

September 16, 2019

Early methods of scanning and transmitting graphics date back to the early 19th century.

Constantin Perskyi had coined the word television in a paper that was read to the International Electricity Congress at the International World Fair in Paris on August 24, 1900.

Philo T. Farnsworth - worked out the principle of the image dissector in the summer of 1921, not long before his 15th birthday. He demonstrated the first working version of a television on September 7, 1927 at the age of 21 in his laboratory in San Francisco and had developed the system sufficiently to hold a demonstration for the press in September of 1928. This is widely regarded as the first electronic television demonstration.

Vladimir Zworykin came up with the main invention of the 20th century – electronic television. He applied for a television patent in the United States in 1923. In November of 1929, he introduced the new receiver that he named the “kinescope”.

Isaac Shoenberg - In 1932, he and his team succeeded in making an electronic television picture-generating tube. By 1936 the BBC launched a public television service using the system Shoenberg had pioneered.

In 1939, **David Sarnoff**, then president of RCA chose to introduce television to the mass public at the RCA pavilion at the New York's World Fair when President Franklin D. Roosevelt's speech was televised along with other parts of the opening ceremony at the fair.

The television networks during the late 1940's were:

NBC - Red - (Now NBC) April 30, 1939

NBC - Blue - January 9, 1942 to June 15, 1945

CBS - July 1, 1941 to present

ABC - April 19, 1948

Dumont Network - June 28, 1942 to August 6, 1956

NBC was ordered to divest one of its networks in 1942. Their Blue network was sold in 1943 and renamed the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) in 1945.

ABC took over the Hollywood Recreation Bowling Alley at 1555 Vine Street with a restaurant called Breneman's. From there, host Tom Breneman served up one of radio's earliest national audience participation shows, the enormously popular "Breakfast in Hollywood" interviewing everyone from 100-year-old birthday guests to Orson Welles. This same building would eventually become the TAV Celebrity Theater as the home of the Merv Griffin Show. By 1949, ABC Television also acquired the studio property located at 4151 Prospect Avenue, Hollywood, California. At that time, it was the world's largest, state-of-the-art television center.

You Bet Your Life (Time 29:30) - Aired on Thursday, May 12, 1955 at 8:00PM. Filmed in Studio A at NBC Studios in Hollywood, California.

After appearing with his brothers in vaudeville, films and radio, Groucho Marx took the next step to television. While his brothers would also make television appearances over the years, it was Groucho who achieved the most recognition and popularity.

During a radio appearance with Bob Hope in March 1947, Marx ad-libbed most of his performance after being forced to stand by

in a waiting room for 40 minutes before going live on the air. John Guedel, the Hope program's producer, formed an idea for a quiz show and approached Marx about the subject.

After initial reluctance by Groucho, he agreed to do the show.

Researchers interviewed all prospective guests in advance. Groucho did not meet any of the guests before each show began.

Debuted on ABC radio on Monday, October 27, 1947 at 5:00PM West coast time. Next, the program moved to CBS debuting October 5, 1949. After going to television, the show was pre-recorded and edited for broadcasts. On NBC, the program aired from October 5, 1950 to September 21, 1961. Seasons 1 to 8 (1950-58), it was on Thursdays 8:00PM-8:30PM Eastern. Seasons 9 to 11 (1958-61), it was on Thursdays 10:00PM-10:30PM Eastern.

Groucho's salary at NBC was a guaranteed minimum of \$263,200 annually for ten years and 38% of the net profits.

The story about Groucho's famous cigar line has been a subject up for discussion over the years. Thanks to the documentation of You Bet Your Life Director Bernie Smith, the story has been confirmed as having happened on radio.

Albert Arthur Hall - the most memorable contestant who had Groucho on the edge. He was born in Coronado, Kansas on October 14, 1886 and was living in Atchison, Kansas in 1900. He registered in the draft for World War I in 1917 while working at the Seattle Times and again in 1942 for World War II at the age of 55. He married Catherine Mary Conroy in King, Washington on June 22, 1911 when she was only 19. Together, they had three children and one grandchild. By 1942, he was living at 10738^{1/2}

Wilshire Avenue (probably Wilshire Blvd.) in Los Angeles and did not have a telephone. He and his wife were living in Los Angeles at the time of his death in August of 1964 at the age of 77. Catherine was 89 years old when she passed away in 1981. They are buried together in Calvary Cemetery in Seattle Washington.

Barbara Louise Schmidt - was born on July 25, 1938. While in Elliot Junior High School, she was on the Student Council and on the cheerleading squad. At this same time, she also began modeling teenage clothes in the tea-rooms of major department store such as Bullocks, The Broadway and The May Company. She was selected as the Pasadena Rose Queen of 1954. After high school Barbara attended UCLA for a while. She has extensively traveled through Europe and Russia. She has one daughter. The high point of her life, she says, is seeing her daughter graduate from law school.

Mario Selveo DaRe - Younger brother of film and television actor, Aldo Ray*. Played football at the University of Southern California in 1954 and lettered in 1952-53-54. Went to John Swett High School in Crocket, California. He served in the United States Army and was the 5th round pick for the Chicago Cardinals football team in 1955. As a defensive tackle wearing number 63, he also played for the Winnepeg Blue Bombers Canadian football team in 1955. Mario had one uncredited acting credit as a football player in the 1953 film *All-American* starring Tony Curtis.

*Aldo Ray appeared in over 100 films and television programs. Among his credits are television roles in *Riverboat*, *Ben Casey*, *Falcon Crest* and *CHiPs* plus films *Battle Cry* along with *Pat and Mike*.

Chico Marx appeared on *You Bet Your Life* - December 19, 1957

The Abbott and Costello Show - (Time 26:10) Episode Title:
The Actors' Home.

The first station to air the program was KTTV Channel 11 in Los Angeles on Tuesday, October 7, 1952 at 7:30PM. The series made its network debut on WCBS, Friday, December 5, 1952 at 10:30PM and set a record for syndication fees in New York. The show lasted two seasons (a total of 52 episodes). The entire first year's episodes were filmed in about three months. Since it was not a network program, it was sold into syndication by MCA, Inc. to about 40 local stations across the country. As a result, it was broadcast on different days and times in different cities.

The first season was filmed at the Hal Roach Studios in Culver City. The 14.5-acre studio, once known as "The Lot of Fun," was the home of Laurel & Hardy, Our Gang and many of the great comedy classics of the 1920's and 1930's. By the 1950's, numerous television series were being filmed on this lot. The second season was shot at Motion Picture Center Studios (today Red Studios Hollywood), where the team had made Abbott and Costello Meet Captain Kidd. Soon after, the studio became Desilu-Cahuenga Studios. I Love Lucy and the Danny Thomas and Jack Benny shows were also filmed there.

Who's On First was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown in 1956.

Sidney Fields - played the hot-tempered, bald-headed landlord of the rooming house where Abbott and Costello lived. He was a frequent target of gags and schemes from Bud and Lou. He played several other roles as well, usually wearing a wig, glasses or other disguise. (These characters were often related to the

landlord.) After the show ended, Sidney played occasional small roles in television shows, and worked as a staff writer and comedian in Jackie Gleason and His American Scene Magazine.

Joe Besser - substituted for Lou Costello on radio, opposite Bud Abbott and by the 1950's he was firmly established as one of the Abbott and Costello regulars. On The Abbott and Costello Show for television, they hired Joe Besser to play Oswald "Stinky" Davis, a bratty, loudmouthed child dressed in an oversized Little Lord Fauntleroy outfit. Joe Besser then joined The Three Stooges replacing Shemp Howard after his death in November of 1955. The Three Stooges shorts with Besser were filmed from the spring of 1956 to the end of 1957.

Joe Kirk - Born Ignazio Curcuruto in 1903. Mr. Bacciagalupe was Lou Costello's real-life brother-in-law, married to Lou's sister Marie. They were divorced in 1953 which explains why Mr. Bacciagalupe did not appear on the second season of this series.

Jo-Carroll Dennison (left) - was Miss Texas of 1942 and was the first Miss Texas to become a Miss America. A few years later, she would be one of the judges to choose Phyllis George to become Miss Texas 1971 and Phyllis would later become Miss America. She was previously married to Phil Silvers. She played small parts in television programs in the early 1950's.

Jarma Lewis (right) - was spotted by director Henry Hathaway while working as a receptionist in a Beverly Hills dental clinic. She was subsequently cast in a small role in Prince Valiant (1954) and was briefly a starlet at 20th Century-Fox (1954) and MGM (1955-57). Served for 15 years on the executive board of the UCLA Art Council. She was married to Benjamin Bensinger III, heir to the Brunswick bowling fortune.

Joan Shawlee - As 19 year old Joan Fulton, she was spotted singing at the famous Copacabana by Lou Costello in 1945. On the condition that her mother could join her in Hollywood, Joan signed a new contract with Universal Pictures. She appeared in thirteen films as 'Joan Fulton', culminating in a leading role in *Buck Privates Come Home* (1947). In 1950, she married businessman Walter Shawlee and changed her name to Joan Shawlee. Joan was also a favorite actress of producer-director-writer Billy Wilder and was featured in three of his films: in *Some Like It Hot* (1959), *The Apartment* (1960) and *Irma la Douce* (1963).

Lucien Littlefield - His career began in the days of silent films and continued into the sound era. He is best remembered for his role as the mad scientist in Laurel & Hardy's *Dirty Work* and as Dr. Horace Meddick the veterinarian in *Sons Of The Desert*.

Allen Jenkins - Although his screen persona was that of a not-too-bright Brooklyn tough guy, Jenkins attended the American Academy of Dramatic Arts and appeared in many Broadway plays before making his film debut in 1931. He found his niche at Warner Brothers, where he perfected his slow-witted but good-natured gangster/taxi driver/cop character. In the latter part of his career he appeared frequently on TV, and was a regular on the TV series *Hey, Jeannie!* (1956). He is probably best remembered by "baby boomers" as the voice of the put-upon cop Officer Dibble in the popular cartoon series *Top Cat* (1961).

Thurston Hall - was most famous for his role of Mr. Schuyler in the *Topper* series of the early 1950s. Hall was a tall, distinguished, imposing-looking man, which fit perfectly with the variety of military officers, wealthy businessmen, bankers and upper-crust types he played so well. He started out in silent films,

but his rich baritone voice enabled him to easily transition into talkies. In addition to television, he appeared in more than 200 films, his final one being *Affair in Reno* (1957).

Hal Roach Studios Television Programs (partial list)

Abbott & Costello (season 1)
Duffy's Tavern
I'm The Law
My Little Margie
Mystery Theatre
Racket Squad
Rocky Jones, Space Ranger
The Stu Erwin Show (aka *Trouble With Father*; *Life With Father*)
Public Defender
Life Of Riley
It's A Great Life
Waterfront
Passport to Adventure
Adventures of Superman (2 episodes)
Twilight Zone episode titled "Two"

REFERENCES

Monkey Business by Simon Louvish

Raised Eyebrows - My Years Inside Groucho's House
by Steve Stoliar

Lou's On First by Chris Costello

Wikipedia

