

Dick Robinson: From deejay to 'dean' Orchestra's drive goes over \$40,000

Broadcasting for Dick Robinson has always been more than just spinning platters.

Not that the former Springfield area disc jockey didn't like his job, (he was one of the top radio personalities in New England): There just had to be more to it.

Today, Robinson is considerably more than a "let's send this out to Marylou and Jimmy" guy. He is president of two radio stations and president of the Connecticut School of Broadcasting, an institution he founded in 1965.

The school has graduated over 3,000 persons since that time, many of whom are employed by stations in Western Massachusetts.

Robinson, born in Boston and a graduate of Boston University, began his broadcasting career in 1959 as a disc jockey in Ware. After a stint at station WREB in Holyoke, he moved on to WSPR in Springfield and then to WDRC in Hartford in 1964.

Although a popular figure in radio circles, Robinson made his shows even more attractive by seeking out interviews with the leading musical personalities of the day. The list is impressive: The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Tom Jones, Sonny and Cher, Diana Ross and the Supremes, Joan Baez, Frankie Avalon, and practically every oldtime rock and roll group worth its salt in the early sixties.

It was during his later years as a disc jockey that Robinson began toying with idea of starting a broadcasting school.

"Once I got some experience under my belt, I always enjoyed helping out the younger people in the business," he said. "I'd give out advice, tips, even special instruction to anybody that wanted to learn."

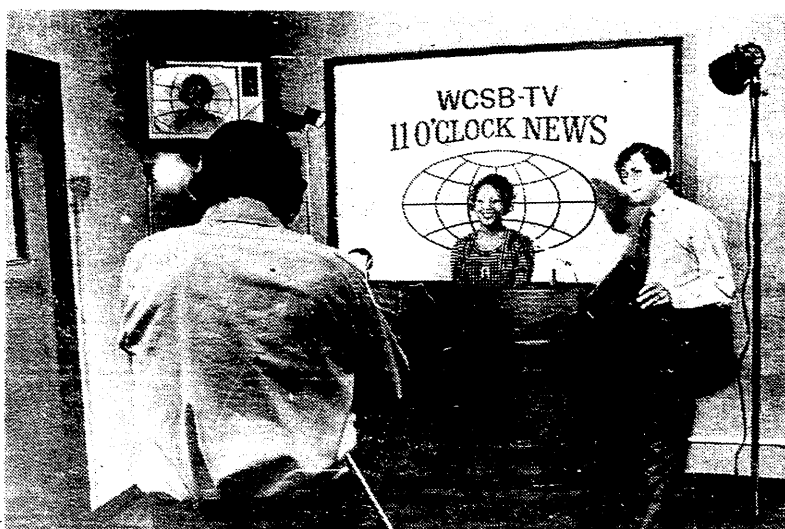
"After a while, I started meeting people who were interested in getting into broadcasting, so I decided to try and get a school going."

Operating from rented facilities in the former America Hotel (now the Sonesta) in Hartford, the school had a modest beginning. "We were just barely sufficient to provide proper instruction," Robinson said.

Today, the school is located at 750 Main Street, Hartford, with a branch also located in Stratford, Conn. Both sites have the latest in radio and television equipment to simulate modern studio techniques.

The school's faculty is manned by professional broadcasters and technicians, many of whom work for Hartford/Springfield radio and television stations.

Included in the school curriculum are classes in speech, announcing, control room procedures, news, copywriting, broadcast management, and FCC licensing. It also includes a complete overview of radio and television background, legal requirements, principles, organization and trends. Special



Students prepare for a mock television newscast during an announcing class at the Connecticut School of Broadcasting



DICK ROBINSON

lectures by prominent authorities on specific aspects of the industry are also presented and the school maintains a full-time Graduate Relations Department to aid students in employment.

"We have placed hundreds of students in the industry," Robinson says, "with by far the highest percentage employed in stations in Connecticut and Massachusetts."

The school holds classes for both day

and night students as well as special classes for high school students.

Day classes are held Monday through Thursday from 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. or 2 p.m.-5:30 p.m. for 8 weeks. Night classes are scheduled from 7-10:30 p.m. two days per week (Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday) for 16 weeks. Special classes for high school students are held on Saturdays from noon to 3 p.m. for 16 weeks.

The cost for full-time students is \$1,390 and \$690 for high school students. Three separate courses offered during the calendar year beginning in February, June and October, respectively.

Full-time classes are comprised of about 20 students each. "We keep the classes deliberately small so we can give greater attention to individual efforts and objectives," Robinson said, adding, "Each student undergoes rigorous critique sessions, simulated broadcasts, control room procedures and is taught a variety of skills we feel is needed by professional broadcast personnel."

Robinson offers a wide background in the industry and is among the chief lecturers. He has held numerous posts throughout his career, including present positions as co-owner and president of WRCQ (AM) and WRCH (FM) in Hartford.

A nephew of the late Henry Morton Robinson, author of the best-selling novel "The Cardinal," Robinson is married to the former Sally Johnson of Boston. They reside with their three children in Farmington, Conn.

Project Opera concert today at 'Hamp Academy of Music

Project Opera of Massachusetts, directed by Richard R. Rescia, has rescheduled its Young People's Lions' Club Benefit Concert for 4 p.m. today at the Academy of Music in Northampton. Heavy road flooding and icing conditions forced cancellation of the performance Jan. 21.

Leading singers will be Ann-Marie Lamotta of Wethersfield, Conn., Kari Rescia and Judith Oberholtzer of Northampton, Gregory Gallivan and Peter Payson of Springfield, with Phyl-

lis Paige and Andria Ettrick of Amherst.

The orchestral program will begin with Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf," narrated by Jill Ker Conway, president of Smith College. An abbreviated staged and costumed version of Humpdinc's popular children's opera, "Hansel and Gretel," will be narrated by Dr. Rupert von Trapp, of the famed Trapp Family Singers.

Tickets may be purchased at the door.

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