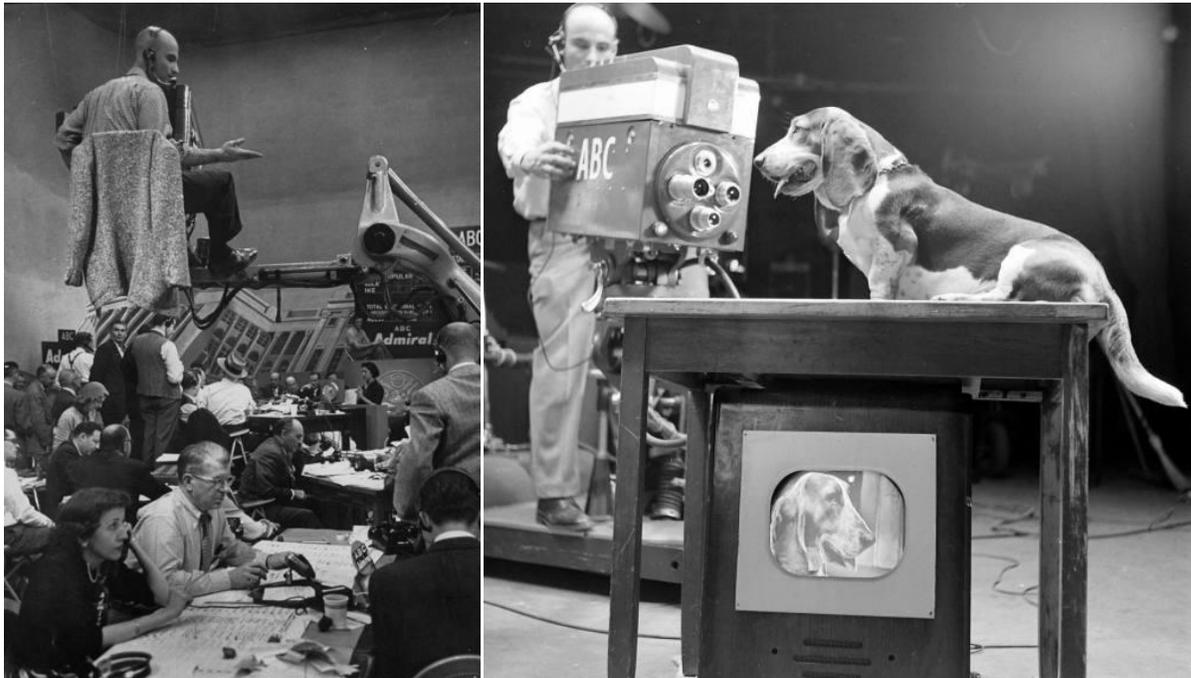
*Soap* in Studio 77



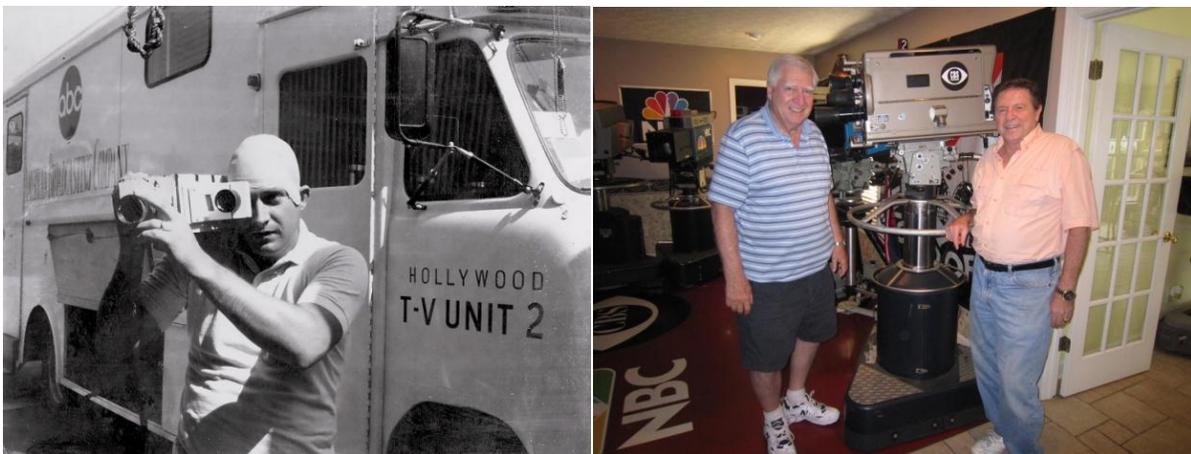
## ABC's First Hand Held Camera

It is only because we know the people that were involved that we are able to pass along this amazing back-story.

Remember this bald cameraman from New York? His name is Mike Friedman and he was ABC's first ever hand held cameraman. He later became a director for ABC Sports, but not before he passed along all his tricks of the trade to our friend Don "Peaches" Langford, who was for many years, ABC's "go-to" hand held master.

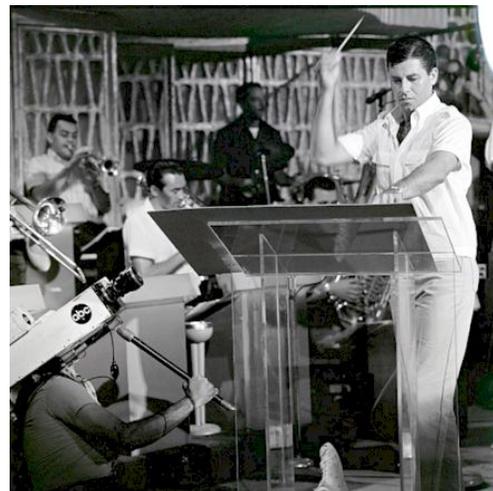


Below left we see Peaches with Mike's camera and a bald wig...in tribute to the master. On the right, Peaches (in shorts) at my house looking at some of his old friends in my camera collection.





On the log, Jim McKay with Mike Friedman using this homemade camera on the show they built it for...another ABC landmark...*Wide World Of Sports*. The GE camera below was one of three surplus cameras retired from ABC New York in 1960. They were sent to LA after someone mentioned they wanted them for a remote unit. What they wound up doing was taking the Image Orthicon tube and yoke from one of the cameras, adding a single 50mm lens and a piece of metal with a hollow tube on the left side to serve as an eyepiece. Notice the cable from the camera is the same as the one it used in the studio. It was bare-bones, but it worked. FYI, RCA was making miniature portable cameras as early as 1950, but they were expensive and only NBC used them at first. You can see the first use of this camera on Page 58 in the Roone Arledge/WWOS section.



On the right above is Peaches using the camera to shoot Jerry Lewis, and below, here he is using one of ABC's first color cameras (RCA TK41) at the 1966 Academy Awards. Don was on the crane for the opening of the first color broadcast of the Oscars that year, and you can see the first five minutes at this link. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wUQRLNGRxEY>



## MUST SEE VIDEO!!!

If you would like to see how ABC covered college football, take a look at this great half hour documentary from the late '60s called *Seconds To Play*. This is the best there is on how it was done, and back then, there were far fewer people to do the job with much heavier equipment. Peaches was there and you'll see him on the sidelines (below) with his portable Norelco handheld color camera. Thanks Don for all the help, then and now!

*Seconds To Play*, Part 1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MfEk24kIGdY&list=PL4023E734DA416012&index=35>

*Seconds To Play*, Part 2 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0-Ab93jR9Ms>



At this link is the first ever color handheld to be used by any network. This was the ABC/Ampex BC 100 used by ABC Sports November 11, 1967. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= kh8JurXv2c&feature=youtu.be>

## From Black & White To Color...1966



Above is RCA's last black and white camera, the RCA TK60...below, a row of brand-new RCA TK41 color cameras all lined up at Pebble Beach in 1966 for part of a *Wide World Of Sports* piece, and to cover the first ABC color broadcast of a golf tournament.



First things first...setting the record straight on ABC's first live color. **The first installation of live color cameras anywhere in the ABC network was at the Hollywood Palace in early 1966**, and the story is told to me by two of the men that put the cameras in...ABC veteran engineers Jan Lowry and Don Langford.

**The first color installation in New York was a couple of color film chains**, and that story was told to me by Dave Elliott, who was one of the men that put it in. There were dual RCA 16 and 35mm film projectors as well as dual 35mm slide drums.



At the 1964 World's Fair in New York, RCA had several color remote units on hand that local stations from around the country could tryout when they came to do news stories on the fair, and of course RCA had 3 TK41s in their pavilion.

After the fair ended in 1965, RCA offered all of this equipment for lease or sale and ABC leased at least one of the units, which went to Hollywood. They may have bought one for New York too, but I'm not sure.

These RCA color cameras at Hollywood Palace were operated from the truck and were only in use there for about a year, when Norelco color cameras were installed. At that time, the major renovation I discussed in the Hollywood Palace section began with the retail stores on the front being taken out so that new control and tape rooms could be added. For a while, or until the official ABC color kick off in the fall of '66, the cameras were operated without the color burst added...that is, they made black and white pictures.

The first non animated ABC show to go color was *The Lawrence Welk Show*, which had to move from Studio 55 to Hollywood Palace in order to do so. The huge stage space the bandstand enjoyed at Studio 55 was not there at the Palace, and the set was too wide to fit. When they were setting it up for the first time, Welk was there and when he was told it was too wide, he joked, "Well, I guess we'll have to fire about six feet of the band."

Below is a shot of the kind of three-panel color test charts necessary to get the color right on these TK 41 cameras. ABC didn't have any so...Don Langford and a friend went to NBC Burbank in their convertible and borrowed one of theirs until ABC could duplicate it.



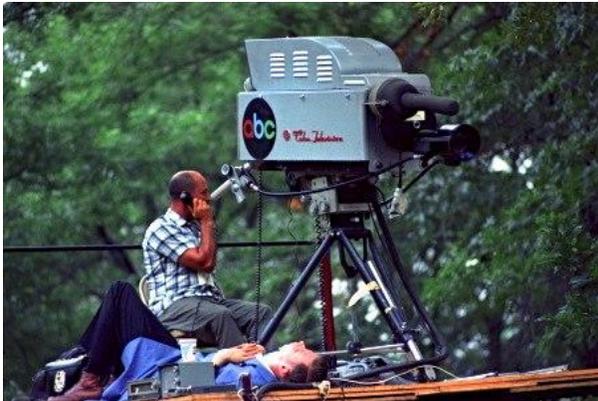
In 1966, ABC ordered a dozen new RCA TK41Cs and new mobile units to support them, and those went to Hollywood. They started with two six-camera color units there, while NY got two six-camera Norelco color units. In 1967, they were all used to televise ABC's first color golf tournament and while they were all there, *Wide World Of Sports* shot a feature story on them and put all 24 cameras in a nice long row. (Norelco PC70s in the foreground, RCA TK41s in the background).



At the link is a rare ABC golf promo from 1968 and, as you will see, almost every make and model color camera is in this thing.

<https://www.facebook.com/189359747768249/videos/vb.189359747768249/762899533747598/?type=2&theater>

On this page, we see one of the ABC remote units with six RCA TK41s in the belly. On the right, an RCA TK60 black and white that always went along, because video character generators/graphics machines didn't come along until several years later. The TK60s were used to shoot title cards that were superimposed over the live picture. At the bottom, our friend Dale Walsh on the road shooting football and golf. On the left, his camera platform is about to be lifted by a crane over the field at the University of Nebraska.



## A Final Note On Color...



*The Jetsons* was the first ever color broadcast for ABC. It debuted at 7:30 Saturday night, September 23, 1962. The only problem was that only about 3% of American households had bought a color television set. The only color equipment ABC owned was a single color monitor in master control in both New York and LA.

So, how was it broadcast? Simple...ABC took the 35 and 16mm color prints (one master, one safety) to NBC Burbank to play from their fully color equipped color studios. NBC fed the color signal to AT&T, who sent it to New York for east coast live broadcast. Two hours later, they did the same again for the west coast. Only a few of the ABC affiliates had color capability, but it was more of a PR stunt than anything else.

Above is the voice of George Jetson, George O'Hanlon. Next to him is the debut newspaper advertisement for the show. Now...although *The Flintstones* had been on since 1961, and had always been produced in color, it was not shown in color until the week after *The Jetsons* debuted. In the color photo are the Flintstone voices Bea Bendaeret (Betty), Jean Vander Pyl (Wilma), Alan Reed (Fred) and Mel Blanc (Barney).

## Roone Arledge & ABC's Wide World Of Sports



Don Meredith, Roone Arledge, Howard Cosell and Keith Jackson *Monday Night Football*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvgnv7xJidY>

The rare video at this link is from the debut season of ABC's *Wide World Of Sports*, which started April 29, 1961. This clip is the last episode from that test season of shows and highlights some firsts in football coverage, and the first ever use of the ABC built handheld camera that I introduced you to above.

From :45 to 1:15 you see images from the handheld camera interspersed with wide shots which also show cameraman Mike Friedman on the sidelines with the camera on his shoulder... a first! The date was September 9, 1961. True television history!

This is also the first use of a crane camera over the field, microphones on the quarterbacks and handheld sideline coverage in a professional football game. The video is quite historic.

In January of '62, WWOS was given a permanent time slot where it remained for over forty years. The show was the creation of Edgar Scherick through his company, Sports Programs Inc. After selling his company to the American Broadcasting Company, and joining them to run ABC Sports, he hired a young Roone Arledge to produce the show.

Around 1956, after graduating with a master's degree from Columbia College, Arledge got a stage manager's job at NBC's New York City station, which was then WRCA. One of his assignments there was to help produce a children's puppet show hosted by Shari Lewis.

Sometime in late 1960, Arledge convinced his superiors at WRCA-TV to let him film a pilot of a show he called *For Men Only*. While his superiors liked the pilot, they told him they couldn't find a place in the programming schedule for it. But the WRCA weatherman, Pat Herson, who hosted the pilot, began showing it, and Edgar Scherick was one of the people who saw it.

While Scherick wasn't interested in the show pilot, he recognized the talent Arledge had, and Arledge realized ABC was the organization he was looking to join. The lack of a formal organization would offer him the opportunity to claim real power when the network matured, so, he signed on with Scherick as an assistant producer for WWOS.

Several months before ABC began broadcasting NCAA college football games, Arledge sent Scherick a remarkable memo, filled with television production concepts which sports broadcasts have adhered to since. Previously, network sporting broadcasts had consisted of simple set-ups and focused on the game itself. The genius of Arledge in this memo was not that he offered another way to broadcast the game to the sports fan. The genius was to recognize television had to take the sports fan to the game.

In addition, Arledge realized that the broadcasts needed to attract and hold the attention of women viewers. At age 29, on September 17, 1960, he put his vision into reality with ABC's first NCAA college football broadcast from Birmingham, Alabama, between Alabama's Crimson Tide and **The Georgia Bulldogs**. Sports broadcasting has not been the same since. Go Dawgs!

## You Can't Spell ABC Without Soupy Sales...Or Can You?





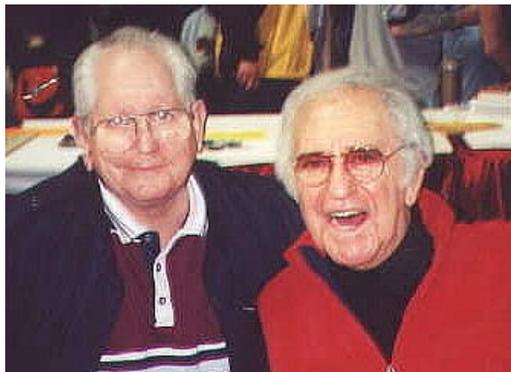
The one and only at ABC Prospect in 1960, most likely in Studio F





**This is a true story**, told to me by Lytle Hoover (below) who directed Soupy's show for six years, when it was done at ABC's WXYZ-TV in Detroit.

*Lunch With Soupy* started in 1953 as a local show, but in '55 it went on the network. In those days, money was still quite scarce as it was only February 1953 that the FCC approved the sale of ABC to Leonard Goldenson and United Paramount Theaters. With cash at a premium, all of the ABC owned- and- operated properties around the country would send a man with a suitcase full of money to ABC New York every Friday morning so the network could cover the payroll checks they handed out in the afternoon, but even then they came with instructions not to deposit them until Monday.



At this link is a classic provided by our friend, New York comedian Barry Mitchell, who many ABC veterans are familiar with, thanks to his *World News Polkas*. This is Soupy returning to WXYZ in 1982. The first time he had been back to the station in many years.

<https://www.facebook.com/189359747768249/videos/vb.189359747768249/827852363918981/?type=2&theater>

## ABC Meets Walt Disney...The First Time Around



A lot of things happened along the way that brought ABC from a struggling third- place competitor to the top that have not mentioned yet. One of the first major synergies ABC had after being acquired by Paramount, with Leonard Goldenson (below) at the helm, was a deal between Goldenson and Walt Disney that paid off big for both of them!



Disney needed money to build his dream theme park, Disneyland. ABC needed programming. Even with a proven track record, both NBC and CBS turned him down, although they both needed programs too. Even though NBC and CBS had tried, they had not been able to convince the Hollywood film studios that producing material for television would actually benefit them, ABC did and that is a BIG DEAL!

Disney got a partner and a multimillion dollar loan from ABC Paramount, and the network got *Disneyland*, the weekly series, and the daily *Mickey Mouse Club*, which was a huge hit. Their relationship lasted from 1955 till 1961, when NBC approached Disney about presenting *Disneyland* in color. ABC could not match the offer, but the early success Disney and ABC enjoyed broke the back of the unofficial lockout of television from Hollywood.

On July 31, 1995, Disney bought Capital Cities/ABC for \$19 billion. The rest, as they say, is history.

<https://www.facebook.com/189359747768249/videos/vb.189359747768249/703773192993566/?type=2&theater>

## Disneyland Opening Day...Behind The Scenes With ABC

At the link above is an extremely rare look at ABC's preparation and coverage of the July 18, 1955 opening day ceremonies at Disneyland. The network brought in 29 cameras, 85,000 feet of cable and audio equipment and even engineers and equipment from ABC Radio. There was enough equipment to furnish 12 television stations. Most of the equipment was theirs, but some had to be rented from NBC in Los Angeles, so don't be surprised when you see that logo.

This is the in-house documentary ABC made for use at their affiliates and sponsor meeting in the fall of 1955. At the time, this was the largest remote ever done by anyone. As you'll see, rehearsal was a mammoth task in itself with last-minute construction making it nearly impossible, but...they pulled it off, and in grand style!

This video ends with the narrator saying "And here's the show". At the link below is "the show" that took all this activity and planning to broadcast nationwide.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JuztZET-3Ew>

## The ABC West Coast Shows Origination List

With thanks to The Game Show Network's historian, and TV history author David Schwartz, here is list of productions done from ABC in Los Angeles.

SHOW	DEBUT	STUDIO/LOCATION
About Faces	1/4/1960	Studio E
All Star Blitz	4/8/1985	studio 55
American Bandstand	8/5/1957	WFIL, Philadelphia (57-64), LA (64- studio E
American Bandstand	2/8/1964	studio E (55)
American Bandstand Evening Show	10/7/1957	WFIL, Philadelphia studio 55, 57; stage 9
America's Funniest Home Videos	1/14/1990	KTLA
America's Funniest People	9/8/1990	
Animal Crack-ups	8/8/1987	studio 55
Anybody Can Play	7/6/1958	studio E
As Caesar Sees It	10/16/1962	LA
Bargain Hunters	7/6/1987	Hollywood Center Studios studio 55, Vine Street
Barney Miller	1/23/1975	Theater, Sunset Gower
Better Sex	7/18/1977	studio 54
Betty White Show	2/5/1958	El Capitan Theater
Big Moment, The	4/3/1999	
Bill Gwinn Show	2/5/1951	studio 2B
Brady Bunch Hour	1/23/1977	KTLA studio 6 & 2
Break the Bank	4/12/1976	studio 55
Bruce Forsyth's Hot Streak	1/6/1986	studio 54
Burns & Schreiber Comedy Hour	6/30/1973	studio E (55)
Captain & Tennille	9/20/1976	LA - studio 41 (TV City)
Carol Burnett & Company	8/18/1979	studio 33 (TV City)
Carpenters 1977 Christmas Special	12/9/1977	studio 55
Carpenters 1978 Christmas Special	12/19/1978	studio 55
Caryl & Marilyn	6/10/1996	Sunset Blvd. Theater
Chucko the Clown (local show)		
Cos (Bill Cosby)	9/19/1976	studio 55
Dateline Hollywood	4/3/1967	studio A

Dating Game	12/20/1965	Studio 55, 1313 Vine, Palace
Day in Court	10/13/1958	studio A
Doctor I.Q.	12/15/1958	studio D
Don Rickles Show	9/27/1968	1313 Vine
Donny & Marie	1/23/1976	KTLA/Golden West Studios: Studio 6 Orem, Utah-Osmond
Donny & Marie	9/22/1978	Studios
Dotty Mack Show	4/19/1956	WCPO, Cincinnati, Ohio
Double Talk	8/18/1986	studio 54
Dream Girl of '67	12/19/1966	Hollywood Palace
Dream Girl USA	9/8/1986	studio 55
Edie Adams Show	9/26/1963	studio E
Ernie Kovacs Specials	1/23/1962	studio E
Everly Brothers Show	7/8/1970	studio E
Everybody's Talking	2/6/1967	studio D
Eyewitness News		studio B (52)
Family Feud (network 1976-84, syndicated 1977-84)	7/12/1976	Vine Street Theater (76), studio 54
Family Game	6/19/1967	studio D
Frank Sinatra Show	10/18/1957	Studio 54
Frank Sinatra Show (specials)	10/19/1959	Moulin Rouge
Fridays	9/18/1981	LA
Funny You Should Ask!!	10/28/1968	studio D
General Hospital	4/1/1963	studio B; stage 8 Cahuenga Studios; stage 74 Sunset Gower; studio 54 (1990's-present)
George Jessel Show	9/13/1953	NY (first show from LA)
Girl In My Life	7/9/1973	studio 54
Grand Ole Opry	10/15/1955	WSM-TV, Nashville
Guy Mitchell Show	10/7/1957	LA - El Capitan
Happening '68	1/6/1968	LA
Hollywood Palace	1/4/1964	LA-Hollywood Palace
Home Show	1/18/1988	studio 55
Hootenanny	4/6/1963	various locations
Hot Seat	7/12/1976	studio 54
How's Your Mother-in-law?	12/4/1967	studio D
Into the Night (Rick Dees)	7/16/1990	studio 59

It Was a Very Good Year	5/10/1971	studio E
It's Happening	1/6/1968	studio E
It's Polka Time	7/13/1956	WBKB, Chicago
It's Garry Shandling's Show	3/6/1988	studio 59
Jerry Lewis Show	9/21/1963	LA-Jerry Lewis Theater
Jim Stafford Show	7/30/1975	LA - Hollywood Palace El Capitan Entertainment Center (Hollywood Masonic Temple)
Jimmy Kimmel Live!	1/26/2003	Masonic Temple)
Joey Bishop Show (late night)	4/17/1967	LA-Vine Street Theater
Johnny Cash Show	6/7/1969	Nashville-Grand Ole Opry
Juke Box Jury	9/13/1953	LA-studio E
Julie Andrews Hour	9/13/1972	LA-studio E
KABC News		studio F; 52
KECA News		studio F
Keep on Truckin'	7/12/1975	studio E
Ken Berry "Wow" Show	7/15/1972	studio E studio E/Hollywood Palace
King Family	1/23/1965	Palace studio E/Hollywood
King Family	3/12/1969	Palace
Krypton Factor	8/7/1981	studio 59
Laughs for Sale	10/20/1963	LA
Lawrence Welk	7/2/1955	studio E
Lawrence Welk's Top Tunes & New Talent	10/8/1956	LA-studio E
Let There Be Stars	10/16/1949	studio E
Let's Make a Deal	12/30/1968	studio D
Liberace (daytime)	10/13/1958	
Malibu U	7/21/1967	various L.A. locations BBC Studios, London,
Marty Feldman Comedy Machine	4/12/1972	England
Match Game	7/16/1990	studio 59
Midwestern Hayride	6/29/1957	WLWD, Dayton, Ohio
Midwestern Hayride	6/28/1958	WLWD, Dayton, Ohio stage 9, Hollywood Center Studios
Mike & Maty	4/11/1994	Studios
Milton Berle Show	9/9/1966	Hollywood Palace studio 4, Hollywood Center
Monopoly	6/16/1990	Center
Morning Court	10/10/1960	studio B
Mr. Belevdere		studio 57

Music Scene	9/22/1969	studio E
Neighbors, The	12/29/1975	Vine Street Theater
Never Too Young	9/27/1965	studio A & outdoor set studio D, Hollywood Palace
Newlywed Game	7/11/1966	Palace
Object Is, The	12/30/1963	Studio D
Olivia Newton-John Special	5/17/1978	Studio 59
Operation: Entertainment	1/5/1968	various military bases
Orchid Room	5/24/1953	NY (first show from LA)
Parent Game	9/4/1972	Vine Street Theater studio D (1971); Vine Street Theater (1972-75)
Password	4/5/1971	Street Theater (1972-75)
Pat Boone Special	4/15/1979	Studio 59
Pat Paulsen's Comedy Hour	1/22/1970	studio D
Paul Whiteman's TV Teen Club	10/3/1953	WFIL, Philadelphia
Pearl Bailey Show	1/23/1971	Hollywood Palace
Penny to a Million	7/5/1955	studio E
Plymouth Show w/Lawrence Welk	9/10/1958	LA-studio E
Pop 'n' Rocker Game	9/17/1983	studio 55
Port Charles	6/1/1997	studio 57
Queen for a Day	9/5/1960	Moulin Rouge
Ralph Story's L.A.	2/8/1971	studio B
Ray Anthony Show	10/12/1956	various cities
Redd Foxx	9/15/1977	LA - TV City studio 43
Reel Game, The	1/18/1971	studio E
Rhyme & Reason	7/7/1975	studio 54
Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve	12/31/1972	studio 55, 59
Roy Rogers-Dale Evans Show	9/29/1962	LA
Second Chance	3/7/1977	studio 54
Seven Keys	4/3/1961	Studio E
Shindig	9/16/1964	LA -studio E
Showoffs	6/30/1975	studio 54
Smothers Bros. Summer Show	7/8/1970	
Sonny Comedy Review	9/22/1974	studio 55
Soupy Sales	1960-61	studio F
Space Patrol	3/9/1950	studio E
Split Second	3/20/1972	studio D or E
Steve Allen Show	9/27/1961	LA
Sundown	1963	studio B
Super Jeopardy!	6/16/1990	studio 1 Hollywood Center

Take a Good Look	10/22/1959	studio E
Temptation	12/4/1967	Hollywood Palace
Tennessee Ernie Ford (daytime)	4/2/1962	SF - KGO-TV
		LA (first 6 shows) studio
This is Tom Jones	Sep-69	E
This is Tom Jones	2/7/1969	London
Three's Company	3/15/1977	Metromedia
Traffic Court		studio B
Treasure Hunt	/1973	studio E
Trivia Trap	10/8/1984	studio 55
Turn On	2/5/1969	LA
View, The (LA broadcasts)		studio 55
Welcome Back, Kotter	9/9/1975	Studio 57
What's It All About World?	2/6/1969	LA -Hollywood Palace
Where the Action Is	6/28/1965	various locations
Whose Line is it Anyway?	8/5/1998	Raleigh Studios
You Don't Say!	7/7/1975	Warner Brothers Studios
Young Marrieds	10/5/1964	studio D



And finally, here is Lawrence Welk showing Vin Scully his famous bubble machine.

**This is the end of Part 2...ABC's West Coast Studios History. The story began in Part 1, which is ABC's New York Studios History.**

I hope you have enjoyed this and will share it with your friends and colleagues. If you have more information, documents, video, artifacts, pictures and comments, please send them to me. I would love to hear from you, as this is an ongoing project and by no means the final word. For daily articles on television's history, please join us on the Facebook site and/or the Live Stream section of the main web site.

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