

PART II OF II

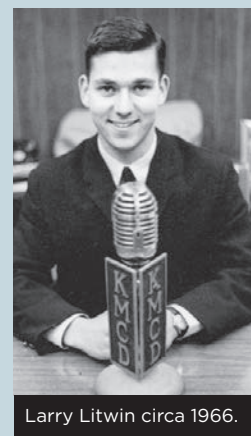
70 years of Philly radio

In celebration of the 70th anniversary, former KYW Newsradio reporter/anchor **Larry Litwin** tackled the challenge of highlighting Philadelphia radio's past seven decades. Here is Part Two of a two-part series. Part One appeared in our Jan. 2017 issue of Philly AD NEWS on page 14. M. Larry Litwin, APR, Fellow PRSA currently teaches at The College of New Jersey after retiring as associate professor from Rowan (NJ) University where he spent 42 years. He's an award-winning broadcast journalist and public relations counselor who has authored eight books including "The PR Practitioner's Playbook, Broadcast Journalism — A Potpourri," "The ABCs and More ABCs of Strategic Communication" (visit www.larrylitwin.com).

Part One looked at the "Baby Boomer" years of Philadelphia radio

highlighting many personality disc jockeys including the WIBG "Good Guys," WFIL's "Boss Jocks" and the personalities at Philly's top Middle-of-the-Road station WIP. It looked at the nation's first two-way talk host **Frank Ford** (WPEN), the advent of FM radio including the phenomenon of what became B-101 (WBEB-FM), KYW Newsradio and the six-decade-long institution **Sid Mark** and "The Sounds of Sinatra."

Part Two recalls many of the female radio voices and those behind the scenes of Philly radios past 70 years.



Larry Litwin circa 1966.

Over 60 of these past 70 years there has been one constant: **Sid Mark** and "The Sounds of Sinatra." It all began with "Friday with Frank" starting in 1957 over WHAT-FM, where Mark was a disc jockey. It has been running continuously — now on WPHT-AM. Co-incidentally, Sid and **John Paul Weber** are graduates of Camden's Woodrow Wilson High School.

WIP alumnus and former Action News producer **Bob Timms** recalls its radio news director **Paul Rust** and an expertise emulated by many newsrooms across the country.

"AT WIP, it was Rust's policy not to bulletin stories unless big enough to overrule programming and cover wall-to-wall," says Timms. "Research proved doing so otherwise sent listeners up the dial to all-news KYW."

"My brief tenure at WIP had me in the company of industry giants — my heroes who accepted me as an equal from day one. I could not have known how short that department's days would be. I didn't want to leave for a full-time gig at WPVI, but it was an obvious choice. Uncle Pauly, as he was known, told me so. Soon after, the InfoTainment format arrived at WIP and, one-by-one, the magnificent journalists went away. **Steve Ross** became a writer at WCAU-TV, **Gordon Thomas** left for more work at the advertising agency where he long part-timed and John Paul retired.

Bob expresses concern over the future of local radio news in Philadelphia and elsewhere. "Paradoxically, listeners treat news as a tune-out. But when they perceive something to be

happening, they expect it to be there (like the proverbial faucet)," he says. "You can't run a department of even one person on contingency. You either spend the money and it's there, or you do not. Sources are the same. They gravitate to those who cover them day-in-day-out."

In spite of streaming, smart phones and computers, when a major story breaks, there is still a large audience segment — especially in their car, that "hits the center button" although many cars now have six buttons, not five.

Conspicuous by their absence is mention of the many females who started hitting Philly airwaves with the advent of all-news radio. Like all other markets, Philadelphia was not only male-dominated, it was just about all male. It is important to mention some of the women who have pioneered Philadelphia radio.

Whether or not current and not nearly all inclusive, many are "top of mind," some are legendary and all paved the way for hundreds of others: **Lynne Atkins, Esther Broza** ("The Children's Hour"), **Mary Cummings-Jordan, Rica Duffus, Emily Elfenbein, Pat Farnack, Kim Glovas, Terry Gross, Pam Haynes, Brenda Joret, Helen Leicht, Lauren Lipton, Pat Loeb, Mary Jo Malone, Andrea Mitchell, Marty Moss-Coane, Karin Phillips, Deborah Potter, Maggie Schiavone, Sue Serio and Christy Springfield.**

One more legendary name that left a mark on Philly radio over the past 70 years is **Patrick Stanton** — a true pioneer who came to Philadelphia from County Cork, Ireland in

1912. From about the mid-20s until the mid-70s he hosted "Pat Stanton's Irish Hour." And that is only a small contribution to our local radio history. According to *The Billboard* and his biography, Pat founded his own radio station, WJMJ-1540 AM, which became WRCP in 1965 and eventually WNWR. After selling his station, he broadcast his Irish Hour on WKDN and WTMR in Camden.

So, where are we today? Just as *Philly AD NEWS* has had to adapt, so has radio. KYW's **Mike DeNardo** started his career as an intern out of Temple University in the early 80s. He has been a part of Philadelphia radio's evolution and the transformation from analogue to digital.

"My equipment bag is much smaller now. When I started as a radio reporter, we had to lug around cassette machines to record audio. You had to cross your fingers that the tape counter was working, as you hit REW and FF to search for the quote or sound bite you wanted. Then, you'd have to find a pay phone and unscrew the mouthpiece to connect alligator clips to send audio over the phone. An engineer back at the station would dub your sound onto 20-, 40- or 70-second tape carts. All of that took time.

"Now, digital audio has revolutionized radio news gathering. Using an iPhone app, we can record and edit studio-quality audio in the palms of our hands. And another app allows us to play that audio on the air as we report live from anywhere in the field. No rewind time. No searching for pay phones. "Nowadays," Mike says, "we are using all of the extra time to live-Tweet, take pictures, do web writes, post videos

and Facebook events. So we're still busy, but we're not simply radio reporters anymore. Thanks to technology, we're multimedia journalists."

Tony Hanson preceded Mike at KYW by about five years and has similar recollections plus



Kae Williams at WDAS with Lois Timbers, the station's traffic manager in the 60s.



WIP Radio morning drive time host Wee Willie Webber interviews talk show host Johnny Carson.



Popular radio personality Harvey Holiday

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some concerns for both radio's future, and the future of credible news reporting.

"It is remarkable in some respects, how little the news gathering aspect of reporting changed over my nearly four decades at KYW Newsradio," Hanson reflects. "At its core, it's still about keen observation, talking to people, building relationships and working sources. But how we get the news to our listeners changed dramatically.

"When I started, we literally cut tape using a grease pencil and razor blade and relied on pay phone booths and a temperamental two-way radio system (handy-talkies) to broadcast from the scene. It was not unusual to go to a murder scene, interview a neighbor and then ask to enter their home and use their phone unscrewing the mouthpiece for a hookup that allowed us to transmit sound back to the station. Or perhaps, more disturbingly, knocking on the door of an unsuspecting and far too-trusting resident to inform them there had been a murder outside their home, and then asking to enter and disassembling their phone. Now the cell phone is a pocket-sized recording studio, editing booth and broadcast center.

Tony's concern focuses on the "new" technology. "It has also created new issues. One, in particular," he says, "has increasingly concerned me over the past decade. The internet and social media have allowed anyone with a computer or phone and internet connection to post whatever they want, often under the guise of news, without the oversight, restraint and ethical standards that, although dismissed by some wary of the 'main stream media,' are an integral part of daily news reporting by reputable organizations."

One wonders, how would Paul Rust handle that today?

Jerry Klein is another Philly radio veteran and industry observer. An attorney and business executive, Klein is a Broadcast Pioneers' past president and former KYW Newsradio editor. Like most good journalists, he summarizes the technical aspects of the 70-year journey this way:

"To me, the biggest change has been the technology. When I worked in radio in the mid-60s to mid-70s, all sound (other than records - i.e. 45s and LPs - and live performers) was on audio tape. It was basically either on reel-to-reel tape (flexible strips of acetate, and later Mylar, a quarter inch wide and hundreds of feet long) or tape "carts" (plastic cartridges with lengths of tape that ran in an endless loop, similar to 8-track cartridges). Many younger people in our industry have never heard of, let alone worked with, tape. You could not edit carts. Instead you had to edit the reel-to-reel audio, then "dub" (copy) it to the cart for use on the air. And, editing tape meant physically cutting and splicing it (with a cellophane-like tape), just like you had to do with movie film."

Jerry recalls that in 1998 "we had a reunion of people who had worked at the Temple University radio station, WRTI-FM, before it went all-jazz in 1968. At the reunion, we recorded a half-hour radio production (think TV program without pictures). After the recording session, I took the

reel-to-reel tapes home and started editing out the pauses, the bloopers and anything else that didn't belong in the final show and inserting some music and sound effects.

"It took hours of laborious cutting, rearranging and splicing of the physical tape. A few months later, I was introduced to digital recording and editing. I cursed that I had not had that technology available when putting that WRTI program together. Digital editing, whether audio or video, was so easy and versatile that it revolutionized the broadcast industry.

"Today, it is all bits and bytes recorded in computer files that can be manipulated and distributed in ways that the broadcasters of my era could not even have imagined."

So, what would Guglielmo Marconi — inventor, electrical engineer, entrepreneur and businessman — a Nobel Prize recipient and major contributor to the development of wireless telegraphy — think of his invention today? He would no doubt be pleased and not at all surprised. #

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Ad Club 2.0 is remarkable.

Today's Ad Club begins its mission younger by focusing on teens, college seminars and scholarships, 2.0's young professionals and a formal mentoring program.

College scholarships are now over \$40,000 a year. In comparison, in 1990, the club awarded \$5,050 to nine recipients. The Club's 501(c)3 designation makes it easier for individuals and corporations to support scholarship efforts. Kudos to Toyota for providing the club with an additional revenue outlet and for the media for promoting this initiative.

Our May 1993 Person of the Year luncheon, honoring CBS' Ed Bradley, was one of the first times a silent auction was held benefiting scholarships, with a follow-up at our Summer Outing. We achieved modest results compared to the breadth of today's auction items proffered and revenue achieved.

HOW WERE WE DIFFERENT?

For many years, the Ad Club produced a bi-annual Public Service Campaign for an area non-profit. Creative, production and media time were all donated. A memorable campaign was created by club board member & LevLane creative director, **Bruce Lev**, for the Children's Advocacy Center.

Noteworthy were four unique performances by the (in)famous Ad Club Band from 1990-98.



The band was originally organized by **Iliana Kloesmeyer** of Philadelphia Coca-Cola to perform at the Summer Outing. The band's drummer, **Frank Marciante**, recalls a band that included radio's **Vince Raimondo** on guitar, Baker Sound's **Gary Moskowitz** on bass, **Toni Brownstein** and **Mark Ferri** on vocals, and WMGK's **Kate Cohn** on keyboards.

The Ad Club Band garnered rave reviews at the 1993 Holiday Party. New members, **Harvey in the Morning** (keyboards), KYW-TV's **Fran Forgiore** (vocals) and radio's **Allen Hite** (bass and vocals) performed their version of "The Last Waltz" at their final performance at the Bellevue in Dec. '98 during **Mary Padula's** term as president.

Possible band reunion?

WHAT MADE US UNIQUE?

Our administrative office was led solely by the unflappable **Bernardine Steinmetz**, who, for many years, handled all club mailings, produced the Ad Club treasurer's report, mailed monthly newsletters, handled reservations, and attended every board meeting and event — all while working at *The Inquirer* and raising a young family. Many late nights with her dining room turned into a mail-house. A talented cellist, Bernardine is now teaching music.

The multi-talented **Shelley Goldstein** later replaced Bernardine, ably fulfilling admin duties.

We had a staff photographer. **Thomas Toohey Brown**, who after many years as a KYW-TV account executive, pursued his passion for photography, filming (yes — Film!) every seminar, luncheon, Addy, outing, holiday party, etc. You can check out Toohey's current work with brilliant sports and golf coverage.

We had the professional services of **Robert Goldy, Esq.** who served as the Ad Club's legal counsel for over 30 years.

We had the exceptional professionalism of TV Guide's **Beth Wagner**. Beth joined the Ad Club board in 1972 and served as First VP, participating in public service, seminar and summer outing groups. Her experience as Addy co-chair (then called the Billys) aided her transition from the board to Addy Coordinator (1991-95).

Beth recounts, "As a member of the Scholarship Committee, it was particularly rewarding to 'pay it forward' to college students eager to pursue



Toohey, Beth, Bernardine, Ted Goldflies

careers in broadcasting or advertising." Beth stated, "It was an honor to serve on the board of governors and work with area professionals for 25 of the Ad Club's 70 glorious years!" Beth is enjoying life in the beautiful Southwest.

WATCH FOR PART II
WITH PLENTY OF OLD PHOTOS