



A Century of Progress, 1933

○ # 2

○ Vol-23

○ 2017



A few Voice of America tails as it was in the past, soon to become something different



NMRCC theme for last month the All American Five tube radio, one example



NEW MEXICO

RADIO COLLECTORS CLUB

February 12th—Wild Card Sunday stump the experts

The Voice of America (VOA) is a dynamic international multimedia broadcaster with service in more than 40 languages. Serving an estimated weekly global audience of 236.6 million, VOA provides news, information, and cultural programming through the Internet, mobile and social media, radio, and television. VOA is funded by the U.S. Government through the Broadcasting Board of Governors. The Voice of America began broadcasting in 1942 to combat Nazi propaganda with accurate and unbiased news and information. Ever since then, VOA has served the world with a consistent message of truth, hope and inspiration.

The 75th Anniversary of the Voice of America

This article is a collection of email stories from some current and past people who worked at the Voice of America in the past, I hope you enjoy it.

As of January 1, the Internet Archive's [VOA Newscasts](#) collection has more than 20,000 five-minute hourly newscasts. That's some 57 GB of data, almost 10 weeks of nonstop listening. Newscasters heard on VOA's hourly newscasts include Frances Alonzo, Victor Beattie, Vincent Bruce, Dave DeForest, Bob Dougherty, Marti Johnson, Ray Kouguell, Michael Lipin, Ira Mellman, Bill Michaels, Steve Norman, Joe Palca, and Sarah Williams. And of

course, there are thousands of newsmaker actualities and reports from VOA correspondents and stringers around the world.

VOAnews.com seems to be archiving newscasts for now, but every time the content management system changes, there seem to be wholesale purging of audio content. Posting these newscasts on an independent, dedicated archive may help these valuable historic resources survive. Art No snarky comments here. But a question: a friend asked me about Willis Conover and his jazz program on VOA. I heard it occasionally when I was overseas, but I had to admit that in 26 years with the voice, including

(Continued on page Six)

February 1, 1942

"We bring you voices from America"



Radio Comes of Age in the Great Depression by David Wilson

The Great Depression drove down the average price of a radio sold in United States from \$139 in 1929 to about \$47 just four years later. But the brutal market forces of the early depression did not stop Americans from buying radios; by the end of the 1920s, one third of U.S. households owned a radio and by

1933 that number climb close to 60%.

Radio was a great entertainment value in a time when people struggled just to pay rent and put food on the table. By 1933, the radio manufacturers had made major technological improvements that in turn allowed radio stations to

reach more listeners in American and around the world. These improvements helped fuel sales; it was estimated that by 1933, 4.5 million radios in U.S. homes were becoming obsolete due to improved radio broadcast and short-wave reception. Radio sales in the early 1930's also had help from "installment buying" or buying on credit.

(Continued on page Four)

The NMRCC First Meeting for 2017

The first meeting of the New Mexico Radio Collectors Club theme was the All American Five (AA5) radio. This radio design was the most sold super-heterodyne radio. It survived for years and wars. Most radios were the plastic version introduced around 1929 and sold through 1964 by most major radio manufacturers. RCA quit in 1962, Zenith in 1967, Philco introduced transistor radios in 1955 and quit tube radios right after that, Emerson didn't quit until around 1955. a few Japanese brands continued selling AA5 tube radios into the mid '60s.

All early transistor radios also used the proven simple superheterodyne design just using transistors. A single transistor worked as local oscillator and mixer (1st detector), a single IF amplifier, tuned to 455kHz. And a diode or transistor used as the 2nd detector.

The pictures on page 3 were from members starting with David Wilson NMRCC President with his two 1938 Charley McCarthy AA5 radios from Majestic Radio and Television. Both radios are brown Bakelite the one is painted white and Charley is cast pot-metal painted.

From member Andy Baron was a very unique Hallicrafters clock radio that was used to demonstrate the modern printed circuit design for the AA5. it was used as a salesman sample and in store sales tool.

To the right from Richard Majestic's collection the 1939 clipper ship AA5 radio the "Majestic Melody Cruiser", also made by Majestic Radio and Television. It has chromed steel sales and cable rigging and the ships hull is solid mahogany with lacquer finish.

To the left is Chuck Burch's mid '50s Bakelite Zenith AA5.

At the bottom of page 3 is John Hannahs' Philco AA5 in a painted white Bakelite case.

I've been told all of these AA5 radios play well and have been cosmetically restored to original quality.
~R Majestic

A reminder that your 2017 NMRCC dues are now payable. Your dues pay for the ongoing expenses of the newsletter printing and mailing and our gettogethers with food and auctions.

If you value the newsletter and your club please send you check for \$20 for the year or \$200 for a life membership.

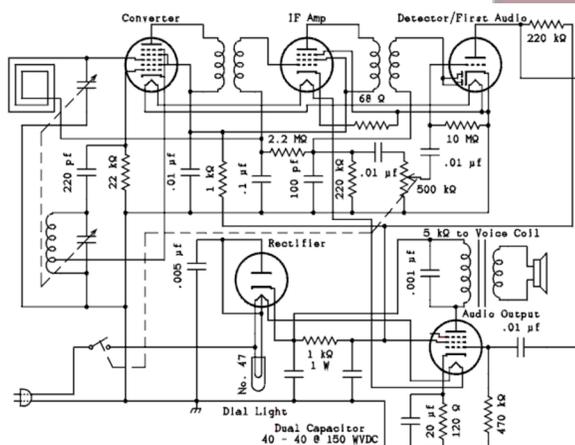


1938 Emerson BT245 Catalin AA5

NMRCC 2017 MEETINGS

- January 8th** Plastic-Bakelite AA5 radios
- February 12th** **Wild Card Sunday**
- March 12th** Old tube boxes, books and KOB History program
- April 9th** Code keys, bugs, sounders
- May 21st** Spring Picnic (TBA)
- June 11th** Field Trip ABQ Balloon Museum, plus Presentation on Stratosphere radios and history
- July 9th** Early plastic, catalin and Bakelite radios
- August 13th** Radio repair workshop
- September 10th** Unusual devices to stump the experts
- October 8th** Fall Picnic (Wilson's) Field Trip to Goddard Hall-Klipsch NMSU
- November 12th** Little known radio manufacturers
- December 10th** Holiday party (Toppo's)

Calendar Change—I have another obligation for our February 12th meeting, Theme will be 'Wild Card Sunday' stump the experts. The radio repair workshop will be held August 13th



NMRCC Officers for 2017

- *David Wilson: President*
- *Mark Toppo: Vice President*
- *Richard Majestic: Treasurer*
- *open Secretary*
- *open Membership*
- *Ron Monty Director*
- *Ray Truijillo Director*
- *John Anthes Director*
- *John Hannahs*
- *Richard Majestic: Newsletter Editor (President pro-tem)*



-Andy Baron's Hallicrafters AA5 clock radio salesman's radio
 -Chuck Burch's Zenith AA5 MW Bakelite radio



Top: David Wilson's Majestic Radio and Television 1938 Charley McCarthy AA5 radios and a original shipping box.

Mid right: Richard Majestic's 1939 Majestic Melody Cruiser 1S49 clipper ship AA5 radio.

Left: John Hannahs' Philco AA5 MW radio.



(Continued from page One)

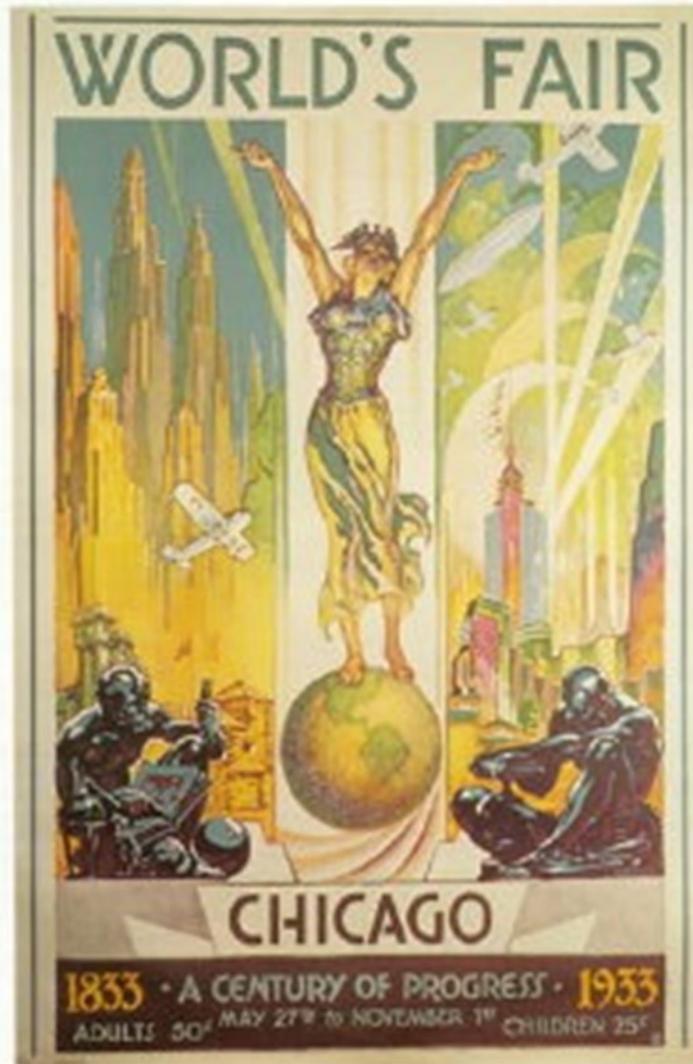
In 1931, 75% of all radios were sold on installment payments with the average radio buyer putting 20% down on their radio purchase.

It was the deep and dark days of the early 1930's and the Great Depression that would have a profound influence on industrial design in America. Streamline and Modern design were born after the popular Art Deco design movement of the 1920s. Complicated design was replaced with simplified straight lines and basic aerodynamic curves.

Basing its American "radio population" on the 1930 radio-set census (taken at the same time as the official decennial census of population), which disclosed 12,048,762, or 40.3%, of the homes in the United States with radios, the U. I. R. projected this figure into 1933 to a total of 17,004,781 "radioized homes," or slightly more than one out of every two homes. Thus, out of the estimated world total, the United States has nearly half of the radios in the world. The United States had 599 broadcasting stations, according to the Federal Radio Commission's annual report for June 30, 1933.

According to the Department of Commerce, other countries had the following number of stations: Russia, 73; China, 72; Canada, 64; Australia, 61; Cuba, 57; Mexico, 54; Argentina, 35; Uruguay, 33; New Zealand, 33; Sweden, 31; Japan, 30; France, 29; Germany, 26. Great Britain in 1933 reorganized its broadcasting structure to serve the British Isles with fifteen more or less powerful units. It will be seen that there is really no definite relationship between the number of listeners and the number of radio stations. Some countries need, by reason of their relatively small size and homogeneous population, only a few high-power stations. Others, like the United States, license not only high-power stations to serve widespread audiences but lower-power stations to serve regional and local audiences.

Broadcasting of the 599 broadcasting stations in the United States, approximately 500 are licensed to different individuals or corporations. There are two major network organizations--the National Broadcasting Company, operating two national networks linking in whole or part a total of about eighty stations, and the Columbia Broadcasting System, also linking about eighty stations but in a single network in



whole or part. Most of these stations are individually owned by private enterprises. They subscribe to network programs almost precisely as the newspapers subscribe to press association services. Each of the network organizations, however, owns so-called "key" stations and others in strategic points. NBC owns or operates seventeen stations under management leases; CBS, seven. There are a few regional networks, such as the Yankee Network of ten stations in New England, the Don Lee Network of eight California stations, and several smaller networks.

Europe has fewer networks, which are simply telephone-line links between stations so that they may take common programs on a national or regional scale. The network idea spread considerably in Europe during 1933, however, and where the stations are not powerful enough to cover the entire country, countries like England, Germany, and Japan link up their stations in a manner somewhat similar to the American scheme.

Programs whereas in countries that own and operate their own broadcasting systems the ruling authorities decide what the public shall hear, usually heeding to some extent the tastes of their audiences, but sometimes, as in Russia and to a more limited extent in England, presenting what the authorities believe the public ought to hear, in the United States there is practically unrestrained competition between the rival networks and the rival stations for the listeners' attention. The 1933 trend in the United States was again markedly toward more variety shows, especially those featuring noted comedians like Eddie Cantor, Ed Wynn, Al Jolson, Will Rogers, and Jack Pearl.

A similar trend was reported in 1933 from England, where the British Broadcasting Corporation during the year conceded that perhaps more "crazy shows" should be given to please the public. But 1933 was probably most notable in American radio, at least from the program standpoint, by the growing number of network and individual station programs offering the higher type of music. The networks also scored in 1933 when NBC relayed broadcasts direct from Commander Settle's stratosphere balloon during its ascent; when CBS rebroadcast, on regular schedule, short-wave relays direct from Admiral Byrd's flagship en route to Little America; and when both carried numerous programs of speech and music from many foreign countries.

Sponsors of programs--the advertisers who buy time from networks and stations--turned somewhat more favorably to great orchestral organizations and great artists, so that 1933 brought to the air more frequently such famous aggregations as the Philadelphia Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the Metropolitan

Opera, and many great artists. Indeed, the only outstanding musical artists who have not yet been heard on the American radio are Fritz Kreisler, Paderewski, and Rachmaninoff; even these have admitted a lessening of their former prejudices and may soon be heard.

Drama enjoyed something of a comeback but dialogue comedy remained more popular. Drama still does not enjoy the vogue in America that it commands abroad. Crooners and dance music continue to be the mainstays of most sponsored programs as well as of most sustaining programs, which are not paid for by advertisers but by the networks and stations themselves. The two major networks had a combined revenue from time sales during 1933 of \$31,516,298 which was 19% under their 1932 total of \$39,106,776. The NBC networks accounted for \$21,452,732 of the 1933 total, as compared with \$26,504,891 in 1932; the CBS network accounted for \$10,063,566 in 1933 as compared with \$12,601,885 in 1932.

Until the latter part of 1933, no statistics on individual station time sales were compiled, but the National Association of Broadcasters began in September to gather figures from stations to determine their collective non-network revenues. Each of the three months reported up to the time of this writing showed non-network revenues running close to \$2,500,000, which would indicate total revenues for non-network stations of about \$30,000,000 a year.

Thus the total 1933 revenues from advertising time sales by networks and stations in the United States approximated \$60,000,000 for 1933, the middle six months of which constituted a deep depression season for radio advertising. Data gathered by the broadcasters' association, in preparing its code of fair competition under the National Industrial Recovery Act, disclosed some 11,000 regular employees in the networks and radio stations, which was increased in 1933 under the NRA to nearly 12,000, with a total payroll running about \$22,000,000. This is exclusive of the sums paid to non-staff artists, thousands of whom perform annually before the microphones of both networks and individual stations. Statistics are lacking as to the incomes, payrolls, and costs of foreign radio

systems and stations, but it is generally accepted that the American competitive system operates with the largest money turnover of any system in the world.

The most notable feature in regard to allocations in 1933 was the newly formed Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, which not only tightened regulations for the more efficient technical operation of Canada's privately owned stations, but actually took over the operation of five of them and undertook to show whether a dual system of governmental and private operation could work in North America. This commission subscribed to American network programs and from its own network "fed" periodic programs to the American networks. Wavelengths were reassigned with the purpose of better serving Canada's far-flung population, and projects were afoot during the year for new powerful stations to rival those of the United States in their coverage capacity.

In Europe there was considerable anxiety over the apparent unwillingness of certain nations to abide by the Plan de Lucerne, whereby wavelengths were parceled out anew to the nations in June, 1933, to go into effect January 15, 1934. Obstinate nations, with their national jealousies and political uncertainties, threatened to upset the plan by refusing to take the waves assigned them. There were no substantial changes in wavelength allocations in the United States, though plans were afoot at the end of 1933 to create more "room in the ether" for more stations by duplicating the otherwise clear channels, which are used exclusively at night by individual stations in the higher-power categories. The Federal Radio Commission licensed more clear channel stations to the maximum permissible power of 50,000 watts, bringing the total at the end of the year to twenty-five.

A conference of North American in Mexico City to reallocate wave lengths among themselves failed completely in the spring of 1933, at least so far as broadcasting is concerned. The United States and Canada, already in friendly agreement as to the division of the ninety-six available wave lengths for their exclusive or joint use, were unable to persuade Mexico to cease licensing powerful new stations along the Rio Grande, stations which were usually backed by Americans who were persona non grata in a radio way

with their own government. These stations generally point their antennas northward to serve American rather than Mexican audiences, deriving their support largely from American advertisers. They "squat" on or near American and Canadian wave-lengths, causing more or less interference, depending upon the powers they employ.

The most significant development in broadcasting regulation was the Federal Radio Commission's action in December, which authorized the widening of the broadcasting band of wavelengths to embrace the range from 1500 to 1600 kilocycles. Three 20-kilocycle channels in this 100-kilocycle band (namely 1530, 1550, and 1570 kilocycles) were designated for new stations for experimentation with high quality transmission and reception. Private enterprisers who license to use these waves--and about a dozen such licenses are anticipated in 1934--must look to the future for a commercial return, since all but the more recently manufactured radios cannot tune down so far. Stations using those wave lengths must not only induce the radio manufacturers to bring out standard sets that will take in those waves, but must also offer attractive enough programs to persuade the public to buy such radios or revamp their existing radios to tune them in.

Radio City, New York Perhaps the most notable event in American broadcasting in 1933 was the November opening of the gigantic Radio City amusement enterprise, more properly known as Rockefeller Center, built largely by Rockefeller capital upon the actual and prospective development of radio and its allied amusements. NBC moved its offices and studios into the RCA Building, towering office unit of the great New York City development.

The studios of NBC are reputed to be the finest as well as the largest in the world, occupying with the offices some 400,000 square feet and including an auditorium studio seventy-eight by one hundred and thirty-two feet, three stories in height. There are thirty-six studios in all, but eight were left unfurnished, presumably to await the advent of television.

This is the end of part one, to be continued next month. D. Wilson

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six in the HEW, I never even saw Willis. I was told once that he pre recorded all his shows, and that he did them in batches instead of daily, but I don't know if that is correct. I don't even know if he came to HEW to record, or were they



taped elsewhere. I do know that I think of him any time I hear the opening chords of A Train. Any help? John Farris Yes, Willis recorded ALL his shows at his studio in Cohen bldg. I saw him almost daily and even sat in the studio next to him at times as he recorded the shows, usually two or three at a time. We were close because most of his audience at the time was in "my" area - Eastern Europe, USSR and Baltics. He was always POV.

He often sought my support (I was Euro Div Dep Chief and often Acting Chief) because (I hate to bring it up, but it was the truth) there were people in the English area that wanted to get rid of his program and prefer rock nroll or Now Music USA (which it turned to when Willis died). The fact is Willis had an audience in the millions. Cliff Groce and I stood by him. Vello Ederma

I wasn't as directly involved in the politics as you were, but did know that people in the English language areas did want to get rid of him. It was so fortunate that you and Cliff and others prevailed.

Willis came to the HEW – later Cohen building – to record his shows. Before the studios were renovated in the late 1980s he used Studio 16 exclusively. I remember it reeked of stale cigarette smoke, and was littered with piles of tapes and other detritus, but he put out a beautiful product. A succession of engineers worked with him. He did record the shows well in advance, but was there nearly every day of the week. As I remember it, his engineer also served as his chauffeur, picking him up at home to deliver him to VOA.

When the studio renovation began, he was moved to a small office that had been converted to a studio. I was tasked with redesigning it and given a small budget to work with; he wasn't especially happy with the facility, especially because of ambient and external noise. I

eventually had a Wenger soundproof rehearsal room placed inside the studio space, which made him a lot happier. (We were using Wenger rooms in the language service production studios.)

Willis was temperamental, but was a true talent; we always got along well. He was a legend world-wide; although he was the best-known VOA talent by far, he was never a government employee; for all his years, he was a POV. Bob Scherago

I worked in the Cohen building for my entire 32 year VOA career and can attest that Willis recorded in house. I don't know what his recording schedule was, however. In his later years before his 1996 death, he frequently came into the newsroom during a break, where I'd engage him in a discussion of one of my favorite topics -- jazz. I treasure those memories. Dave McAlary

Regarding Blair's comment re: Willis' VOA employment, the following is an excerpt from a VOA public relations office profile: ". . . he signed 40 one-year contracts during his time at VOA to ensure he remained a contractor rather than a government employee. This allowed him to retain control of his schedule and take advantage of other work opportunities."

Among his outside work, Willis had a Jazz show called "Willis Conover's House of Sounds," on WCBS in New York. The show sounds to me pretty much like his VOA programs, except that it also included commercials, weather, etc. As an example, I've attached a short clip from the Christmas Eve 1960 broadcast where, before introducing a recording, he makes a small joke during a traffic report. You can hear the whole show (compliments of the University of North Texas)

here: <http://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc944390/m1/#track/15>

Staying on memory lane, Willis was a long-time fan of the horror writer H.P. Lovecraft. As a 12-year old, he exchanged letters with the writer and in the 1970's published a collection of the letters in a book, Lovecraft at Last: The Master of Horror in His Own Words. The letters to Willis showed a largely unknown gentle and funny side of Lovecraft. My small involvement in it

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was introducing Willis to my father, who owned a small legal publishing company in Arlington in the early 1970s. Willis wanted to self-publish the book and he met with my Dad a few times to learn how to go about it. The book came out in 1975 -- I believe that a publishing house had picked it up. -Fred

Quite correct on Willis recordings of Music USA and his other offerings on the premises... more than 10,000 programs over 42 years. He also participated in jazz programs in the old USSR Division and worked closely there with Marie Ciliberti. My favorite Willis quote: "Jazz is a classical parallel to our American political and social system. We agree in advance on the laws and customs we abide by, and having reached agreement, we are free to do whatever we wish within these constraints. It's the same with jazz. The musicians agree on the key, the harmonic changes, the tempo and the duration of the piece. Within these guidelines, they are free to play what they want. And when people in other countries hear that quality in the music, it stimulates the same need for freedom in their lives."

Not a bad 75th anniversary sentiment, as well. Best, Alan Heil



VOICE of AMERICA
1967 25th Anniversary
US Postage Stamp

Alan Heil is the current Director of VOA; VOA, still in the Cohen building, Alan was the main broadcast operations leader and boss when I was in VOA engineering and later the Division Chief of the Special Projects Division. I worked for the VOA from 1985 to 1996, during that time I met and talked with Willis Conover many times. We talked about his programs during WWII and the Korean war. He smoked cigarettes and in his later years had that deep slow announcer's voice that fit the jazz music he played and loved. VOA housed most of Willis's music library, a lot of 78 RPM records, tons of LPs and my division was involved with the relocation of his record library and studio.

Happy 75th Birthday VOA. Check out the website. <http://www.voanews.com/> still the most trusted in news accuracy, let's hope this and all US Congress's keep them going another 75 years. Richard Majestic

Election Night 2016 at VOA

VOA's journalists worked late into the night covering the 2016 Elections on November 8, 2016 and ...
[Show more](#)



VOA's Coverage of the National Conventions 2016

VOA reporters were hard at work in Cleveland and Philadelphia.
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VOA Television Anchors

[Show more](#)



1 Patsy Widakuswara is a TV anchor and senior TV producer for VOA's Indonesian Service. She supervises the development and production of news programs and anchors various TV shows. Prior to joining VOA, she worked at Indonesia's first TV news station, Metro TV, and at BBC as an assistant producer.



**NEW MEXICO RADIO
COLLECTORS CLUB**

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FOR INFORMATION CHECK THE INTERNET
<http://www.newmexicoradiocollectorsclub.com/>

The New Mexico Radio Collectors Club is a non-profit organization founded in 1994 in order to enhance the enjoyment of collecting and preservation of radios for all its members.

NMRCC meets the second Sunday of the month at The Quelab at 680 Haines Ave NW, Albuquerque NM Tailgate sale at 1:00PM meetings start at 2:00 pm. Visitors Always Welcomed.

NMRCC NEWSLETTER

THIS PUBLICATION IS THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW MEXICO RADIO COLLECTORS CLUB. INPUT FROM ALL MEMBERS ARE SOLICITED AND WELCOME ON 20TH OF THE PRECEDING MONTH. RICHARD MAJESTIC PRO-TEMP NEWSLETTER EDITOR, SEND ALL SUBMISSIONS IN WORD FORMAT, PICTURES IN *.JPG FORMAT TO: RMAJESTIC@MSN.COM

USPS Stamp

October 1934 Grigsby Grunow Co. Liquidation Sale

Sales figures starting 1927 through 1932 year end and some employee data for GG Majestic

	Gross sales	Net before taxes, etc.	Before dividends	After dividends	Date	Production/day	Employees
1927	\$ 4,988,727	\$ 652,202	\$ 553,358	\$ 381,383	6-7/28	1500	—
year ending 5/31/28	5,861,225	895,667	616,206	444,231	11/28	3250	6,000
8 mos. ending 1/31/29	32,185,568	4,329,140	3,396,843	2,907,903	12/28	3300	6,800
year ending 5/31/29	49,318,669	6,531,809	5,117,614	4,191,634	2/29	4000	—
(2nd source)	49,275,990				5/29	—	6,000
year ending 5/31/30	61,330,217	3,022,513	1,745,648	(564,421)	7/29	4400	—
year ending 5/31/31	28,350,881	(352,785)	(2,169,761)		8/29	5000	11,000
7 mos. ending 12/31/31	8,417,590	(1,330,052)	(2,901,305)		7/30	3700	15,000 (for 60 days only)
6 mos. ending 6/30/32	6,481,414		(1,056,026)		2/31	3000	5,000 ("soon")
24 wks. ending 6/17/33	3,817,171		(1,455,190)		3/31	3500	5,795
year ending 12/31/32	9,349,741		(2,236,276)		4/31	3500	5,795