

# 40th Birthday Observed

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A - TIMES

## By Radio Station WWNC

Radio Station WWNC, the radio voice of the Asheville Citizen-Times, today is celebrating 40 years of service as the "Pioneer Voice" of Western North Carolina.

Today's station with its 5,000-watt transmitter and modern studio is an outgrowth of pioneer interest in radio in 1923, when E. H. Jackson Jr. set up a tiny 20-watt station in the rear of his battery shop at 19 Haywood St.

Jackson, a member of the board of directors of the Asheville Chamber of Commerce, gave his frequency to the chamber in 1926, and in 1927 the chamber purchased a 1,000-watt transmitter from WSM-Nashville and set up WWNC on top of the Flatiron Building.

Its first program boosting Asheville went on the air on Feb. 22, 1927, with a dinner program and concert broadcast from George Vanderbilt Hotel highlighting the christening ceremonies. Communications from every state and five foreign countries brought congratulations to the infant station.

In its infancy, programming was intermittent and of a local nature, with listeners using crystal sets and battery-operated sets. Local artists contributed heavily to the radio fare.

After the depression the station was taken over by G. O. Shepherd, advertising man who commented on radio programs in a news column called GOSH. Purchased by the Citizen in 1928, the station operated from atop the Flatiron Building until moved to the new newspaper building on O. Henry avenue in 1939 under the ownership of The Citizen.

First affiliated with CBS from 1929 to 1931, the Station switched to NBC from 1931 to 1939 before reverting to CBS in 1939. From three employees in 1927, the station has grown to around 20 employees.

James M. Lorick, who began his radio career in 1926 and has remained with the station since its christening in 1927, recalls that "to first get on the network, we had to pay, and we started a CBS Chain Club; everybody interested sent in a dollar.

The station began an expansion program in 1946, when it increased its power to 5,000 watts, and moved its transmitting facilities to Emma.

Station Manager J. W. Douglas noted today that a new five-kilowatt solid state transmitter is now being installed. With the installation of the new transmitter, the station will have installed 99 per cent new equipment within the past few years, he said.

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