

# The History of ABC's New York Television Studios

## Part 1 of 2

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

### Preface and Acknowledgement

**This is the first 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 here. The 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 to John Fider, Dick Roes, Donald Launer, Bob Franklin, Bill Freiberger, Howie Zeidman and Bill Rigo.

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.

This presentation is presented as a public service by the world's ultimate destination for television's living history...*Eyes of a Generation.com* –Bobby Ellerbee

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## In The Beginning, There Was WJZ Radio...

As mentioned in the preface above, there is not very much in the way of historical archives from ABC. Possibly because of this, there is, and always has been an informal internal narrative of the history of the network among many of the network's employees. We are quite fortunate to have located and spoken with some of these key people and have their assistance in telling this story. There is no better way to tell this story than by using their photos, recollections and memoirs and that kicks in just a few pages down.

Allow me to set the stage with a history that, believe it or not, it starts with David Sarnoff.

By 1919, 28 year old Sarnoff was the commercial manager of American Marconi in New York. That same year, British Marconi made an offer to General Electric to buy the worldwide rights to the Alexanderson Alternator technology, which was vital for transatlantic communication. The prospect of a foreign company controlling international communications set off alarm bells in Washington, and the government approached GE with a counter offer. If GE would place the Alternator technology in a new subsidiary company, they would be allowed to operate the international wireless circuits for both government and commercial traffic. To sweeten the deal, the Navy agreed to turn over all the wireless patents it received through its wartime research.

**The new GE subsidiary company was named the Radio Corporation of America.** At the helm was Owen Young as Chairman, Ernst Alexanderson as Chief Engineer and David Sarnoff as General Manager. Within months, AT&T, Westinghouse and a big consumer of international wireless services, United Fruit Company, bought up all the RCA shares.

By 1921, commercial broadcasting stations begun to appear with 28 springing up that year, including the **Westinghouse-owned 50,000 watt WJZ in New Jersey**. With the July 2, 1921 World Heavyweight Championship fight between America's Jack Dempsey and France's George Carpentier looming, everyone in New York was anxious for a speedy way to know the details and outcome. David Sarnoff decided RCA should arrange to broadcast the fight on WJZ. It was a radio first; a publicity coup for RCA and Westinghouse, and it sold lots of radios!

With Westinghouse in a good mood, Sarnoff convinced them to allow RCA to take over WJZ. With the buyout, RCA moved the license from Newark to New York City and the transmitter and studios to the Aeolian Building on West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street. This was RCA's first broadcast property.

In the summer of 1924, AT&T's management began to consider getting out of the broadcast business, and in July 1926, AT&T agreed to sell their New York City station, WEAJ, to RCA.

When RCA acquired WEAJ, their studio and office was in the AT&T Building at 195 Broadway. Less than a year after RCA created NBC, the company's first made-to-order studios were ready, and on October 1, 1927, NBC moved into the new facilities on the twelfth and thirteenth floors of 711 5th Avenue, with WEAJ and WJZ now at the same location.

**NBC, the nation's first major broadcasting network came to life on November 15, 1926,** with a four-and-a-half hour broadcast from New York over a network of 25 stations, as far west as Kansas City. Close to half of America's four million radio homes tuned in. The demand for a network service among local stations was mounting so rapidly that on **January 1, 1927, less than two months after their first national broadcast, NBC split its programming into two separate networks: the Red and Blue networks,** to give listeners more of a choice in programs. **The NBC Red Network used WEAF as its flagship, and the NBC Blue Network's flagship station was WJZ.**



These are the original WJZ Radio Studios in Newark

Many believe that NBC created the first radio network, which is not exactly true, but it did come to own the first two radio stations that had ever endeavored to create their own networks. RCA's old partner AT&T had the first radio network at WEAF, and its first network radio broadcast was January 4, 1923, between WEAF in NYC and WNAC in Boston, using the company's telephone lines. RCA's WJZ had also begun to build a small network in late 1923, but barred by AT&T from leasing land lines, tried using telegraph lines but abandoned the attempt due to the low signal quality a few months later. WJZ's first real network broadcast was in December 1926, between WJZ and General Electric's station WGY in Schenectady over the newly-available AT&T lines.

In the mid 1930s, Mutual Broadcasting had begun to complain to the FCC that CBS, with the Columbia/Don Lee west coast network, and NBC with its Red and Blue networks had a monopoly on many of the country's radio markets. By 1938, the Federal Communications Commission had begun a series of investigations that concluded in 1941. After studying the Mutual charges, the FCC issued an opinion that no organization could own more than one network. NBC decided to appeal the decision, but the next year, the Supreme Court ruled that the FCC had the power to make such rules and enforce them.

By late 1942, NBC had separated the properties into two separate entities, each with their own personnel and facilities, and was preparing to sell the Blue Network. By this time, there were 103 Red subscribing stations, 76 Blue, and 64 supplementary stations using a combination of NBC Red and Blue programs.

## History from the Horse's Mouth

For a real first person view of ABC's early history, the narration is about to be taken over by one of ABC's first television engineers, Donald Launer. Donald began with ABC in 1948, the year television came to the network, and he left 41 years later having been a part of everything in between. In his 80s, Mr. Launer wrote several books on sailing and navigating the waters of his native New Jersey, but the only thing he ever wrote about his years at ABC was in this rare 56 page memoir that were only given to friends. Fortunately, one of Donald's friends, John Fider, has shared his copy of *The Early Days Of ABC – A Memoir by Donald Launer*.

John Fider was formerly Vice President of Production Operations at ABC News. He was Technical Director for ABC Television Network Olympics, Special Events and Election coverage from 1976 until 1989. He is a seven-time Emmy Award winner, as well as a recipient of the prestigious Alfred I. DuPont award, and a member of the Directors Guild of America. He serves as Director of Broadcast Operations at the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism, where he directs *Columbia News Tonight*.

Now, Donald Launer's narration picks up the ABC history, where I left off, with amazing detail.

### The 1940s:

In 1940, the FCC determined that there was a monopoly in network broadcasting and ordered RCA to sell one of its two networks. NBC challenged the FCC's authority to decide this, but the challenge was overturned in court.

Since NBC's *Red Network* was the largest, most diverse and profitable, with high powered transmitter locations on clear channels, NBC put the *Blue Network* up for sale at a firm price of \$8 million. The eight-million dollar package included a lease for studio facilities in Rockefeller Center, as well as the licenses to WJZ in New York, WENR in Chicago, and KGO in San Francisco. It also included leases to the telephone land-lines that connected these stations together into a rather loose network. The divestment took place during the war-years of 1942 and 1943. Offers were made to buy the *Blue Network* at a lower price, but were rejected. Finally, Edward J. Noble, owner of Life Savers and Rexall Drug Stores, paid the asking price and the sale was consummated on October 12, 1943. The fledgling network remained known as the *Blue Network* till the following year, 1944, when it was renamed the *American Broad-*

*casting Company*.

In 1945, shortly after the end of WW II, both NBC and CBS began pursuing the development of television broadcasting, but ABC held off because of its stressed financial position. Finally, in 1948, when people were beginning to buy TV sets and antennas began sprouting from every rooftop, ABC also decided to enter the TV market.

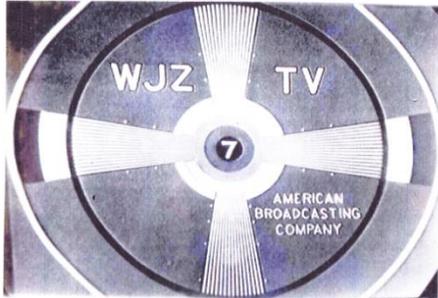
ABC needed a brand-new engineering staff, but experienced broadcast engineers were hard to come by. During the winter of 1947-1948 the engineers at WFIL in Philadelphia went on strike, resulting in a lock-out. When WFIL management began replacing them, those engineers started looking for work—just at the time that ABC-TV was looking for engineers. Many of the former WFIL engineers took jobs at ABC-TV and became the nucleus for the company's highly-professional and dedicated engineering department.

Dedication and professionalism was certainly ingrained in one of the WFIL alumni, Al Saeger, who worked at the transmitter atop the Hotel Pierre.

He still made his home in Philadelphia, and commuted by train every day. After the 11:30 PM sign-off one evening, he turned off the transmitter and headed home. He was on the train to Philly, when he began wondering if he had accidentally turned off the "crystal oven" in the transmitter. (The quartz crystal establishes the frequency of a transmitter. A change in temperature changes the transmitted frequency, and the "oven" maintains the necessary constant temperature. If the oven

has been turned off it takes a long time to stabilize again).

When he arrived at the train station in Philadelphia, he took the next train back to New York, went to the top of the Hotel Pierre, saw that he had



ABC's New York Station WJZ-TV broadcast from the top of the Hotel Pierre, and later from the Empire State Building.  
The station's call sign was later changed to WABC-TV

not turned the "oven" off, went back to Penn Station, and took the another train to Philadelphia, arriving at home at daybreak

Although ABC had a dedicated staff of true broadcasters, their entry into TV was a meager start. ABC didn't own a TV studio and had purchased a pitifully small amount of TV equipment – just enough to get on the air. They began using a Manhattan photographic studio as their TV studio, as well as a leased NBC studio, 3G, in Rockefeller

Center, where ABC-TV also leased office space.

Whenever I was working in 3G, I would take every possible chance to visit NBC's 8H studio where, frequently, the NBC orchestra under the baton of Toscanini, would be rehearsing. It's hard to imagine today that a network would support a full concert orchestra with a world-renowned conductor.

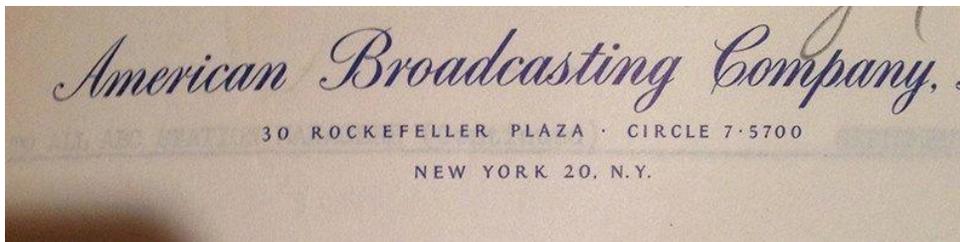
ABC Television went on the air for the first time on April 19, 1948, with five Owned-and-Operated stations, all on Channel-7. There were less than one-million TV sets throughout the entire United States.

In order to cover special events outside the studios, ABC-TV built a "remote truck" - of sorts.

In the 1940s milk, bread, and pies were still being delivered directly to homes by truck. ABC-TV purchased a used pie-delivery truck and equipped it with the necessary electronic gear to create a makeshift remote truck. Of course everyone at ABC-TV immediately dubbed it the *Pie-Wagon*, and that's the name it retained for years till it was eventually replaced with a proper vehicle.

The most logical location for a TV broadcasting antenna in New York City was the top of the Empire State Building – the tallest building in the city. However NBC, and its New York station WEAFTV had an exclusive contract with the Empire State Building, preventing other broadcasters from installing transmitters and antennas there. So the CBS station in New York, WABC-TV, installed their equipment and antenna at the top of the Chrysler Building, and ABC's transmitter and an-

**Notice above on page 13, the first day of television for ABC was April 19, 1948. That debut show was from WFIL in Philadelphia, and called *On The Corner* with Henry Morgan as host. ABC had the use of NBC radio studios 2A, 2B, 2C, 3C, 3G, 5C 5G, 6A, 6D 8A and 8E at 30 Rockefeller Plaza. As mentioned, ABC also had office space inside the building, here is a real rarity. This is ABC's first official letterhead and the address is 30 Rock. Although ABC's Circle 7 station logo was created in San Francisco in 1962, I have a feeling that the original Circle 7 phone number in New York also had a role to play somewhere along the line.**



*NOTES: To clarify a few things on page 13...the antenna for NBC's WEAFTV Radio and NBC's WNBT TV were on the Empire State roof. Believe it or not, CBS radio's NYC station actually had the call letters WABC until 1946. In 1928, CBS bought A.H. Grebe's Atlantic Broadcasting Company in New York City with the call letters WABC. WJZ radio and TV became WABC radio and TV in 1954.*

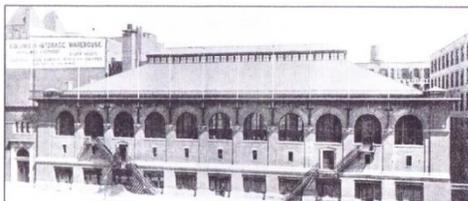
## Welcome To West 66<sup>th</sup> Street!

As it happens, West 66<sup>th</sup> Street in New York is ground zero for ABC's operations, and has been since they bought the Durland Riding Academy at 7 West 66<sup>th</sup> back in 1948. As we'll see, over the years, nearly the whole street from Central Park west over to Broadway, has at one time or another been a part of ABC's east coast operations. The photo at the bottom of this inserted page, is St. Nicholas Arena, and there will be more on this on this historic venue on the next page, along with a lot more on Durland's, The First Battery Armory, the elegant Des Artistes Hotel on West 67<sup>th</sup> Street, and more as they all come into view as future properties of ABC.

tenna for WJZ-TV was installed on the top of the Hotel Pierre, on the east side of Central Park.

ABC-TV began looking for a location for their own studios, and settled on the riding stable at 7 West 66<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan. The building had a large indoor riding auditorium, which could be turned into a TV studio, and the price was right. Ramps for the horses led up from 66<sup>th</sup> Street into the auditorium, and ramps also led down to the lower level, where the horse-stalls were located (it was years before the horse smell was completely gone from the building). Across from 7 West 66<sup>th</sup> Street, in a small three-story building, was a blacksmith shop, and often, when coming to work, I would see the blacksmith out on the sidewalk of 66<sup>th</sup> Street, shoeing a horse.

The south side of 66th Street consisted mostly of brownstones, and near the center of the block, on the south side, was an Armory. Across from the Armory and a bit further down the block on 66<sup>th</sup> Street, was St. Nick's Arena, a popular spot for boxing and wrestling.



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The St. Nicholas Skating Rink, which was built by Cornelius Vanderbilt and Jacob Astor, opened in 1896, using the new refrigeration technology. Boxing matches began at St. Nick's in 1906, and professional wrestling followed. St. Nick's was finally closed in 1962, but was not demolished till the 1980s for the expansion of ABC-TV.

Next to St. Nick's, on the northeast corner of Columbus Avenue and 66<sup>th</sup> Street was the local watering-hole, *Heally's* (Heally's wife was the voice for Betty Boop).

Across from the back of the ABC building, on 67<sup>th</sup> Street, was the posh *Des Artistes* where, a few years later, ABC turned the main floor ballroom into two TV studios, TV-11 and TV-12.

West of Broadway, across from what is now known as Lincoln Square, all the way to the Hudson River, there was a depressed area of old brownstones, most of which had been subdivided into small rooms. It was the location chosen for Leonard Bernstein's ethnic conflict, *West Side Story*, and is now the home of Lincoln Center.

Parking was not nearly the hassle it is now, and parking on 66th Street was the norm. Commuting, however, was expensive. Gas was 18 cents a gallon and the toll on the George Washington Bridge was 50 cents. This took a big chunk out of the typical engineer's \$50/week salary. On the other hand, orchestra seats for a Broadway musical ran about four dollars.

Work began on ABC-TV's broadcasting center at the riding stable. Initially it would consist of one studio, a studio control room, a Master Control

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One of ABC's first dramatic anthology programs was *Actor's Studio* that ran from 1948-50. Above are Jessica Tandy and Dick York in one of their first productions, *Portrait of Madonna*.

Room, and a telecine (film) room, along with the associated offices and maintenance facilities. The facility became operational in late 1948, and remains so to this day. When the broadcasting operation began from the new studio – which was on the ground-level of the building – a trip down to the lower levels would take you to the horse stalls, which were still being cleaned out.

The one studio served many back-to-back shows which, of course, were all live, with only a station-break between them. The sets for these consecutive shows were arranged around the periphery of the studio floor, with the cameras in the center, and after one live show finished, the cameras could swing around to the next set for the following show.

Our first big dramatic show from the new studio called for an echo-chamber. We didn't have one, but created one that same day.

On the second floor of the building was a large, tiled men's room. We ran cables out to the back of the building and up into the window of the men's room. At one end of the room we installed a speaker and at the other end a microphone. The tile and porcelain fixtures created a great reverberation, and ABC-TV had its first echo-chamber. During the daytime rehearsal, of course, we heard extraneous noises coming from our echo chamber as the room was being used for what it was originally intended. For the air show a guard was posted outside to prevent anyone from entering.

With live shows there was always the chance of something going wrong—with no opportunity to

“do it again.” Although there were many of those instances, one, in particular, sticks in my mind.

We were doing a dramatic show. An important moment in the evolution of the story required a murder to be committed with a pistol. The dress rehearsal went flawlessly, but a stagehand forgot to reload the pistol with a blank for the air show. When it came to the crucial moment when the gun was to be fired, there was only a “click” from the pistol. In a moment of brilliance, the actor flung the pistol aside, sprang at his victim - and choked him to death.

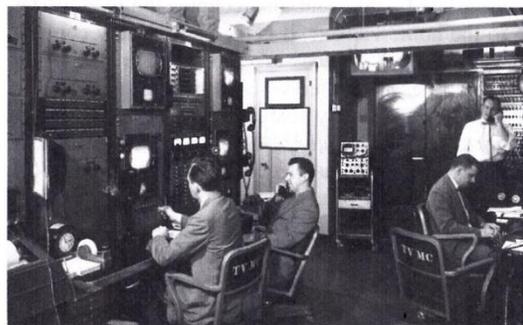
Television may have ended up as Cinderella-at-the-ball, but it began as radio's unwanted stepchild. Off-camera announcers and commentators, all of whom were loaned-out from the radio division, would often use assumed names because they didn't want their colleagues in radio to know that they were lowering themselves by working in TV.

In those early days we needed almost everything in the way of electronic equipment, but the limited budget precluded most of these purchases. We got around this by building much of our necessary equipment from scratch.

In the days after WW II there was a flood of war-surplus equipment on the market. In New York City, Cortland Street was the center of war surplus electronic equipment. We would make a trip to Cortland Street and buy the minimum amount of equipment necessary, and then build the equipment we needed onto a homemade aluminum chassis. The aluminum for a chassis came from an

unlikely source.

During the hey-day of radio many programs were recorded. These recordings were on 16-inch diameter disks that turned at 33 1/3 rpm, and were called *Electrical Transcriptions*. These records were constructed from a 16-inch disk of aluminum, coated with a recordable surface on which the transcriptions were cut. At ABC there was a whole room full of those old radio shows. By taking an *Electrical Transcription* of an old show, and dipping it in boiling water for a few seconds, the coating would peel right off, leaving a shiny new piece of aluminum, which could then be fashioned into a chassis. Of course, we could only use shows that were recorded before or after WW II since, during the war years, there was no aluminum available for the base of these platters.



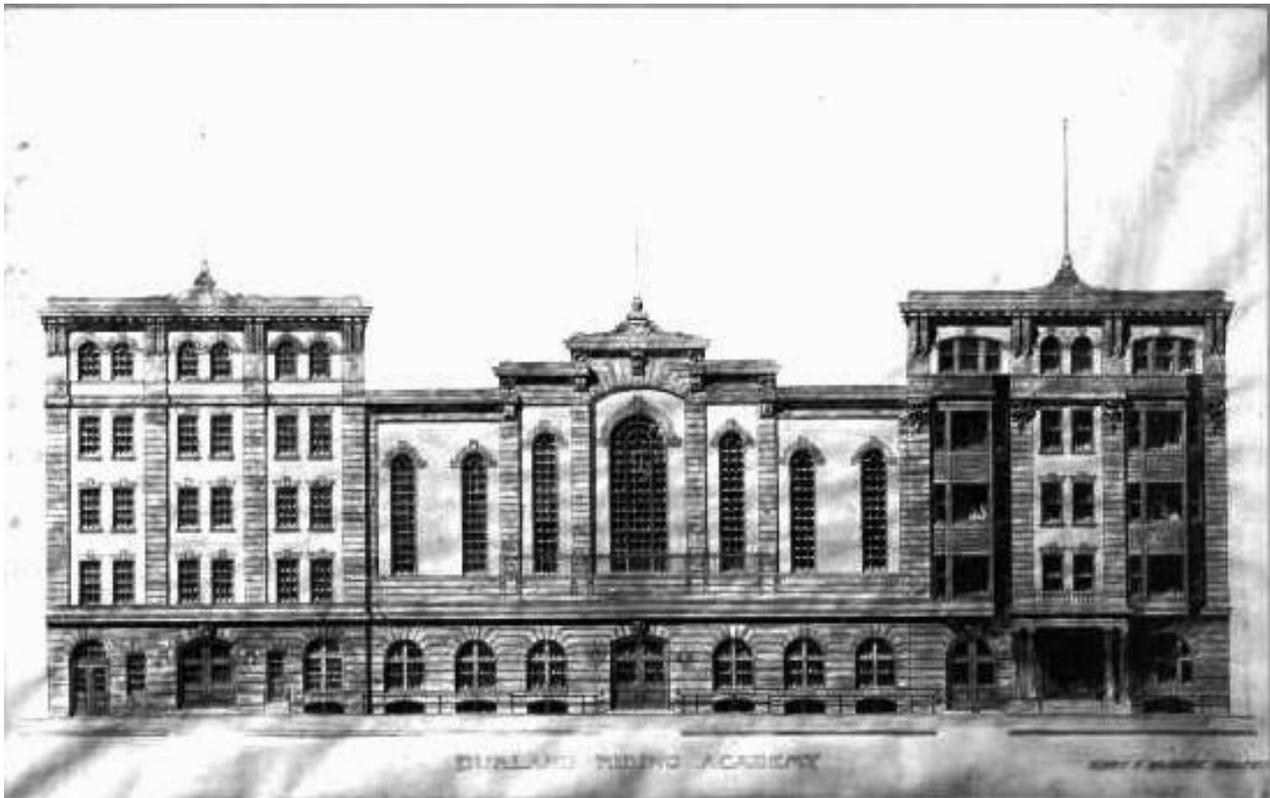
**ABC-TV's first Master Control Room, on the Mezzanine of 7 West 66th Street.**

**From left to right are: Don Launer, "Bud" Caffery, John Serrafin (seated), and Chet Mazurek. Note the mode of dress in those days.**

In the photo above, our narrator, Don Launer is seated with his back to us on the far left. There will be more from Don, but now, let's go to West 66<sup>th</sup> Street in New York.



This is 7 West 66<sup>th</sup> Street in 1903, two years after the new Durland Riding Academy building was opened. The central pavilion, slightly lower than the flanking 5 story sections, housed an enormous riding ring under a great span of roof supported on giant trusses. Three-story tall arched windows flooded the ring with sunlight on clear days. Viewing galleries could accommodate 600 spectators and a separate musicians' gallery could hold an entire 40 piece orchestra. This was necessary for Durland's popular afternoon "music rides." In 1948, the American Broadcasting Company purchased the building and converted it to television studio space. The riding ring area is now home to the TV-1 and TV-2 studios.



Above, architects drawing of the building and on the next page, an interior shot of the main arena with the sun coming in the 66<sup>th</sup> Street windows. This is the home of TV-1 and TV-2.



## A Virtual Tour of West 66<sup>th</sup> Street

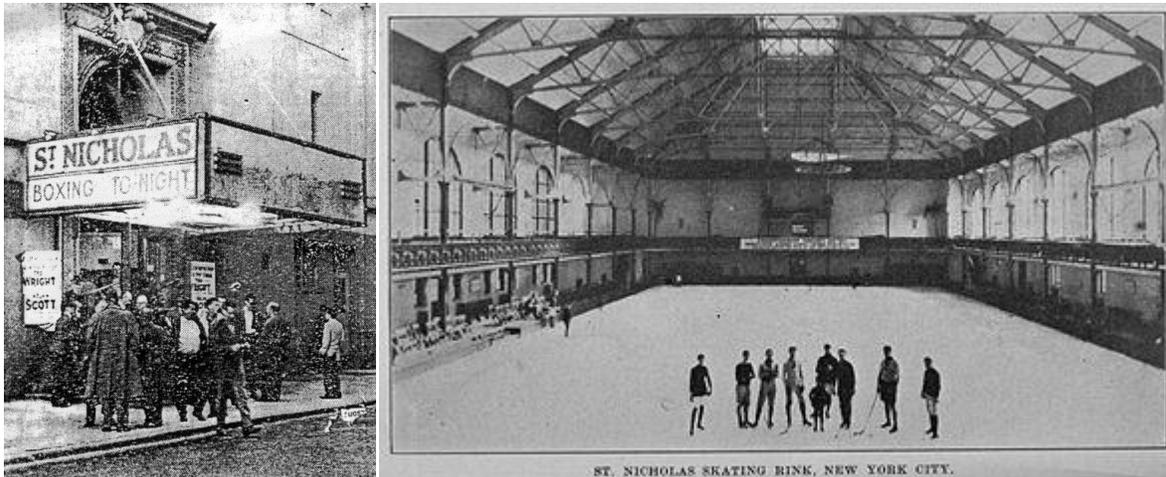
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If you click the link above, Google Street View will open with 7 West 66<sup>th</sup> Street on the right. On the far right is the eastern 5 story tower that you see on the far right in the photos above. As you click on the street to move further west (Central Park is just behind us), you will see on the right the main ABC entrance at 77 West 66<sup>th</sup>, and directly across the street is the Armory. Just past the main entrance, on the right (north) side of the street, you see the brick facade change to a tan brick... that building is where the famous St. Nicholas Arena was located, at the NW corner of 66th and Columbus Avenue. As you can see at the corner, this is now WABC's glassed in news studios. A block further up on 66<sup>th</sup> is Julliard and a block south on Broadway is The Lincoln Center. Even further down 66<sup>th</sup> Street are ABC's TV 23 and 24 at 320 West 66th Street, as well as ABC's 125 West End Avenue building, which houses its radio networks and scenery shops.

In the first few seasons of live television in 1946 and 47, when only a few shows were on the air, and only in the evening, *Boxing from St. Nicholas Arena* was a weekly, two hour event on NBC

and again later in '54 and '55 from Dumont. Many of the *Gillette Cavalcade of Sports* boxing matches were held at St. Nick's. It was built in 1896 as an ice-skating rink by two New York millionaires...Mr. Astor and Mr. Vanderbilt. Here's look at a match from the 50s.

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



The Armory at 56 West 66<sup>th</sup> Street was built in 1903 and used by the Army until 1976 when ABC leased it and converted it to TV 17...the home of *One Life To Live*. Until then, *OLTL* had been a half hour show, but with the move to TV17, it went to 45 minutes with *General Hospital* leading in, and also at 45 minutes. The formed a 90 minute block that won ratings for years. In 2009, *OLTL* moved to TV 23 and ESPN took over this NY landmark building for office space.



These are ABC's logos in the order they were used over the years.



## ABC's New York Television Studios...

Once ABC bought the 7 West 66<sup>th</sup> Street (the old Durland Stables) building, master control and TV-1 was operational by late 1948. Early on, ABC in New York used a combined letter and number system to differentiate local use and network studios. All ABC television studio numbers are prefaced by the letters TV, with network studios given a number, as in TV-1, etc. ABC's local use television studio numbers started with a letter, like TV-A, B, C and D. Radio studios used numbers and letters like Studio 1A, 5C, etc.

Over the years, ABC has taken over most of West 66<sup>th</sup> Street from Central Park to Columbus Avenue, and mostly on the north side of the street and extending to West 67<sup>th</sup> to cover the whole block. Many studios have come and gone, but we'll do the best we can to cover them.

**Network Television Studios:** (The underlined/bold are still in use) TABLE OF CONTENTS is a 1964 list of studios from a rare ABC engineering book, that we'll see more of soon.

**TV-1 & TV-2, TV-3, TV-7, TV-9, TV-17, TV-23 & TV 24...** West 66<sup>th</sup> Street

TV-11 & TV-12...Hotel Des Artistes, 1 West 67<sup>th</sup> Street  
**TV-13 & TV-14...** 7 Lincoln Square  
 TV-15... The Elysee Theater, 202 West 58th Street  
 TV-16... 433 West 53rd Street  
 TV 17...Armory building across from 77 West 66<sup>th</sup> Street  
 TV-18 & TV-19...101 West 67th Street  
**TV-23 & TV-24...** 320 West 66<sup>th</sup> Street  
 Ritz Theater... 219 West 48th Street  
 Little Theater... 234 West 44th Street  
 Colonial Theater... 1887 Broadway  
**Times Square Studio...** 1500 Broadway

### Early Local Use Studios

TV-A, TV-B, TV-C, TV-D were the original local use studios. **TV-A eventually became TV-7** (studio and control room) and was the home of the local newscasts and, from time to time was a network news studio.

TV-C was in the basement under TV-2 and is where ABC's first network newscasts began with John Daly.

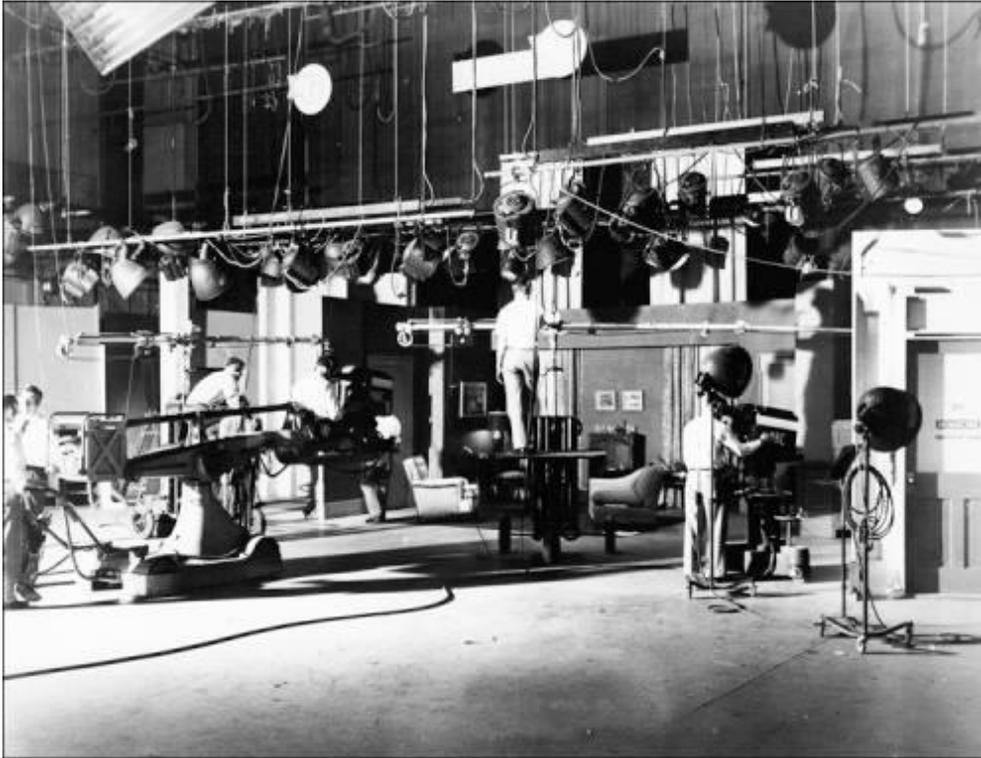
TV-B was a control room only, and is now office space. TV-C and TV- D were local film and station break studios.

**REMINDER: At the end of this report is a 7 page list of ABC's New York shows and their originating studios.**

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 TV-11 (NETWORK STUDIO)  
 RITZ THEATRE (NETWORK STUDIO)  
 ELYSEE THEATRE (NETWORK STUDIO)  
 TV-A (LOCAL STUDIO)  
 TV-C (LOCAL STUDIO)  
 TV-D (LOCAL FILM AND STATION BREAK STUDIO)  
 NET PROJECTION  
 LOCAL PROJECTION  
 TV MASTER CONTROL  
 VIDEO TAPE CENTER  
 RADIO MASTER CONTROL  
 STUDIO 1-A (RADIO)  
 STUDIO 2-A (FM STEREO)  
 STUDIO 3-B (RADIO)  
 STUDIO 4-A, 6-B (RADIO)  
 STUDIO 5-B, 5-C (RADIO)  
 STUDIO WABC (RADIO)

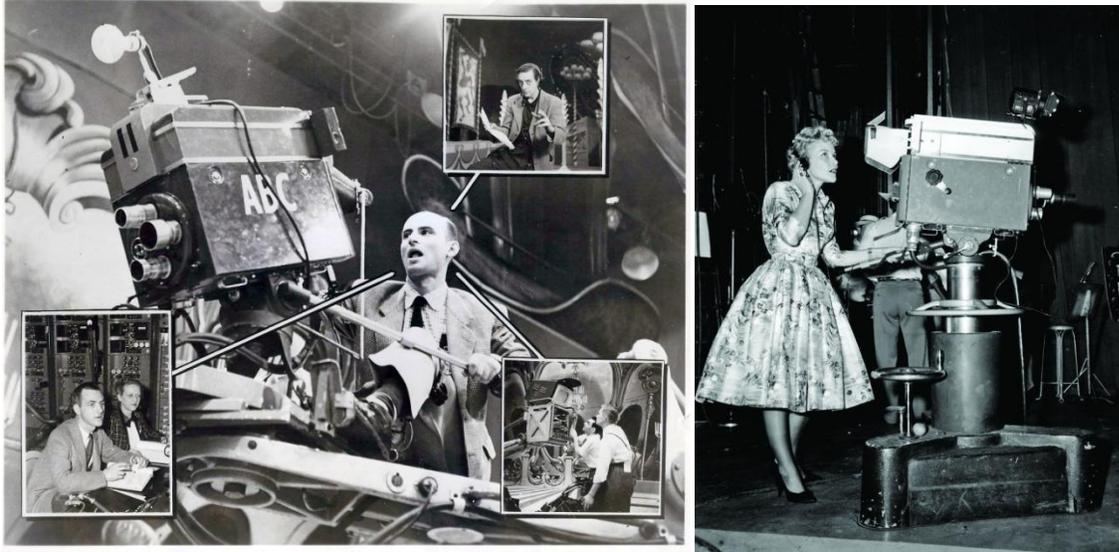
## ABC's First Network Studios...TV-1 & TV 2



Above is perhaps the earliest photo taken in these huge workhorse studios, and shows the production of *The Look Photo Crime Show* in September of 1949. This was a half hour ABC radio show that ran 5 days a week, and once a week on television, sponsored by Look Magazine. Below is a set for a production of *The Paul Whiteman Revue*. Both are in TV-1.



In the images above and below, the sets in TV-1 are massive and ornate and show just how well a television studio fits into a horse riding ring, but remember TV-1 is just half of the space. On the right is Patti Page in TV-1, which was where her 1958 show for Oldsmobile was done.



Below are shots from the 1952 Presidential election coverage from TV-1. TV-1 and TV-2 are still the main production studios in New York. The bald cameraman is Mike Freidman who become a director on *Wide World Of Sports*. He built and used ABC's first handheld camera, and that whole first hand history is in Part 2.





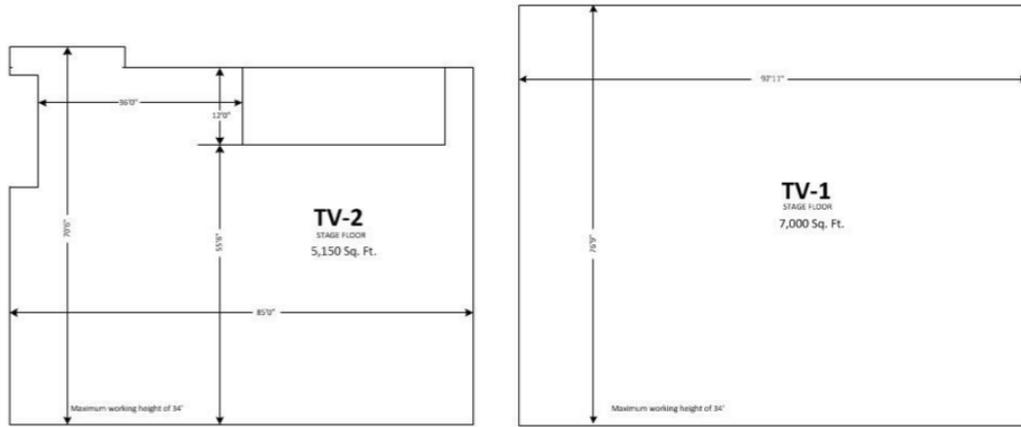
A cool TV trick from back in the day. This is again, the 1952 election coverage and on the left you see the camera shooting the totals board in TV-1. On the right is one of the many men behind the board changing the vote total numbers as they come in. Notice the clever continuous loop, numbered rings.



**From TV-1, *Hollywood Screen Test* ...this was the first network series broadcast on ABC-TV.** It was hosted by Neil Hamilton (who you may remember as Commissioner Gordon on *Batman*), and sought to give exposure to many up-and-coming actors who were looking for their big break. The relatively unknown actors would be picked to guest star on the show and then

they would have half-hour scenes of dialogue with established stage and screen actors. Among the many stars discovered on *Hollywood Screen Test* were Grace Kelly, Jack Klugman, Pernell Roberts, and Jack Lemmon.

## TV-1/TV-2 STAGE FLOORS



The common wall between TV 2 and TV 1 can be raised to allow the space to be used as one big studio, as it was when *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire* debuted here August 16, 1999.



Above is the 1968 election set with both GE and Norelco color cameras, and below is the 1992, Bush – Clinton election set. Both are in TV-1.



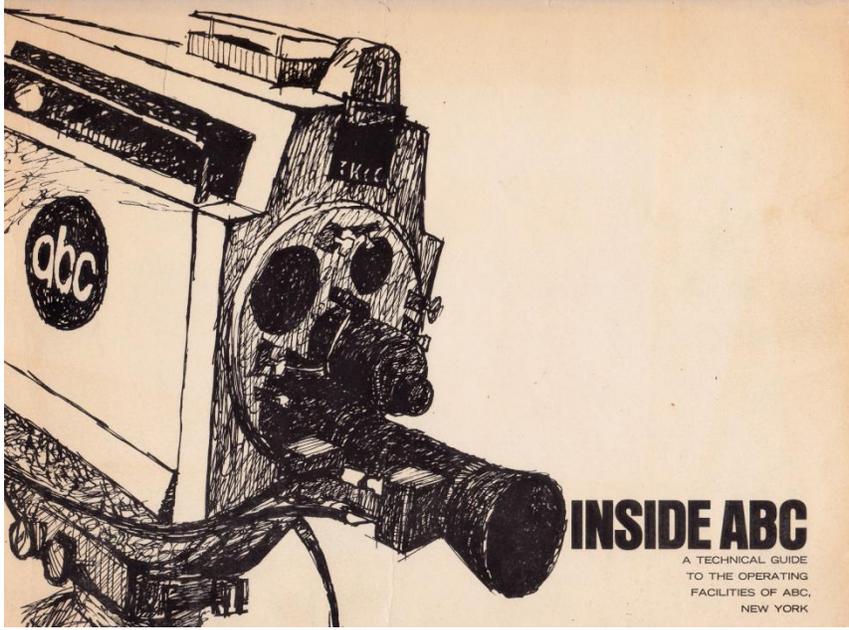
**At the link is a very rare look inside TV-1.** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UvheqZQadz4>

From 1952, this is the anthology series *Tales Of Tomorrow* that, in a science fiction twist, has an ABC broadcast interrupted by a scene from an apartment. It is odd, but it was 1952...as a bonus, we see Rod Steiger in one of his first ever roles. In the second half, the scenes in the back corner of the studio where calls to the police are made, all happen near the door that leads into TV-2.

### **Another Exclusive Rarity!**

In 1963, ABC did a little booklet called *Inside ABC* to distribute to clients and producers to introduce them to ABC's engineering capabilities and facilities in New York. From one of the only surviving copies, we will get to see the control rooms of the early years, thanks to 40 year ABC veteran audio engineer Dick Roes. Here are the pages for TV-1 and TV-2. There will be more of these as we go.

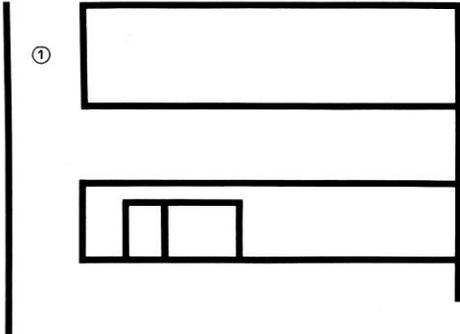
By the way, as luck would have it, we have found a Los Angeles version of *Inside ABC* too and we'll share that with you in Part 2, which is the West Coast history of the ABC Studios.



# INSIDE ABC

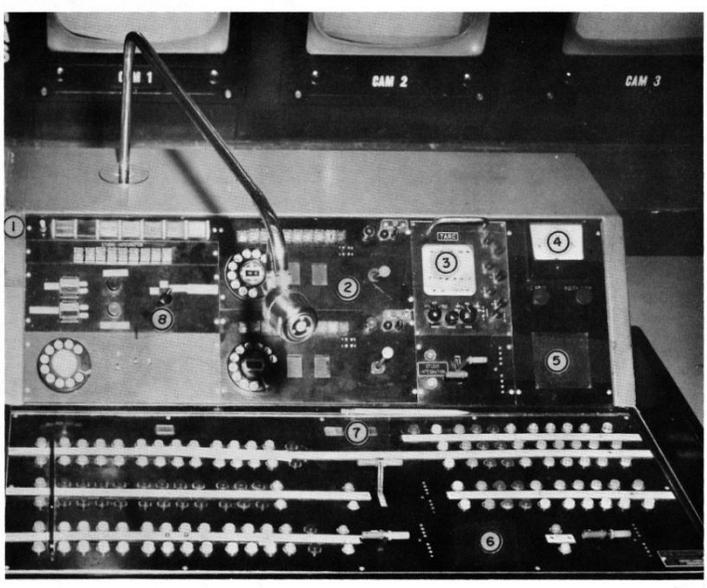
A TECHNICAL GUIDE  
TO THE OPERATING  
FACILITIES OF ABC,  
NEW YORK

## TV-1 PRODUCTION CONTROL

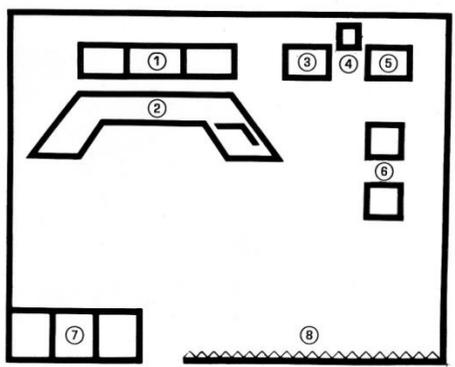


- 1. STUDIO LAYOUT (PLAN VIEW)
- 2. PROGRAM SPEAKERS
- 3. PREVIEW MONITORS
- 4. LINE MONITOR
- 5. STUDIO SWITCHER
- 6. CAMERA CONTROLS

1. SELECTOR PUSH BUTTONS - INTERCOM, SA, CUE
2. TWO EFFECTS AMPLIFIER CONTROL PANELS
3. LINE WAVEFORM MONITOR
4. LINE V.U. INDICATOR
5. INTERCOM SPEAKER FROM CAMERAS
6. VIDEO SWITCHER
7. SYNC. SELECTOR SWITCH
8. STUDIO BREAK-IN PANEL



THIS SWITCHER IS UNIQUE IN ITS VERSATILITY. IT IS CAPABLE OF HANDLING THE MOST COMPLICATED PROGRAM FUNCTIONS THROUGH ITS: TWO SPECIAL EFFECTS AMPLIFIERS; 14 NON COMPOSITE INPUTS AND 10 COMPOSITE INPUTS. GENLOCKING FACILITIES ARE ALSO AVAILABLE.



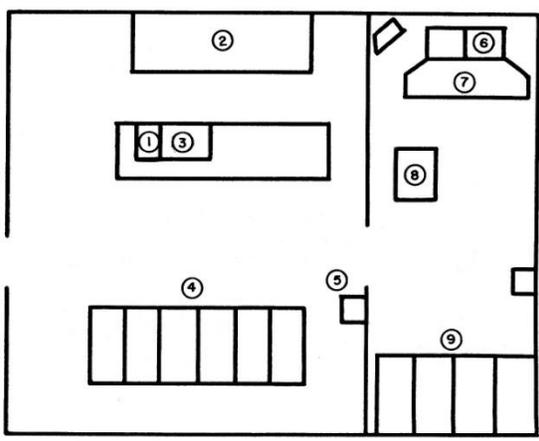
# TV-1

## AUDIO CONTROL

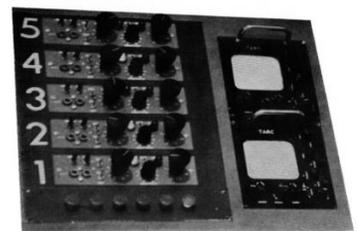
1. AUDIO SPEAKERS
2. AUDIO CONSOLE
3. VIDEO MONITOR
4. A.C. POWER PANEL
5. AMPEX AUDIO TAPE MACHINES
6. AUDIO TURNTABLES
7. AUDIO AMPS AND POWER SUPPLIES
8. ACCORDION TYPE FOLDING DOOR



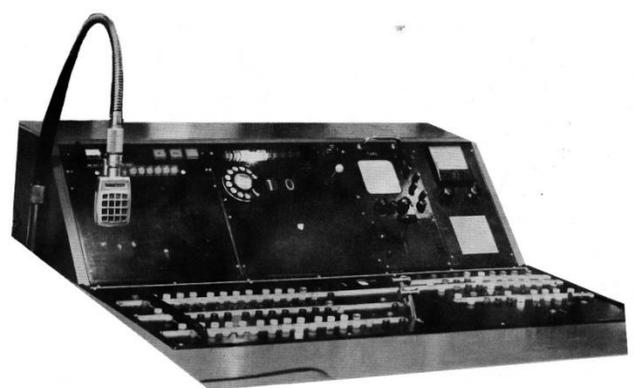
# TV-2 CONTROL



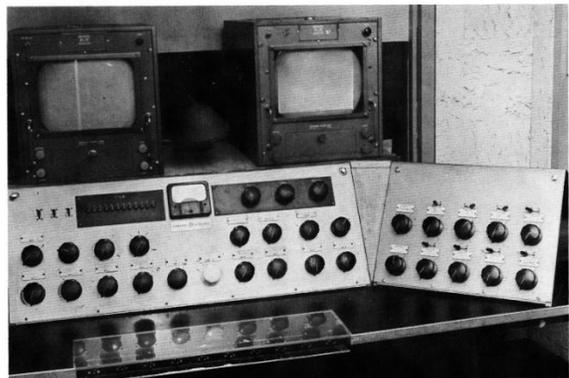
- 1. VIDEO CONTROLS
- 2. MONITORS
- 3. VIDEO SWITCHER
- 4. POWER SUPPLIES  
Distribution Amps  
Video Jackfield
- 5. A.C. POWER PANEL
- 6. VIDEO MONITORS AND AUDIO SPEAKER
- 7. AUDIO CONSOLE
- 8. RCA AUDIO TAPE MACHINES
- 9. AUDIO RACKS, PWR SUPPLIES, PREAMPS,  
AUDIO PATCH FIELD, ETC.



TK 60 - CAMERA CONTROL POSITION



FACILITIES INCLUDE A DIAL SELECTED SPECIAL EFFECTS AMPLIFIER. SWITCHER WILL ACCOMMODATE 14 NON COMPOSITE INPUTS AS WELL AS 10 COMPOSITE INPUTS.



THE AUDIO CONSOLE IN TV-2 HAS BEEN MODIFIED WITH ADDITIONAL FADERS MAINLY TO HANDLE ADDITIONAL MIKES USED FOR A LIVE ORCHESTRA.

THE PUSH TYPE SELECTOR BUTTONS ARE USED TO HANDLE ALL FILM INPUTS AND NEMO FEEDS, THE OUTPUT IS FADER CONTROLLED.

ON THE MAIN PANEL, THERE ARE TWO SUBMASTER FADERS. EACH WILL HANDLE 8 MIKES INPUTS, BUT ONLY FOUR AT ONE TIME. THE MASTER FADER IS LOCATED IN THE UPPER RIGHT CORNER.



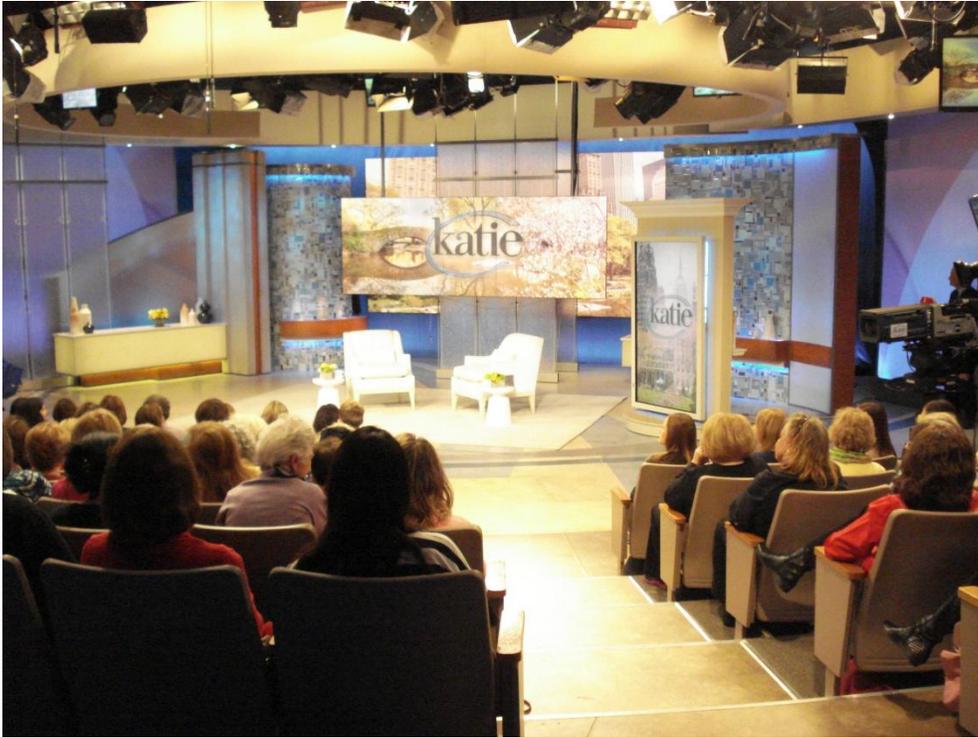
Above is one of our contributors, ABC audio engineer Dick Roes at the controls in TV-1 around 1965, and with Roone Arledge. Dick was at the controls at the Berlin Olympics when the news of the massace broke. He was with ABC from 1964-1999.

## WEST 66TH STREET CAMPUS | TV -1 SOUND STAGE



The home of the *Katie* show with Katie Couric starting in 2012, and the former home of the popular game show *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*, and the News magazine shows *Prime Time Live* and *20/20*, the TV-1 Sound Stage specs out with:

- 6,400 square feet of production space
- Moveable grid
- Maximum working height of 34 feet
- Full cyc track at 28.5 feet
- Additional 5,150 square feet of space available by raising an adjoining wall
- Approximately 1,000 square feet of technical/utility space with power, racks and connectivity to create a carry-in control room or support space as needed



The green room for *Katie* is behind this set...at one time that was the studio space for TV-7. The TV-7 control room is still in use and is now used for TV-1's productions.



These are photos of *Katie* that I took in 2014, just after the audience had been seated.



Every ABC New York veteran will tell you that until sometime in the 1980s, you could occasionally still smell the stable that this building started out as.

## WEST 66TH STREET CAMPUS | TV - 2 SOUND STAGE



The current home of ABC's *The Chew* and the former home of *Good Morning America* and *The Tony Danza Show*, the TV-2 Sound Stage specs out with:

- 5,150 square feet of production space
- Moveable grid
- Maximum working height of 34 feet
- Full cyc track at 28.5 feet that wraps around three walls
- Additional 6,400 square feet of production space available by raising an adjoining wall
- Paired with our state-of-the-art High-Definition Control Room

In the picture above, the dividing wall between TV-1 and 2 is just behind the set on the far end of the studio. Thanks to my ABC tour guide Bob Franklin for the amazing tour and taking this photo of me in TV-2 in the area where the first GMA home-base set was. When *Good Morning America* debuted in 1976, TV-2 was the show's home for several years. Here is a full episode from August of 1978. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WqP4jDpaGRA>



## TV-2...1980 Presidential Election Coverage



This was the election that put Ronald Reagan in office. As you can see on the totals board, it was a three way race between President Carter going for a second term, Reagan, and Independent candidate John Anderson. Thanks to ABC alum John Schmidt for the photos. In the photo below we see on the set Barbara Walters, Frank Reynolds and Ted Koppel in the foreground and Max Robinson a little further back.





On the top photo, we see the huge door between TV-1 and TV-2 in the down position, and below, we see it half way up. Twin electric motors lift and lower the multi ton door. At the link is a WABC news report from this night on the network's preparations.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=smHM4InI62I>





Here's the TV-2 Control Room (top) and the graphics desk behind the switching console and the audio room. At the bottom, a look at the back of the 1980 totals board...a far cry from the manually changed numbered tape loops we saw in the 1952 election.



**TV-3, Home of *ABC World News Tonight*...**



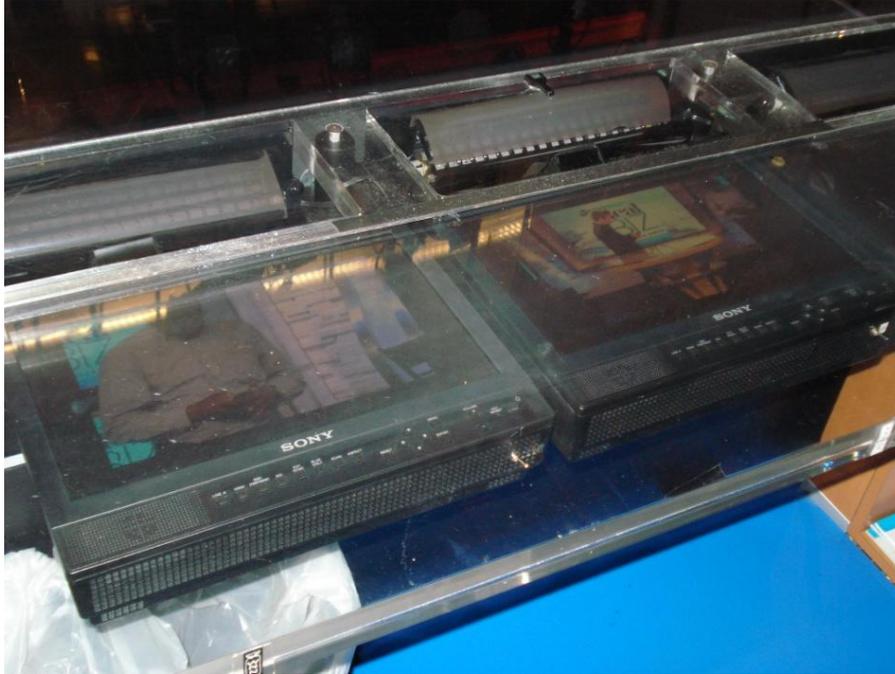
Above is the great Peter Jennings. He was the first to use this two story studio built for news around 1988 when the historic St. Nicholas Arena was torn down to make room. Below is ABC anchors Diane Sawyer and David Muir in the same studio, but with different sets.



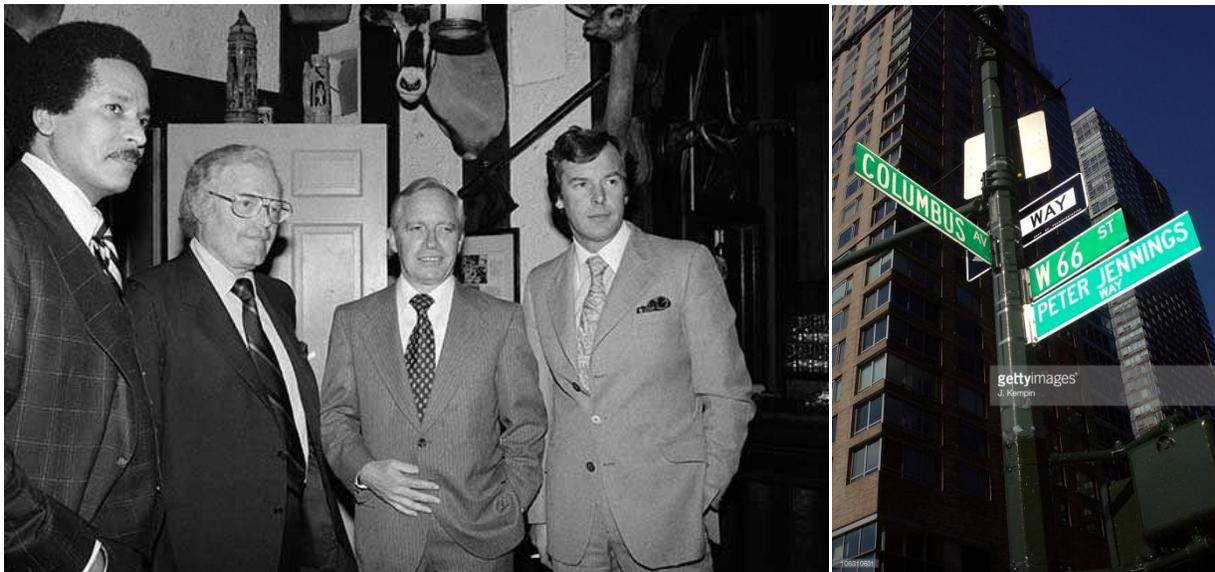
At the link is a nice 5 minute tour of the news department and a look at TV-3 hosted by David Muir. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zEOf2F\\_PNGE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zEOf2F_PNGE)

Below is yours truly at this famous news desk. I am sitting at the short neck of the L shaped desk, with the long neck L on by right. In the photo below, you get a look at what the anchor sees while sitting at (the long L of) the news desk. These days, there is a small standup set on the far wall that can be used for any number of tasks and on this day; they did a short video recording of a business piece for another show.





Here is the desk monitors that Sawyer and Muir use during their broadcast. Below is Roone Arledge (in glasses) with his new three man news crew. After the Harry Reasoner/Barbara Walters anchor team, he reformatted ABC's news and launched *World News Tonight* on July 10, 1978, with Frank Reynolds (C) reporting from Washington, Max Robinson (L) from the Chicago bureau and Peter Jennings (R) reported international headlines from the London bureau. The show was produced from TV-7's control room, where Reasoner and Walters had just worked. Notice that West 66<sup>th</sup> Street is also known as Peter Jennings Way.



## TV-7...Formerly TV-A



After a year in TV-11, Walters was not happy that their studio was not in the main ABC building, but on the street behind it in the Des Artistes Hotel, so, to keep her happy, local news was moved out, and the network news was moved into TV-7 in 1977. At the link is a 1973 look inside how *WABC's Eyewitness News* show was put together and at 21:00 we go inside TV-7 as the show goes to air. Just to remind us how much things have changed, this opens with a motorcycle courier rushing film to the studios. <https://youtu.be/OfnmZfynVW4>

### WEST 66TH STREET | TV - 7 CONTROL ROOM



TV-7 Control Room is a roomy, fully equipped state-of-the-art High Definition control room with connectivity to the TV-1 Sound Stage.

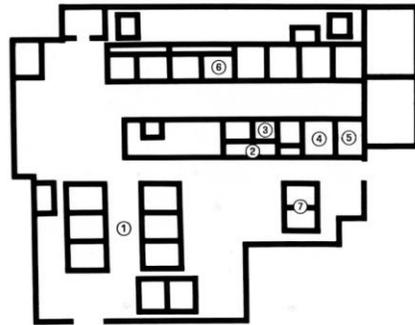
The main control room has three levels of seating able to accommodate up to fourteen people.

The main technical elements are an array of high-tech excellence:

- Sony 7000G Video Switcher
- Studer Audio Board
- Monitor Wall array of large flat panel monitors with a Multiviewer
- For-A DCC-70HS Color Corrector
- RTS Adam Intercom
- The Audio Room includes separate spaces for mixing, music playout and communications coordination.
- The Video Room includes space for a video operator, lighting director and robotic camera controller, as well as a transmission QC area.
- An announce booth adds additional flexibility to this multi-dimensional space.

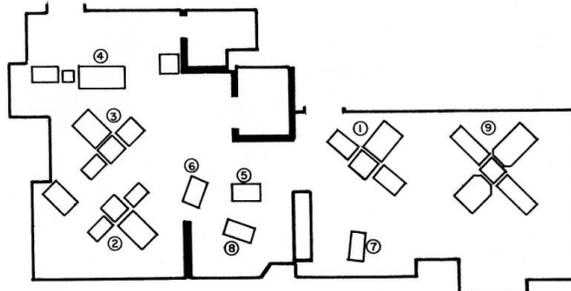
# TV-9

Originally, TV-9 was the main network control studio. From here, all station breaks, films, commercials, announcements and promos were inserted into the network's programs and sent on to Master Control. Network projection/telecine was next door and controlled from here as well.



## TV-9 CONTROL

1. EQUIPMENT RACKS
2. TS-11 SWITCHERS
3. REMOTE-CONTROL PANEL FOR FILM CHAINS
4. AUDIO CONSOLE
5. TAPE CARTRIDGE MACHINES
6. VIDEO CONTROL
7. AUDIO PATCH PANEL



## NETWORK PROJECTION

1. Chain 1 - 1-16 mm, 1-35 mm, 1 slide proj.
2. Chain 2 - 2-16 mm, 1 slide proj.
3. Chain 3 - 1-16 mm, 1-35 mm, 1 slide proj.
4. Chain 4 - Telop
5. Chain 5 - 1-35 mm
6. Chain 6 - 1-35 mm
7. Chain 7 - 1-35 mm
8. Chain 8 - 1-35 mm
9. Chain 9 - 1-16 mm, 1-35 mm, 1 slide proj. - Color.



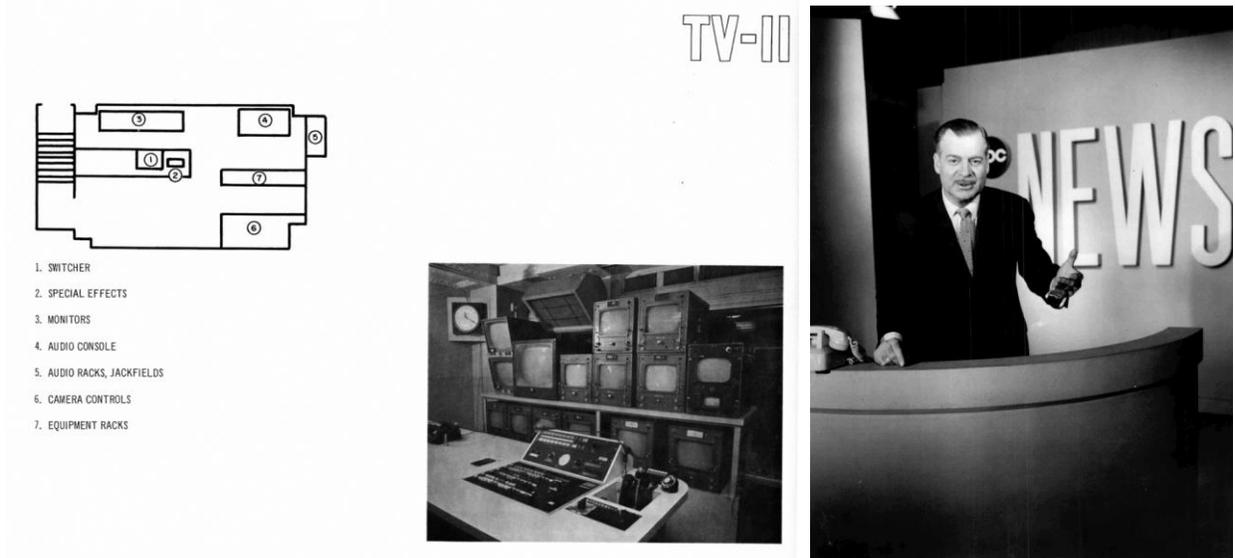
## TV-11...The Des Artistes Hotel News Studio, 1 West 67<sup>th</sup> Street



From the earliest days of ABC's network news shows, the place they were usually done was in TV-11 on the ground floor of the Hotel Des Artistes, but early on John Daly did some news from TV-C, under TV-2. There was also a TV-12, next to TV-11 (on the other side of the Des Artistes lobby elevator bank), but that was only a production and news office, and not a studio at all.

You can bet there are a lot of secrets buried in this old news studio. This is where Harry Reasoner and Barbara Walters became network television’s first male and female co-anchors. Harry didn’t like it a little bit and didn’t much care who knew it. **From 1953 until around 1978, almost all of the ABC network news shows originated from here.** At the link is a very interesting 1961 ABC News promo. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22ZzzeCaUwY>

This studio was located on the street behind the main ABC campus at 1 West 67<sup>th</sup> Street in the beautiful Des Artiste Hotel and apartments, where Norman Rockwell lived. Below left is the technical setup for the control room. ABC’s first color news broadcasts would come from TV-11 using GE PE350 cameras.



Here are some of the ABC anchors that did their shows from TV-11. Above is Ron Cochran, below left ABC’s John Daly, Bill Shadel (who took over for Daly) and Bill Lawrence.



**REMINDER:** At the end of this report is a 7 page list of ABC’s New York shows and their originating studios.

## TV-14...7 Lincoln Square



TV -14 is now the home of *Live With Kelly & Michael*. The studio is at West 67<sup>th</sup> Street and Columbus Avenue.

From 1970 until 1983, WABC had run *A.M. New York*, *The Stanley Siegel Show*, and *Good Morning New York*, usually from TV-7. In April of '83, Regis Philbin took over as host of *The Morning Show* from TV-14, which was adjacent to a small studio called TV-13.

After a few different co-hosts, Regis was paired with Kathy Lee Gifford in 1985 and the show did very well. By 1988, WABC's *The Morning Show* was ready to become a nationally syndicated AM talk show called *Live With Regis & Kathie Lee*. Just before the new venture, TV-13 and TV-14 were combined into what we now know as TV-14.

At the link below is the last Regis and Kathie Lee show and you can see TV-14's size which is around 5,000 square feet. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QKkBBedDnnM>

Below are two photos I took in the old TV-14 back in 1987 when the studio was much smaller. The guest that day (left) was Elke Sommer and on the right is my friend Manny Rodreguiz in front of the kitchen set, which was to the right of home base.



Ture story ~ I had heard Regis was a very nice guy and was well liked by almost everyone he worked with, both in front of and behind the cameras. As I was waiting for the show to start that day I was there as Manny's guest, we had stepped outside the building for a smoke and all of a sudden, here came Regis in the front door. Although everyone knew him, the security people needed to see every ABC employee's ID, and without missing a beat, Regis stopped, reached in his back pocket, pulled out his wallet and showed it with a smile on his face.



## TV-15...The Elysee Theater, 202 West 58th Street



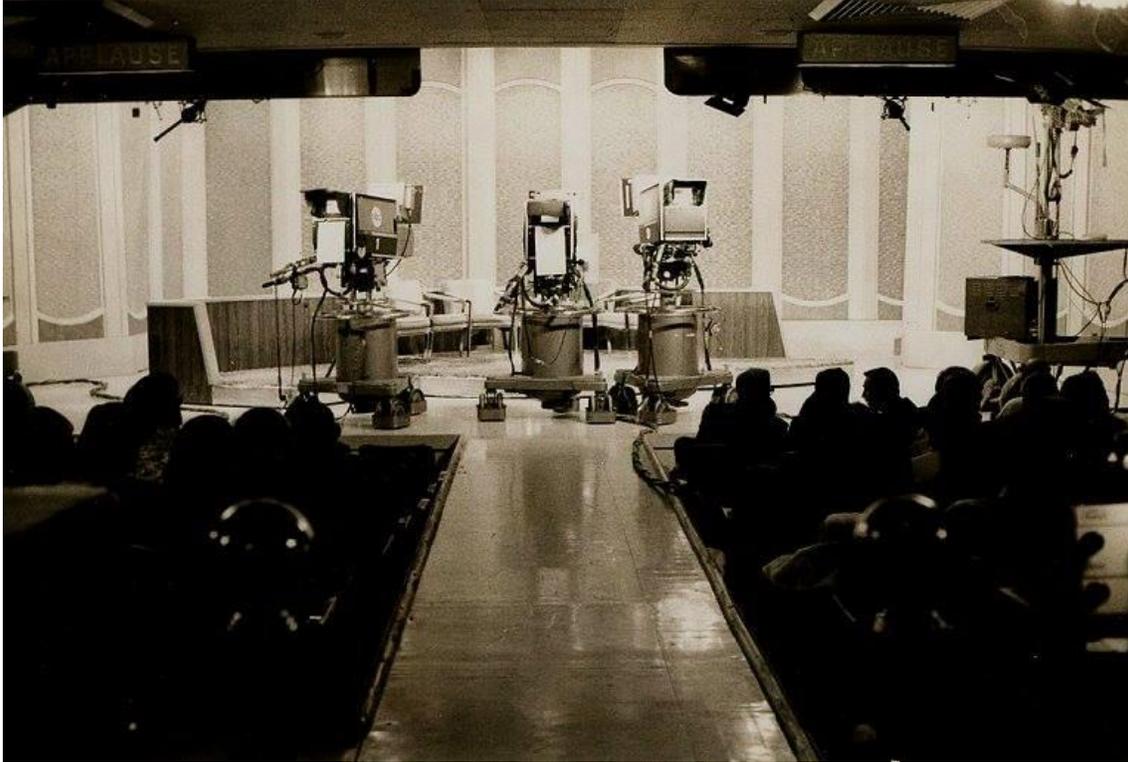
This was the home of *The Dick Cavett Show*. Some other well known shows that come from here were *\$10,000 Pyramid*, *The David Frost Specials*, *Camouflage*, *Masquerade Party* and many more. Above is Dick with the Apollo 15 astronauts and, below, with Woody Allen.



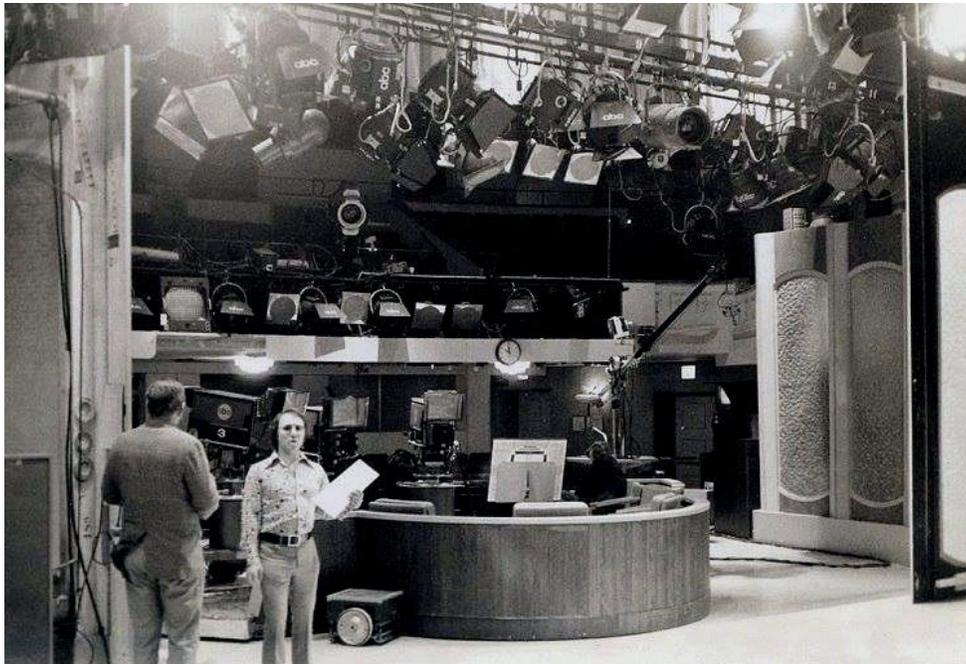


In 1949, ABC leased Cort's 58<sup>th</sup> Street Theater (this space) for radio shows, but left a few years later, only to return around 1952 for television. One of the first television shows to come from here was *Chance Of A Lifetime* with host Dennis James. Here is a full episode from 1953 (which is misidentified as 1955, but by then the show was on Dumont with a different host). [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s\\_H7AOlwEus](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s_H7AOlwEus) This and the TV-11 news studio were the only ABC facilities in NYC that used the GE PE 350 color cameras. Everywhere else, Norelcos were in use. In the mid '80s, ABC switched to the Ikegami HK 312 color cameras.





When the *\$10,000 Pyramid* was taping here, this camera ramp was used for a Chapman Electra crane. It was usually at NBC in Studio 8H but Chapman would take it apart and bring it here to the Elysee to use for a couple of days, and then take it back to 8H. Howie Zeidman was the crane cameraman. The same crane is still in use at NBC on *Saturday Night Live*. Below is the Cavett set from the back with the control room on the back wall, under the balcony.

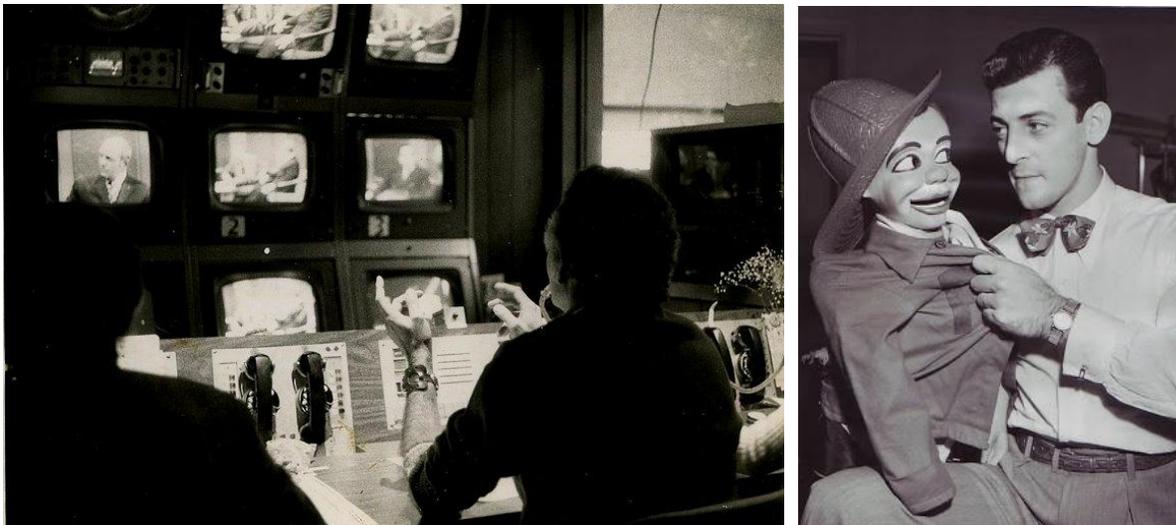




As mentioned, The Elysee was also home to the early *Pyramid* shows...at the link is a 1979 look at the show being taped at TV-15 with the GE PE 350 color cameras in use.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qx\\_QGsJcmTE&index=2&list=PL4B5A6E9936E7D568](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qx_QGsJcmTE&index=2&list=PL4B5A6E9936E7D568)

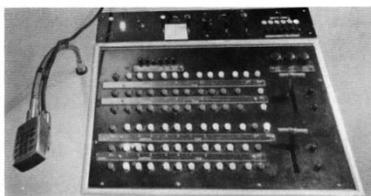
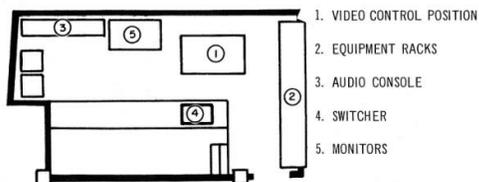
Below is a shot of the control room during Cavett, and some other Elysee Alumni, Winchell & Mahoney.



At this link, ventriloquist Paul Winchell ends this show and season, and leaves the Elysee Theater through the audience and out the door to the sidewalk of 58<sup>th</sup> Street.

<https://youtu.be/EykdOQPblbw?t=8m31s>

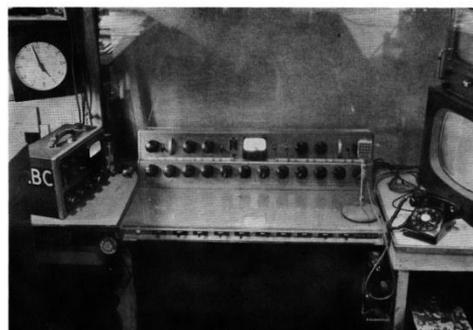
# ELYSEE THEATRE



THIS STUDIO IS COMPLETE WITH EFFECTS EQUIPMENT AND CAN BE GENLOCKED FOR TAPE AND FILM FEEDS. THE SWITCHER IS CAPABLE OF HANDLING 10 INPUTS.



VIDEO CONTROL POSITION AND STUDIO MONITORS



AUDIO CONSOLE

## TV 16...433 West 53rd Street



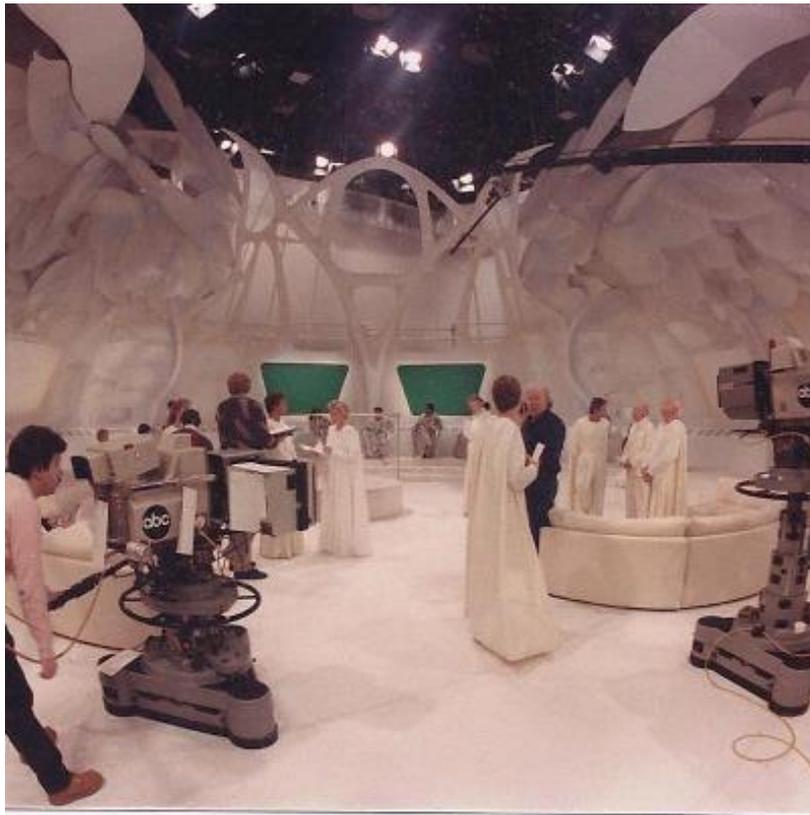
Thanks to Howie Zediman for the only outside TV-16 photo we know of. This was the home of ABC's cult hit, *Dark Shadows*, and below is one of the show's stars Joan Bennett on the set in TV-16. Later this would become home to *Ryan's Hope*. The building had 5,000 square feet of studio space and 10,000 for operations and support. Before ABC took over the site around 1965, it had been a lumber and hardware wholesale warehouse.

When ABC left, All Mobile Video bought the property, but it is now scheduled for demolition soon to make room for an apartment building.

At the link is the first ever episode of *Dark Shadows*, complete with an interesting slate.  
<https://youtu.be/iI7Jo4XAscY>



## TV-17...The Armory Building, 56 West 66<sup>th</sup> Street



This is the *One Life To Live* set with our friend Howie Zeidman (l) on camera in TV-17, shooting the famous “heaven” scene from the 1985 season. In its amazing 44 year run (1968-2012) *OLTL* spent 31 years in TV-17 that had around 10,000 square feet of production space.

The show started in TV-1, and after a year moved to TV-18 where it stayed until the 1978 move to TV-17, which was converted just for this show. In 2010, when *OLTL* moved to TV-23, ESPN took over the building for offices. Below right is the exterior of the old Armory. The flag is at the main entrance to ABC at 77 West 66<sup>th</sup> Street.



## TV-18 & 19...101 West 67th Street



Just above, on the TV-17 page, in the *One Life To Live* notes I mentioned the it had come from here in the 1970s and we see the show's name on the marquee in the black and white photo. By the time the color photo was taken, *All My Children* was being taped here at what was originally **WOR's 9 Television Square**.

WOR TV built 9 Television Square in 1949, but due to corporate mergers, they announced on January 18, 1954 that WOR was moving its television operations to the new Empire State Building studios, and that NBC was leasing the 67th Street facility for three years. The building originally had four studios A (largest), B (next largest), C and D (both smaller) but by 1970, the four had been combined into two.

NBC took over and used the building for a ground breaking program called *The Knickerbocker Beer Show* with Steve Allen as the host. A new director who would become a legend, Dwight Hemion, was at the helm in Studio A. A few weeks after the debut, the show's name was changed to *The Steve Allen Show* and this is of course the forerunner to the *Tonight* show, which NBC did from The Hudson Theater. Soon after, NBC's *Home* show with Arlene Francis took over the building and ran from there from '54 until '57 when it was canceled.

NBC left the property in 1961 and shortly after, this became the home of The Video Tape Center. VTC had opened in 1958 at the Century Theater and this was their home from '61-'70. In 1970, the property was bought by ABC and became Studio TV-18 and 19. ABC stayed here till 1990 producing shows like *One Life To Live* and *All My Children*. The building was demolished in 1995 and is now the site of the fifty story Millennium Tower apartment building. I think there is a sports bar on this corner now and I know someone that would love to be there.

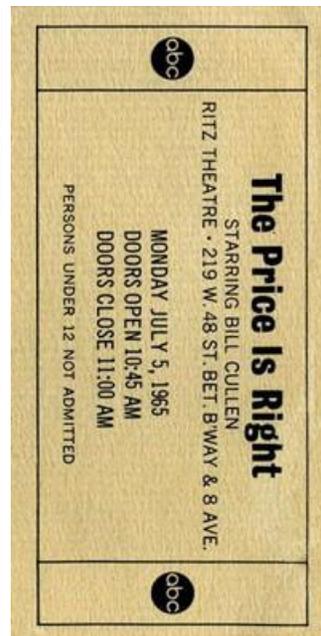


## The Ritz Theater...219 West 48<sup>th</sup> Street

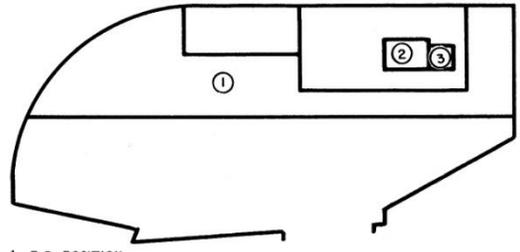


Built in 1921, The Ritz is now the Walter Kerr Theater. From 1943 until 1971 the theater was home to many ABC radio and finally television shows. The last TV show here was *The Price Is Right*, which was at the Ritz from 1963 till 1965. TPIR was at The Colonial I until the show moved to ABC from NBC.

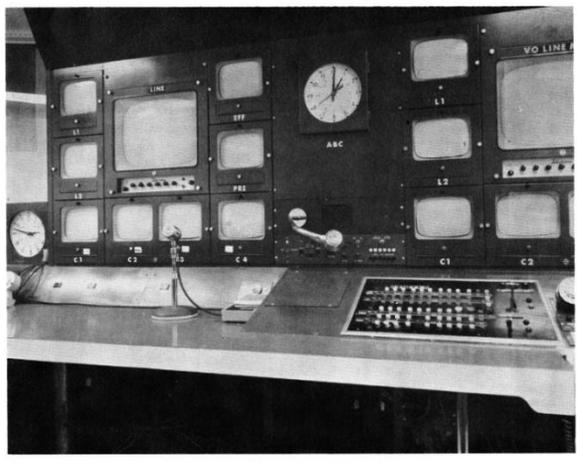
Below is Bill Cullen's announcer Johnny Gilbert warming up the audience at the Ritz with an RCA TK60 in the balcony. Many times in small converted theaters, the orchestra level was used up by control rooms and extra stage ramps for the cameras...the only place left for the audience was the balcony.



# RITZ THEATRE

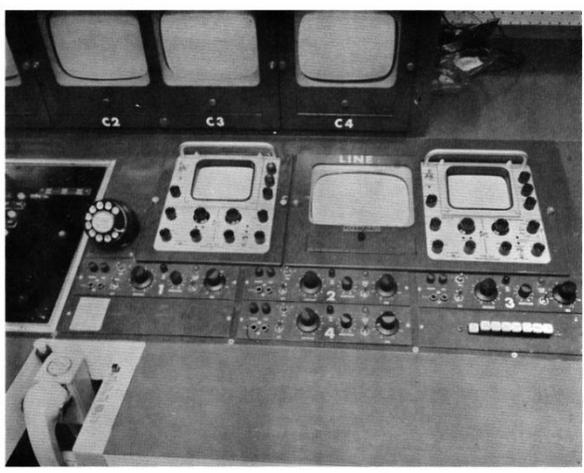
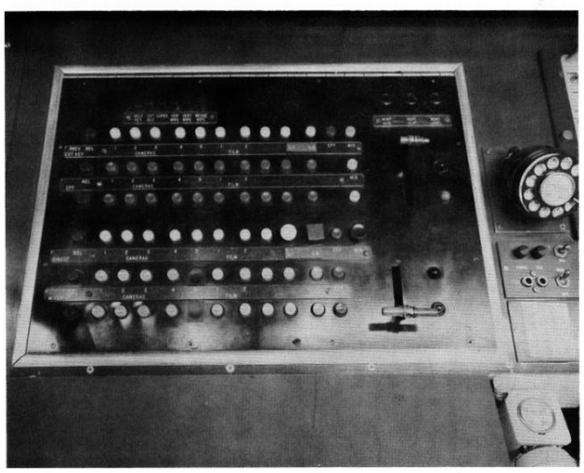


- 1. P. D. POSITION
- 2. SWITCHER
- 3. VIDEO CONTROL POSITION



THIS STUDIO IS COMPLETE WITH EFFECTS EQUIPMENT AND CAN BE GENLOCKED FOR TAPE AND FILM FEEDS. THE SWITCHER IS CAPABLE OF HANDLING 10 INPUTS.

VIDEO CONTROL POSITION



**REMINDER:** At the end of this report is a 7 page list of ABC's New York shows and their originating studios.

## The Little Theater...234 West 44<sup>th</sup> Street



ABC leased this theater in 1957 for *Do You Trust Your Wife*, with Johnny Carson as host. On February 15, 1958, The Little Theater (built in 1912) began to rock when *Dick Clark's Beech Nut Saturday Night Show* debuted here. Six months earlier, Clark's *American Bandstand* had become a weekday afternoon hit (ABC's first big daytime show), and was live from WFIL in Philadelphia, but his weekend show was live from New York. Here he is on stage in The Little Theater with a the audio booth at the far right. The video control room is in the center on the back wall, and the balcony is just above. There is a client booth on the other side of the aisle. We'll see it all in these very intimate videos!

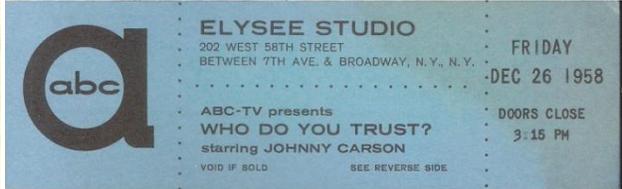
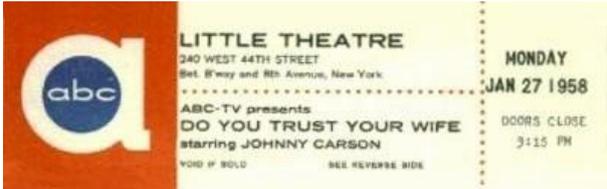


In this *Beech Nut Show* intro, you'll see the outside with Dick giving us a quick tour of the neighborhood, and, believe it or not, the world famous **Sardi's Resteraunt** is almost next door. Conway Twitty is shown here entering the lobby and walking down the left aisle of the ground floor with the client booth window on the left. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-e2MUH3rBw>

In this video, we join Dick in the balcony while he intros the Chordettes who will sing their new hit *Lollypop* and their prior hit, *Mr. Sandman*. Notice they enter from the lobby on the right wall side and make their way to the stage, giving us another good look at the theater. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fty3Nzc-oiY>

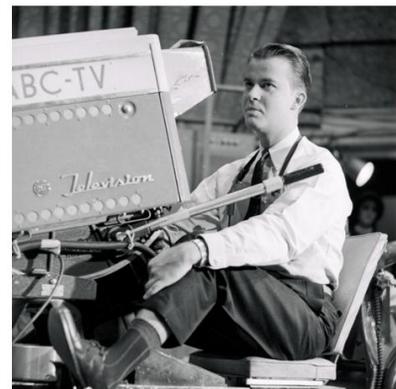
Here, the Royal Teens start in the lobby and on the stairs leading down to the ladies lounge. They'll make their way into the theater, and when they are through, we join Dick in the balcony where he'll introduce Jerry Lee Lewis singing *Great Balls Of Fire*. <https://youtu.be/WINew-UOBZc>

The show ABC leased the theater for was *Do You Trust Your Wife*, which was later renamed *Who Do You Trust*. Below is host Johnny Carson with an ABC page and, believe it or not, playing drums on an episode of Clark's Beech Nut show. At the links are part 1 (left) and 2 (right) of a complete episode with Bill Nimmo as Johnny's announcer, just before he and Ed McMahon were introduced and paired for the first time. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cs9S8sIibLw> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTPID6G9fK0>

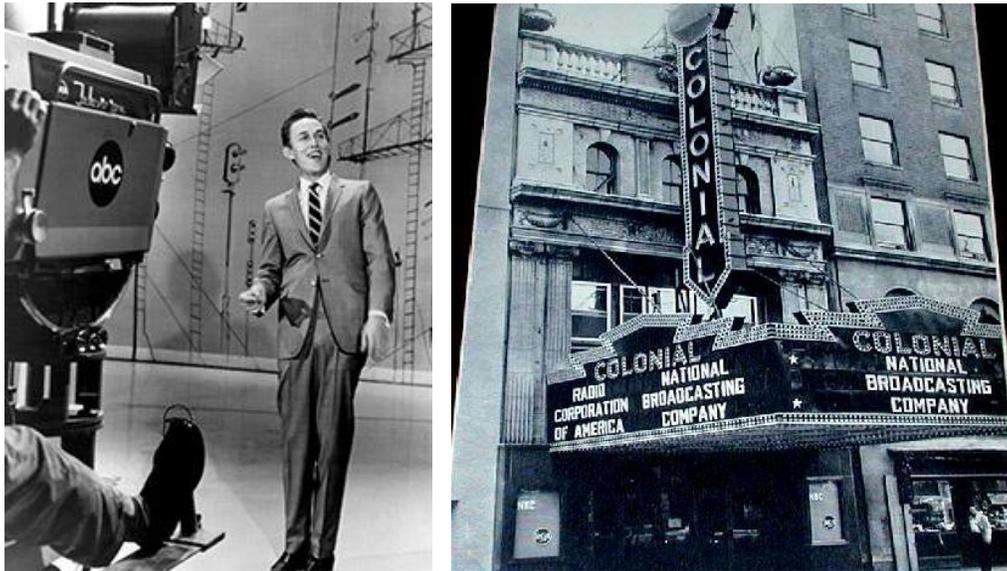




Just for fun, here is a quick look at American Bandstand in Philadelphia in Studio 2 at WFIL and a rare look at the Bandstand control room. Below, Bobby Darrin with Annette Funicello playing with one of the Little Theater's RCA TK 30s and take a look at that concave credits board. At the link, *Splish Splash* at The Little Theater. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GV4DHumSJEM>



## The Colonial Theater...1887 Broadway



Given that The Colonial Theater is the first ever full color television facility, it is almost sacrilegious to show a black and white TV camera in here, but at least it is an RCA TK60. The theater opened in 1905 as a vaudeville palace but by 1932, RKO had bought it and began showing movies there until around 1950 when it went dark.

In 1952, RCA bought it to bring color television out of the shadows and into the mainstream. Millions were spent on transforming and equipping The Colonial with four RCA TK40 color cameras, and this was where every network show on NBC came from in 1953 and '54, as each were broadcast in color tests, on a one time basis. For two years, NBC and RCA tweaked and perfected their color systems before RCA began to mass produce the camera and receiving sets in early 1954.

In January 1963, *The Price Is Right* with host Bill Cullen moved from NBC to ABC and this is when ABC took over The Colonial, as this theater was where *TPIR* had come from in color for several years on NBC, but NBC took the color equipment with them. At this link is a quick shot of The Colonial balcony in the 1964 *TPIR* promo. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vSQ9TkJ2HAI>

Goodson-Todman wanted *The Price Is Right* to be ABC's first non-cartoon color show, but the network could not afford to convert to color until '66. This meant that the nighttime version reverted to black-and-white. As we'll see in Part 2 on the west coast studios, *The Jetsons* was ABC's first color show, debuting in 1962, with *The Flintstones* changing to color shortly after. Part 2 also has the color conversion details for both coasts.

Some other Colonial shows were *Girl Talk* with Virginia Graham, and *The Jimmy Dean Show*. Dean's hour-long weekly series ran on ABC from September 1963 to April 1966. ABC left in 1971. At the link is a clip from a 1964 Dean show with the Muppets, Rowlf The Dog. Jim Henson is doing the main puppetry, but Frank Oz is moving Rowlf's hands. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-dHo7sIIB4>

## TV 23 & TV 24...320 West 66<sup>th</sup> Street

### WEST 66TH STREET | TV - 23 SOUND STAGE

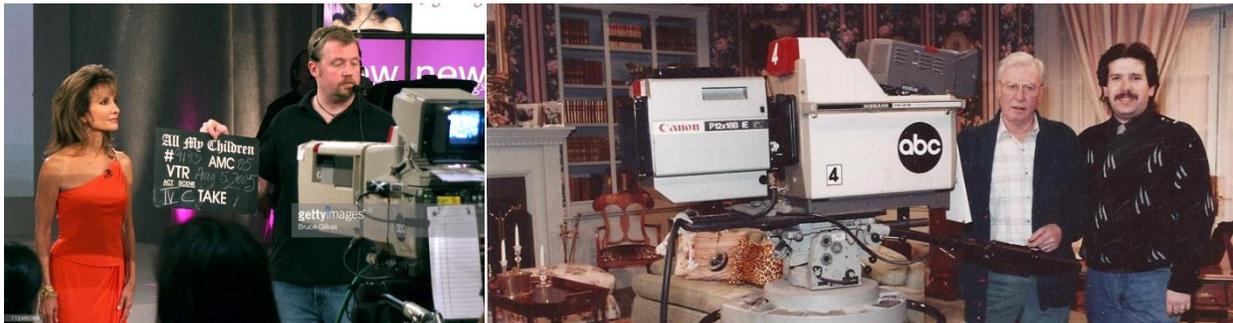


The former home of *All My Children* and *One Life to Live*, and starting in 2012 the new home of *Who Wants to Be A Millionaire*, the TV-23 Sound Stage specs out with:

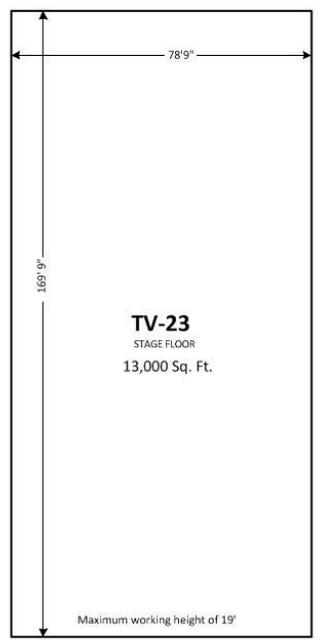
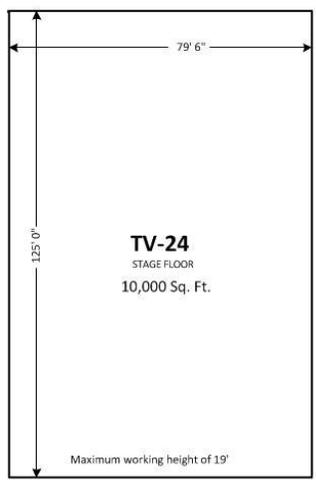
- 12,000 square feet of production space
- Maximum working height of 19 feet
- Technical Space with consoles to create a carry-in control room
- Separate Technical Support Space for record/playback and post needs
- Large Dressing Room, Make-up/Hair Room and Green Room/Rehearsal Space available

The studio may be leased for your four-wall projects or large events that require extensive space.

These massive studios were built in the mid 1990s to handle production of ABC's New York based soap operas which would have been *All My Children* and *One Life To Live*. On the right below are ABC vets Lou Marchand and Howie Zeidman on the *One Life To Live* set in 1988 in TV-17. On the left, the eternally nominated Susan Lucci, who is best known as the infamous Erica Kane on *All My Children* at TV-23.



# TV-23/TV-24 STAGE FLOORS



The View started in TV-24 but is now in TV-1

## WEST 66TH STREET | TV - 24 SOUND STAGE



The home of the popular long running show The View, the TV-24 Sound Stage specs out with:

- 10,000 sq ft. of production space
- 19 feet maximum working height
- Full HD control room
- Separate technical support space for record/playback and post production
- Dressing Room, Hair/Make-Up and Green Room space available

## Times Square Studio, Marquee Level...1500 Broadway

Located on the northeast corner of Broadway and 44<sup>th</sup> Street, this is the home of *Good Morning America* and has been since ABC bought the Criterion Cinema and converted it to a three story television studio in the late '90s. The control room and support areas are on the first floor and the studio is on two and three. This location has a very interesting history and the early part of the story is at this link. <http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/16481>



On top, we see The Criterion as it was in 1934, on the bottom as it was in 1975 with *The Towering Inferno* listed on the marquee.





*Good Morning America* moved here from TV-2 in 1999. Here is a 2008 behind the scenes look.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUxKJevmyMU>

## TIMES SQUARE | MARQUEE LEVEL STUDIO



Overlooking the heart of Times Square, our Marquee Level Studio's unsurpassed view of bustling Times Square adds the texture of New York City to any production.

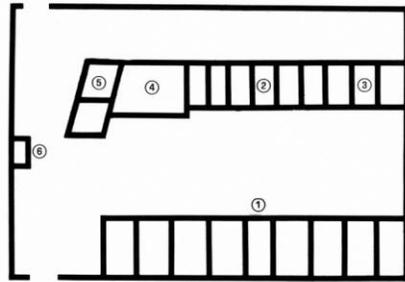
The Marquee Level Studio is a multi-purpose location used for *GMA Specials*, the iconic *Dick Clark's New Years Rockin' Eve*, and a variety of *ABC News Special Events* features.

This unique location offers:

- 5,000 square feet of configurable production space
- Partially moveable grid height of 15 feet
- Pairing with either of two state-of-the-art High Definition Control Rooms
- Large windows out to Times Square equipped with ND-3 & ND-6 gels to adjust for your production's lighting and privacy needs
- Blackout shades on the windows offer complete privacy

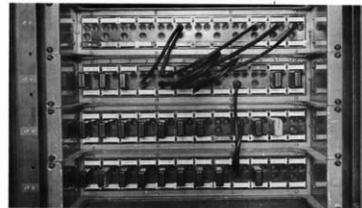
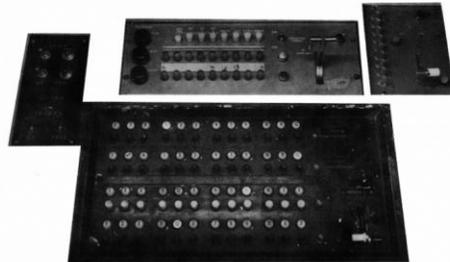
# 1950s Local Use Studios At West 66<sup>th</sup> Street

These are more of the pages from the rare 1964 ABC publication *Inside ABC*. Many thanks to long time ABC veteran sound engineer Dick Roes for sharing the only surviving copy with us.

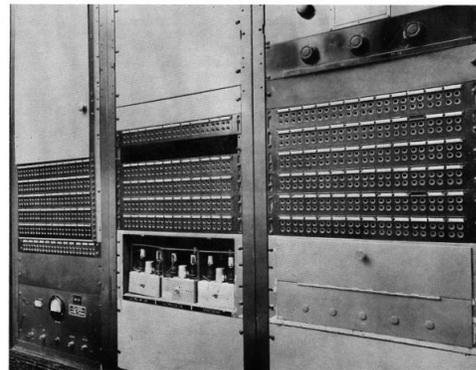


## TV-A

- 1. EQUIPMENT RACKS
- 2. VIDEO SWITCHER & MONITOR CONSOLE
- 3. VIDEO OPERATORS CONTROL UNITS
- 4. AUDIO CONSOLE
- 5. TURNTABLES
- 6. POWER PANEL



FACILITIES INCLUDE A TS-20 SWITCHER INCORPORATING SPECIAL EFFECTS EQUIPMENT.

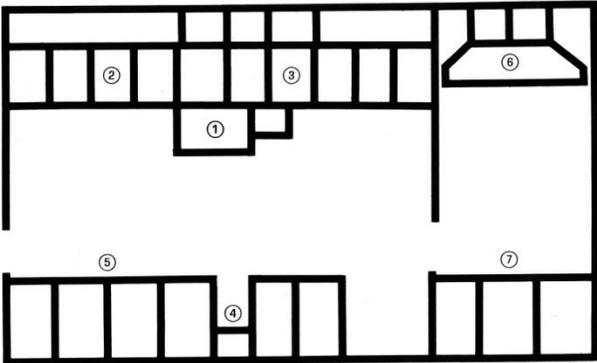


AUDIO PATCH PANEL

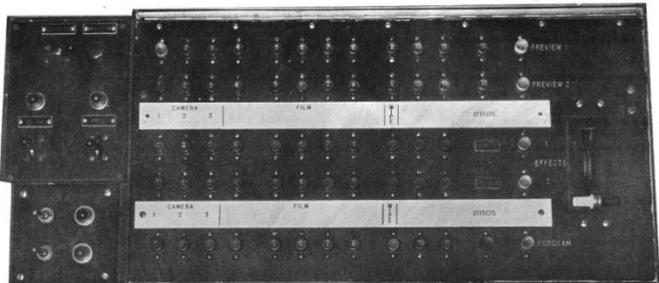
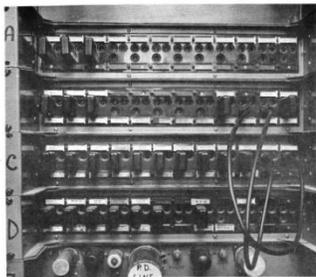


THE AUDIO CONSOLE IN TV-A HAS SIX MIKE INPUTS, 2 SUB MASTERS, AND ONE MASTER FADER. PUSH BUTTON SELECTOR IS AVAILABLE TO HANDLE FILM FEEDS, NEMOS AND OTHER SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS. LOCATED IN THE AUDIO PATCH FIELD IS AND R.F. CUE TRANSMITTER USED FOR PRODUCTION PERSONNEL.

# TV-C



- 1. VIDEO SWITCHER - TYPE TS-20
- 2. VIDEO CONTROL AREA
- 3. VIDEO MONITORS
- 4. A. C. POWER PANEL
- 5. EQUIPMENT RACKS
- 6. AUDIO CONSOLE
- 7. AUDIO PREAMPS - ETC.



FACILITIES INCLUDE A TS-20 SWITCHER INCORPORATING SPECIAL EFFECTS EQUIPMENT.



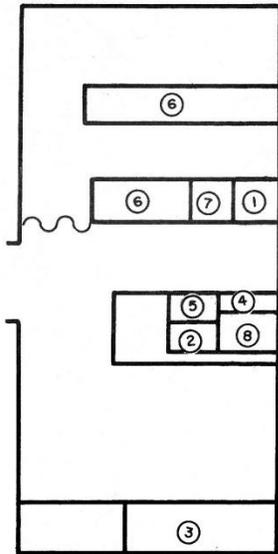
THE AUDIO CONSOLE IN TV-C HAS NINE FADER POSITIONS, ONE SUBMASTER AND ONE MASTER FADER. FILM AND NEMO INPUTS ARE SELECTED BY MEANS OF PUSH BUTTONS.

Some of the fun little shows that came from the basement's TV- C included, *The Tinker's Workshop* (top left) with Bob Keeshan...this is what he did after being Clarabell on *Howdy Doody* for five years. He spent a year here as Tinker Tom and then for the next 30, he was *Captain Kangaroo* at CBS. Before moving to NBC, this was home to *The Bob & Ray Show* (top right) and *The Rootie Kazootie Show* was one of the productions from Studio C.

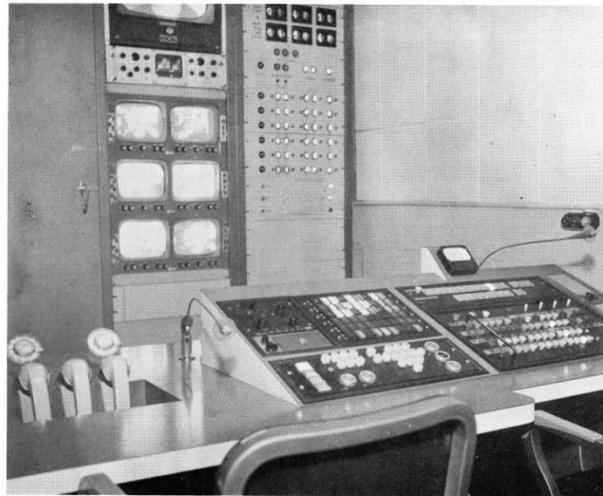
For the first couple of years of news, both local and network, this is where John Daly reported from. When TV-12 was built in The Des Artistes, network news moved there and local stayed.



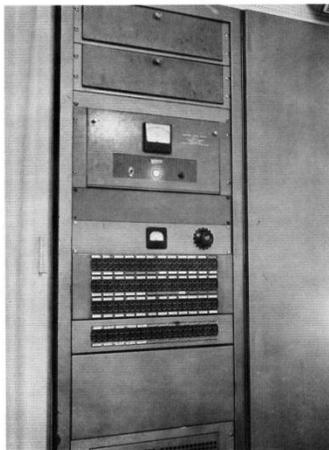
# TV-D



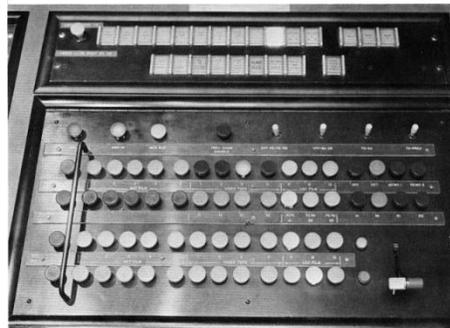
- 1. VISUAL 6000 DISPLAY PANEL
- 2. VISUAL 6000 KEYBOARD
- 3. FRIEDEN TAPE READERS
- 4. AUDIO SWITCHER PANEL
- 5. REMOTE CONTROL PANEL
- 6. EQUIPMENT RACKS
- 7. MONITORS
- 8. SWITCHER



TV-D IS THE LOCAL WABC-TV BREAK STUDIO. THE SWITCHER WILL HANDLE 12 NON-COMPOSITE INPUTS AS WELL AS 4 COMPOSITE INPUTS. SWITCHING FUNCTIONS ARE ACCOMPLISHED BY A VISUAL 6000 AUTOMATIC SWITCHER PROGRAMMED BY A PUNCHED TAPE READER OR BY MANUAL OPERATION OF A KEYBOARD.



AUDIO RACK

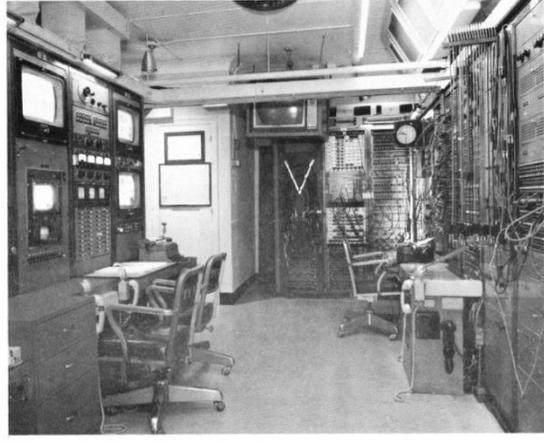


SWITCHER



REMOTE CONTROL PANEL AND VISUAL 6000 KEYBOARD.

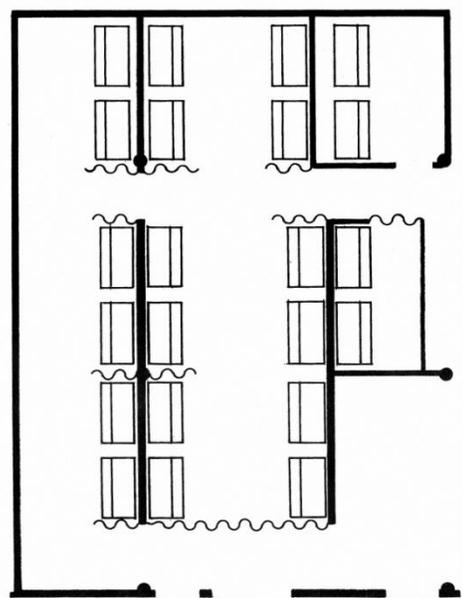
# TV MASTER CONTROL



TV MASTER CONTROL COORDINATES ENGINEERING PROGRAM FUNCTIONS. IT SUPPLIES AUDIO AND VIDEO DISTRIBUTION TO THE STUDIOS, LOCAL STATION, NETWORK, TAPE. FOUR SEPARATE OUTPUT CHANNELS ARE AVAILABLE TO FEED PROGRAM MATERIAL. ALL AUDIO AND VIDEO FACILITIES ROUTE THROUGH THIS CONTROL AREA.

VIDEO TRANSMISSION FACILITIES

# VIDEO TAPE CENTER



THE VIDEO TAPE CENTER is divided into compartments containing from 2 to 4 machines: twenty-two in all. Sound proof folding doors allow for independence and quietness during editing.



**The New York Shows And Their Studios...** At the link is ABC's 1957 Seasons Greetings spot with a rundown of the primetime shows. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vERZKQJr4g0>

This list, from Game Show Network historian and author, David Schwartz, is a big help in reminding us what shows were done where. This list was done a couple of years ago, and my research has yielded some new information that I have shared in this document, but remember...shows moved and sometimes often.

	A	B		A	B
1	\$10,000 Pyramid (1974-80)	TV-15 (Elysee Theater)	27	Baby Game (1968)	TV-15 (Elysee Theater); Colonial Theater (4-28-68)
2	\$10,000 Sweep (1972 pilot)	24 W. 67th	28	Back that Fact (1953)	Elysee Theater
3	\$25,000 Pyramid (Bill Cullen/synd)	TV-15	29	Beat the Clock (1958-61)	Ritz Theater
4	100 Grand (1963)	TV-1	30	Best of Everything (1970)	TV-17
5	20/20 (1978-present)	TV-1; Times Square Studio	31	Big Beat (1957)	
6	A Time for Us (1965-66)	TV-2	32	Big Showdown (1974-75)	TV-15
7	A World Apart (1970)	TV-18	33	Blankety Blanks (1975)	Elysee Theater
8	ABC 2000 12/31/99-1/1/00)	Times Square Studio	34	Blind Date (1949-51)	Radio City Studios (6/30/49); Elysee Theater 6/14/51)
9	ABC Comedy Hour (1972)		35	Bob & Ray (1954)	TV-C (basement studio at 7 West 66th Street
10	ABC News with Frank Reynolds (1968-70)	TV-11 (Des Artistes)	36	Break the Bank (1948-49, 54-56)	Ritz Theater
11	ABC News with John Daly (1953-60)	TV-C (basement studio at 7 West 66th Street	37	Breakfast Club (1954)	Chicago
12	ABC News with Peter Jennings (1983-2005 World News Tonight)	TV-3	38	Camouflage (1961-62)	Elysee Theater
13	ABC space shot coverage (1960's)	Colonial Theater	39	Can You Top This (1950-51)	
14	ABC World News w/Diane Sawyer (12/09-present)	TV-3	40	Carnie Wilson Show (9/95-6/96)	TV-16
15	Across the Board (1959)	Elysee Theater	41	Celebrity Time (1949-50)	7 West 66th Street
16	Alan King Looks Back in Anger (1972)	24 W. 67th	42	Chance for Romance (1958)	TV-1
17	All About Music (1957)		43	Chance of a Lifetime (1950-53, 55-56)	Elysee Theater
18	All My Children (1970-2012)	TV-2; TV-19 (1970-90); TV-23 (1990-2009 moved to LA Jan 2010; Encompas Digital Media studio A&B, CT Film Center, Stamford CT 2013))	44	Charley Weaver Show (1959)	TV-2 (7 West 66th Street)
19	Alumni Fun (1963)		45	Chevy Showroom (1958)	26 W. 67th
20	AM America (1975)	TV-2	46	Chew (2011-)	TV-2
21	Amazing Dunniger (1956)	Little Theater	47	Circus Time with Paul Winchell (1956-57)	Elysee Theater
22	American Bandstand (1957-64)	Studio B, WFIL, Philadelphia; moved to Los Angeles in 1964	48	City (1995; daytime soap)	TV-24
23	American Bandstand Evening Show (1957)	WFIL, Philadelphia	49	Coke Time with Pat Boone (1960)	Ziegfeld Theater
24	Andy Williams Show (1958) (aka Chevy Showroom)	TV-1	50	Come Closer (1954)	
25	Arthur Murray Party (1952)	Ritz Theater	51	Confidential for Women (1966-)	TV-2
26	Auction-aire (1948-49)	Ritz Theater	52	Corner Bar (1972)	24 W. 67th
			53	Creative Cookery (1954 daytime)	
			54	Dark Shadows (1966-71)	TV-2 (June-Aug 1966) TV-16 (Aug 1966-71)
			55	Dating Game (9/28/)	24 W. 67th
			56	David Frost Show (1969-72)	Little Theater
			57	David Frost Specials	Elysee Theater
			58	Day's End	TV-7
			59	Dennis James Show (1951 daytime)	
			60	Dick Cavett Show (1968-72)	TV-15 (Elysee Theater); Colonial Theater



This is WABC's AM New York in TV-7

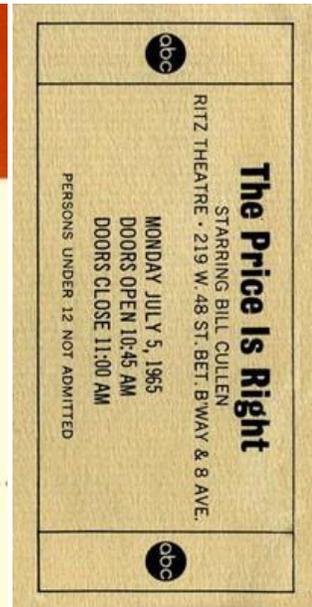
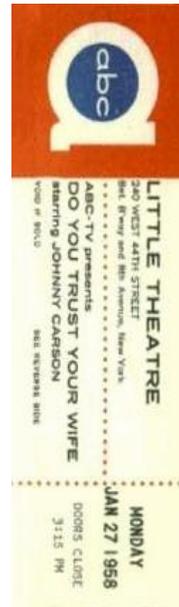
	A	B
61	Dick Clark Show (1958-60)	Little Theater
62	Dick Clark's Rockin' New Years Eve	Times Square Studio
63	Dick Clark's World of Talent (1959)	TV-1 (26 West 67th Street)
64	Directions (1960-84)	TV-1
65	Discovery (1962-71)	Ritz Theater (first show), TV-1
		Elysee Theater; Little Theater 11/25/53
66	Doctor I.Q. (1953-54)	
67	Dollar a Second (1955)	Elysee Theater
68	Don Imus Show (1972 pilot)	TV-15
69	Don McNeil's TV Club (1950-51)	Chicago
70	Down You Go (1955-56)	Elysee Theater
71	Draw Me a Laugh (1949)	
72	Dream House (1968-70)	Colonial Theater
		Screen Gems studio on East 44th Street
73	Edge of Night (1975)	
74	Ern Westmore (1953 daytime)	
75	ESP (1958)	TV-A
76	Ethel & Albert (1955-56)	
	Everything Goes with Dayton Allen & Allen Melvin (11/19/59)	7 West 66th Street
77	Five Star Comedy Party with Bill Brophy (1957)	
78	Flame in the Wind (1964-65)	TV-2
	Frances Langford-Don Ameche Show (1951 daytime)	Little Theater
80	Fun and Fortune (1949)	
		WENR Chicago (Civic Opera House)
82	Fun for the Money (1949)	
83	Gaylord Hauser Show (1951)	
84	Generation Gap (1969)	Elysee Theater
85	George Hamilton IV (1959)	Washington D.C.
86	George Jessel (1953)	
87	Get the Message (1964)	Elysee Theater
88	Girl Talk (synd. 1963-70)	Colonial Theater
89	Good Afternoon America (2012)	Times Square Studio
90	Good Morning America (1975-present)	TV-2; Times Square Studio
91	Greatest Man on Earth (1952-53)	
92	Hail the Champ (1951-53)	Civic Opera House, Chicago
93	Henny & Rocky (1955)	
94	Herb Shriner Time (1951)	Elysee Theater

	A	B
95	Here's Edie (1962)	
	Hobby Lobby with Charley Weaver (1959)	Little Theater
96		
97	Honeymoon Race (1967)	Hollywood, Florida
98	Hootenanny (1963-64)	various colleges
99	Identify (1949)	Civic Opera House, Chicago
100	It's About Time (1954)	Chicago
101	It's Your Move (1967)	Colonial Theater
102	Jack Paar Tonight (1973)	TV-15
103	Jane Pickens (1954)	
104	Jerry Lester (1954)	TV Center
105	Jimmy Dean Show (1963-64)	TV-1
106	Jimmy Dean Show (1964-66)	Colonial Theater
107	Joe Franklin	TV-A
108	Katie Couric (2012-2014)	TV-1
109	Keep it In the Family (1957-58)	Little Theater?
110	Keep Talking (1959-60)	Little Theater
111	Ladies Be Seated (1949)	Civic Opera House, Chicago
112	Last Call	TV-16
113	Lawrence Welk summer shows	TV-1
114	Les Crane Show (1964)	TV-1
115	Let's Dance (1954)	Hotel New Yorker
116	Let's See (1955)	Atlantic City, NJ
117	Live Like a Millionaire (1952)	Elysee Theater
	Live with Regis & Kathie Lee (1988-2000)	
	Live with Regis & Kelly (2001-2011) Live with Kelly & Michael (2012-present)	TV-14
118		
119	Look to Win (11/55)	7 W. 66th
		TV-1 (4/83-8/84); TV-23 (8/84-1994)
120	Loving (1983-95)	Chicago
121	Majority Rules (1949-50)	Chicago
122	Make a Face (1961-62)	Little Theater
123	Make Me Laugh (1958)	Little Theater
124	Masquerade Party (1955)	Elysee Theater
125	Melody Tour (1954)	
126	Merv Griffin Show (1965-69)	Little Theater; Cort Theater
127	Missing Links (1964)	Elysee Theater
128	Moneymaze (1974-75)	TV-1
129	Morey Amsterdam Show (9/54)	7 W. 66th

	A	B
130	Mother's Day (1958-59)	Latin Quarter
131	Movieland Quiz (1948)	WFIL, Philadelphia
132	Mr. Citizen (6/29/55)	26 W. 67th
		Ritz Theater (3/59, 5/59)Elysee Theater (12/59)
133	Music Bingo (1958-59)	
134	Music for a Spring Night (1960)	TV-1
135	Music for a Summer Night	TV-1
	Music from Manhattan with Sammy Kaye (1958)	
136		
137	Name's the Same (1951-55)	Elysee Theater
138	NET Play of the Week	TV-1
139	Nightlife (1965)	Colonial Theater
140	Nightline	
141	Number Please (1961)	Ritz Theater
142	Nurses (1965-67)	TV-1
143	On the Boardwalk (1954)	Atlantic City, NJ
144	On Your Mark (1961)	TV-1 (7 West 66th)
145	On Your Way (1954)	
146	One in a Million (1967)	Elysee Theater
		TV-1 (1968); TV-18 (1970's); TV-17 (1978-2009); TV-23 (2010-2012)
147	One Life to Live (1968-2012)	
148	Orchid Room (1953)	
	Packard Program with Martha Wright (1954)	
149		
150	Pantomime Quiz (1955, 1958-59)	Little Theater (1959)
151	Pat Boone's Chevy Showroom (1957-58)	TV-1
152	Patrice Munsel (1957)	TV-1
153	Patti Page Oldsmobile Show (1958)	TV-1
154	Paul Dixon Show (1952)	
155	Paul Whiteman Revue (1949-52)	
	Paul Whiteman's TV Teen Club (1949-54)	WFIL, Philadelphia
156		
157	Paul Winchell Presents (1957)	Elysee Theater
158	Paul Winchell Show (1958-61)	Little Theater
159	Penny to a Million (1955)	Ritz Theater
160	People's Choice with Jack Barry (1952)	Elysee Theater
161	Personality Puzzle (1953)	
162	Peter Lind Hayes (1958)	Little Theater
163	Play the Game (1948)	

	A	B
164	Play Your Hunch (1959)	Elysee Theater
165	Price is Right (1963-65)	Ritz Theater
166	Primetime Live (1989-present)	TV-1
167	QED (1951)	
168	Quick as a Flash (1953)	
169	Quizzing the News (1948-49)	
170	Revolution (2012-)	Chelsea Studios
171	Road to Reality (1960)	TV-2
	Rock & Roll Revue with Alan Freed (1957)	
172		
173	Ryan's Hope (1975-89)	TV-16 (1975-86); TV-23 (1986-89)
174	Sammy Kaye (1959)	TV Center
	Saturday Night Live with Howard Cosell (1975)	Ed Sullivan Theater
175		
176	Say it with Acting (1951-52)	Elysee
177	Science All Stars	Colonial Theater; TV-1
178	Showdown (1975-76)	19 W. 66th
179	Sid Caesar Invites You (1958)	
180	Sid Caesar Show (1963)	
181	So You Want to Lead a Band (1954)	
182	Soldier Parade (1954)	
183	Sparring Partners (1949)	7 West 66th Street
184	Sports scoreboards	TV-7
		Ritz Theater; & West 66th St (10/25/51)
185	Stop the Music (1949-52; 1954-56)	
186	Stork Club (1954)	
		Chicago (1949-55), New York (1955-56)
187	Super Circus (1949-56)	
188	Supermarket Sweep (1965-67)	various supermarkets
189	Take Two (1963)	Chicago
		Little Theater (1952) Elysee Theater (1956) Ritz Theater (1960)
190	Ted Mack & the Original Amateur Hour	
191	Ted Mack's Family Hour (1951)	
192	Think Fast (1949-50)	
193	This is Galen Drake (1957)	
		TV-C (basement studio at 7 West 66th Street)
194	Tinker Tom	
195	Treasure Hunt (1956)	Ritz Theater

	A	B
196	Treasure Isle (1967-68)	Colonnades Beach Hotel, Palm Beach Shores, Florida
197	Treasure Quest (1949)	Chicago
198	Turn to a Friend (1953)	Ritz Theater
199	Twenty Questions (1950-51, 1954-55)	Elysee Theater
200	Vaudeville Show (1953)	
201	View, The (1997-present)	TV-24 (320 West 66th Street)
202	Voice of Firestone (1954-59, 62-63)	TV-1; also TV-2, 3
203	WABC-TV News	TV-B (basement studio at 7 West 66th Street)
204	WABC-TV News	TV-13; TV-2
205	Walter Winchell (1952-55, 1960)	TV-A
206	Wedding Party (1968)	Colonial Theater
207	What's Going On? (1954)	Elysee Theater
208	What's Your Bid? (1953)	
209	Who Do You Trust? (1957-63)	Little Theater
210	Who Said That?	
211	Who Wants to be a Millionaire (1999-2002 AVC; 2002-present synd.)	30 W. 67th Street; TV-1 & 2; TV-23 (2012-2013),
212	Who's the Boss? (1954)	Elysee Theater
213	Why? (1952-53)	
214	Window Shopping (1962)	Little Theater
215	Young Set (1965)	Elysee Theater
216	Yours for a Song (1961-63)	TV-2



## WJZ-TV Sign On

Until WJZ-TV signed on August 10, 1948, ABC had no New York based programs. Their only programming fare was from the only ABC TV affiliates, WFIL in Philadelphia, WMAR in Baltimore, WMAL in Washington and WABD (owned by Dumont), in New York. These are some of the ABC ads marking the sign-on in *Billboard* and the news article from *Broadcasting*, with a rare photo of Edward Noble. The first ever show broadcast on the ABC Television Network was *On The Corner* with Henry Morgan which was done at WFIL, April 19, 1948.

*On the Air!*

**WJZ-TV**  
CHANNEL 7

KEY STATION IN NEW YORK

**ABC** TELEVISION NETWORK

*Tuesday, August 10—a red-letter day in ABC television. Why? Because ABC's key station, WJZ-TV goes on the air in New York . . . on Channel 7, right smack in the middle of the dial.*

For years ABC has been working, planning for network television. (During the early days of telecasting ABC produced more commercial programs, in more cities, for more sponsors, than any other group working in this new medium.) As time went along, ABC assembled a staff of top video experts, and now, at long last, is completely geared for full-schedule, nation-wide television.

On the following pages, you will find the full story of how an exciting, new television network has come into being . . .

# ABC-TV

## STATIONS



**NEW YORK WJZ-TV**

is ABC's first owned-and-operated station to go on the air. The ultra-modern transmitter and antenna are atop the Hotel Pierre, one of New York's tallest buildings. This mid-Manhattan location on Central Park is far removed from other high structures and gives WJZ-TV an unobstructed transmission path to all the greater New York market.

**CHICAGO WENR-TV**

will be telecasting in the nation's number two market next month. Located on top of the Civic Opera Building in the heart of the Loop district, WENR-TV's antenna rises 1271 feet above sea level, providing sharp, clear reception for all Chicago's business and residential sections.

**DETROIT WXYZ-TV**

will be on the air in October, transmitting from the Maccabees Building on Woodward Avenue. With an antenna 1100 feet above sea level, WXYZ-TV's transmissions will cover the Detroit area without interference from other tall structures.



**LOS ANGELES KECA-TV**

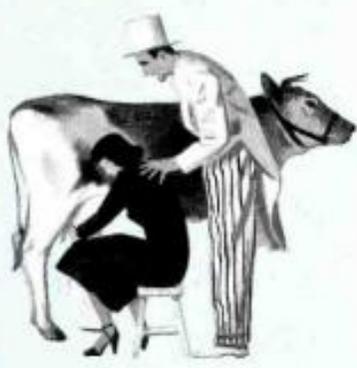
begins transmission in November. ABC's transmitter in Los Angeles will be on top of Mt. Wilson, 6,000 feet above sea level, overlooking all greater Los Angeles and its populous neighboring communities — the perfect location to assure clear reception.

**SAN FRANCISCO KGO-TV**

will be on the air in December, transmitting from Mount Sutro. A 500-foot tower brings the total antenna height to 1360 feet above sea level, a point high enough to provide maximum television service to all The Bay Area's rolling residential sections.

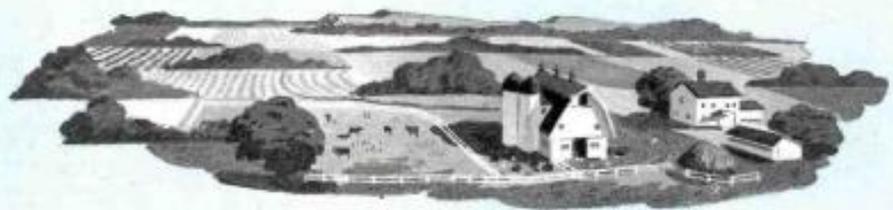
All five of these key stations are owned and operated by the network . . . and all five occupy Channel 7, in the middle of the television dial. Their importance as major markets . . . and (in the case of New York, Hollywood and Chicago) as the major origination points for talent . . . is of the greatest possible importance in building a strong television network.

In addition to the above stations, ABC has affiliates in



- Philadelphia, WFIL-TV
- Boston, WNAC-TV
- Washington, WMAL-TV
- Baltimore, WAAM
- Minneapolis, WTCN-TV
- San Diego, KFMB-TV
- New Orleans, WDSU-TV
- Toledo, WSPD-TV
- Syracuse, WAGE-TV
- Fort Worth, WBAP-TV
- St. Petersburg-Tampa, WSEE

*By the end of 1948, ABC will have a network of from thirty to forty television stations!*



## ABC-TV

### PROGRAMS



In television, even more than in AM radio, program appeal counts for everything. That's because in television, stations in any one locality have approximately even coverage. This means that television stations and television networks will compete for their audiences on the merits of their programs.

ABC-TV network programming has two all-important advantages: first, long years of experience back in the horse-and-buggy days of television . . . and second, outstanding success in AM radio programming.

Here are but a few examples of the good, solid entertainment that is available to audiences—and to advertisers—on WJZ-TV and the ABC-TV Eastern regional network that covers all the Central Atlantic States—

#### HOLLYWOOD SCREEN TEST

Talented young artists take a movie test while talent scouts look on! Bert Lytell emcees as a different Hollywood star plays opposite the newcomers each week. Here's a video show loaded with thrills, comedy, drama and music—plus big names to give it added appeal! *Sunday 8:00-8:30 PM EDT.*



#### THREE ABOUT TOWN

Two girls and a boy—Phyllis Wood, Betsy Allison, and Bill Harrington—spark this sprightly quarter-hour show twice each week. Aided by two spinet pianos, this talented trio entertains with lively songs and exchanges gay patter about the theatrical world. *Monday and Friday 7:00-7:15 PM EDT.*

#### THAT REMINDS ME

Walter Kiernan, weaver of homespun philosophy and droll tales of life on a hundred American Main Streets, has as his colleagues on the show Ex-Governor Harold Hoffman of New Jersey, Tex O'Rourke, swashbuckling soldier of fortune, and "Uncle Jim" Harkins, radio actor. *Monday 9:00-9:30 PM EDT.*

#### YOU'RE INVITED

Romo Vincent greets the video audience at his front door and invites them in to see his lively, informal variety show. Singing comedian Vincent, an experienced Broadway musical comedy star, is adept at tying the acts together and keeping the show on its toes! *Wednesday 8:00-8:30 PM EDT.*



#### CARTOON TELTALES

A unique television program that keeps the kiddies spellbound! Brother Chuck, the cartoonist, and Brother Jack, the narrator, combine their efforts to describe the antics of their animal world characters—Pinto the Pony, Cletus the Caterpillar and Alice the Alligator. *Monday & Wednesday 5:30-6:00 PM EDT.*



# WJZ-TV STARTS *Elaborate Inaugural Program*

WJZ-TV New York, ABC's first owned and operated television station and the sixth video outlet to begin operations in New York, opened for business last week amidst festivities reminiscent of the gayest Hollywood movie premiere.

Its inaugural program ran from 7 until 11:40 p.m. Aug. 10 and included everything from Beatrice Lillie, one of the world's great comedienne, to fragments left over from a recent Fifth Ave. parade.

Civic, religious and business leaders participated in the opening ceremonies. More than 100 executives of ABC affiliated stations were invited and came to New York to see the show, and the net-

Story on WJZ-TV and IATSE Tif, page 32

work sales department staged a debut party for scores of advertisers and agencies.

Early in the inaugural show ABC presented a "creed" which it plans to follow in its television broadcasting. The creed:

The American Broadcasting Co. is deeply aware of a high responsibility to the people in its approach to television. We are also deeply aware of a grave responsibility to ourselves. We shall, therefore, do our utmost to bring into your home the kind of programs we would want in our homes. We believe television will become one of the great forces in the world, and for that reason we regard our role not only as a privilege but also as a challenge. Thus, television imposes on us the profound obligation to see it with clarity, with skill, with honesty and care. We shall discharge that high obligation to the very best of our ability.

Edward J. Noble, chairman of the ABC board, and Mark Woods, the network's president, were televised in greetings to the WJZ-TV audience. Grover A. Whalen, chairman of the mayor's committee for the reception of distinguished guests, appeared as special representative of New York's Mayor William O'Dwyer who was absent on official business.

At the conclusion of these opening talks, the cameras went to the streets of Rockefeller Plaza, outside the RCA Bldg. where ABC is housed, to pick up various elements of a parade which was a feature of New York's summer-long golden anniversary celebration.

#### Kiernan Describes Parade

The televised parade included policemen dressed in uniforms of 50 years ago, carriages drawn by horses, some marching societies, bands, drum corps and fire fighting equipment. Walter Kiernan described the parade.

The program then returned to ABC studios. Following this Wayne Coy, FCC chairman, spoke from Washington, predicting that "in two years from now I expect to see 400 stations either in operation or under construction." He added:

"We are and will continue to be years and years ahead of any other nation in the employment of this magical electronic instrument."

This was followed by a half-hour television presentation of *Candid Microphone*, an ABC sound broadcasting feature, and a pre-

view of several video features which will be on the station regularly. At 9 p.m., the show moved to the Palace Theatre, now a movie house but formerly one of the biggest vaudeville theatres in the city. The program was almost pure vaudeville, with performers doing

their specialties in turn. Ray Bolger, famed dancer, was m.c.

Among the outstanding performers at the Palace were Mr. Bolger, who in addition to his duties as an introducer of the other acts, did a few turns of his own; Beatrice Lillie, star of the current Broadway hit, "Inside U. S. A.," James Barton, actor and one-time vaudevillian; Ella Logan, singer, Mary Raye and Naldi, ballroom dancers, Pat Rooney Sr., a vaudeville dancer and Paul Whiteman, ABC vice president and musical director, who led an orchestra in "Rhapsody in Blue."

#### Folk Dancing, Too

During an intermission at the Palace, the program returned to the ABC studios for half an hour of folk dancing by various national groups. This event had been originally scheduled for either Times Square or Duffy Square, but the police and fire departments did not approve.

Before the start of the Palace show at 9 p.m., the more than 100 station executives attended a buffet supper in the Hotel Astor. They then went to the Palace for the show. The several score advertiser and agency representatives were feted at a buffet in the Waldorf-Astoria. A large crowd of press was fed in the Rainbow Room lounge atop the RCA Bldg. and they watched the entire evening's program on special receivers installed there.

Following its mammoth debut program, WJZ-TV, which operates on Channel 7, took up routine programming Aug. 11, the next day. The schedule for Aug. 11 was: 5:30-6 p.m., *Cartoon Teletales*; 7-7:15, *News and Views*; 7:15-7:30, *Three About Town*; 7:30-8, film; 8-8:30, *Gay Nineties Review*, and 8:30-9, film.



Edward J. Noble, chairman of the board of ABC, is televised at inaugural.



Part of the inaugural program originated at New York's Palace Theatre.





THE NEVER-TO-BE-FORGOTTEN

**WJZ  
TELEVISION**

ON CHANNEL 7

TUNE IN  
**7**  
AT 7:00 P.M.

A GLITTERING FIVE-  
HOUR "OPENING NIGHT"  
THAT PEOPLE WILL  
TALK ABOUT FOR  
NIGHTS TO COME

TUNE IN  
**7**  
AT 7:00 P.M.

A NIGHT ON

**WJZ-TV**  
CHANNEL 7

TONIGHT—BEGINNING AT 7 O'CLOCK!

YOU'LL SEE... AND THRILL TO:

**JAMES BARTON**  
*Distinguished Broadway Star*

**RAY BOLGER**  
*Famous Dancing Star*

**BUCK & BUBBLES**  
*Sensational Top-Dancing Team*

**CARLTON EMMY'S  
MADWAGS**  
*Canine Carnival*

**BEATRICE LILLIE**  
*Star of "Inside U.S.A."*

**ELLA LOGAN**  
*Original Star of "Finian's Rainbow"*

**JULES LENZBERG**  
*Popular Palace Orchestra Conductor*

**MARY RAYE & NALDI**  
*Brilliant Ballroom Dancers*

**PAT ROONEY, SR.**  
*Beloved Dancing Star*

**WILLIE, WEST & MCGINTY**  
*Comedy at its Best*

**PAUL WHITEMAN**  
*Dean of Modern American Music*

**EARL WILD**  
*World Famous Pianist*

AND A HOST OF OTHER ALL-TIME STARS  
OF VAUDEVILLE, RADIO AND HOLLYWOOD

**PLUS!** Pre-Views of the ex-  
citing WJZ-TV shows  
you'll be seeing  
night after night in your home.

**PLUS!** Films . . . parades  
. . . dancing in the  
streets . . . a fabu-  
lous block party and Times  
Square Celebration — all as a  
salute to New York's 50th An-  
niversary.

AMERICAN BROADCASTING COMPANY

THAT NEW YORK WILL NEVER FORGET

This is the end of Part 1...ABC's New York Studios History. The story continues in Part II...ABC's West Coast 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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