

KWK Tops Eleven Years' Progress With Installation of New 5 KW

Baseball Reports and Constant
Improvement Helped to Win
Early Recognition for Station

To keep pace with the rapid progress of broadcasting—to fulfill the demands of a widespread radio audience for high fidelity and greater signal strength, Station KWK in St. Louis, has installed a new Western Electric high fidelity, all-AC-operated 5 KW transmitter. The new station is situated on Riverview Drive in the Baden section of northern St. Louis. This is an ideal transmission site for city coverage as well as for numerous small towns to the north and east in Missouri and Illinois.

KWK has traveled a long and sometimes tedious road in its climb to prominence and popularity. Eleven years ago on St. Patrick's Day the station, owned and operated by Thomas Patrick, Inc., went on the air. Although located in the Hotel Chase, one of the finest hotels in the city, KWK was provided with meagre space—one small office, a transmitter room, and a studio. The staff numbered three—an engineer, an announcer, and a stenographer who also acted as program director and pianist. Thomas Patrick Convey, head of the organization, carried on all other duties from those of office boy to those of president.

With every conceivable obstacle impeding KWK's progress, but with its play-by-play baseball reports carrying it into popular favor, the first real break came with an offer from the National Broadcasting Company to join its network. Needless to say the offer was accepted and on December 1, 1927, KWK became an associate station of NBC for programs originating from WJZ. The network affiliation brought the station immediate recognition, and month by month it gained in popularity.

Early in the fall of 1930 Thomas Patrick, Inc., purchased from "The Voice of St. Louis, Inc.," their Western Electric transmitter which was located at Kirkwood, a suburb of St. Louis. These added facilities enabled KWK to give constant day and night service not only to the metropolitan audience but to rural districts throughout Southern Illinois, Missouri, Tennessee and reaching north to the Iowa line in the area commonly termed the "billion area."

This step forward placed KWK among the leading stations in handling both sustaining and commercial programs originating on the Blue Network out of Chicago and New York studios, as well

as a number of other pick-up points of the NBC System.

All through the hectic days of KWK's early development Thomas Patrick Convey looked to the time when his son Robert Thomas would take his place at the helm of his rapidly growing business. He continually trained the boy in the fundamentals of good broadcasting supervision. After assigning young Convey to a broadcast of a ball game, a post mortem would be held for frank criticism. Soon "Bob Thomas" became a by-word to baseball listeners. As the years rolled by the father's vision became a reality. Young Bob was managing the junior executive departments with the ability of his dad.

Thomas Patrick Convey's patience and perseverance meant much to the organization. When he passed away recently his talented son was well equipped to take complete charge of KWK. His handling of executive duties has placed him 'way ahead of the average young man, for R. T. Convey, president, is yet only in his early twenties. Aably assisting Mr. Convey are Clarence G. Cosby, general manager of the organization; James P. Burke, chief engineer, and an excellent staff of employees.

Mr. Burke with his keen knowledge of transmitting equipment, has done an outstanding job in the organization. While still at high school he began experimenting with amateur wireless telegraphy. Shortly after graduating from the Rankin school in St. Louis he entered the service of the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company where he spent three years. He holds a commercial wireless operator's license and sailed on merchant vessels for the old Marconi Company and later for RCA when that company took control of wireless communications.

Today as in earlier days the Thomas Patrick corporation continues to plough its revenue back into expansion, development and programs. The studios occupy two-thirds of an entire floor of the Hotel Chase—the personnel has grown from 3 to 43 members and the installation of the new 5 KW transmitter places KWK among the best equipped stations in the country.

KWK's new Western Electric transmitter is similar to the 5 KW equipment at WSAI of the Crosby Radio Corporation, described in the May 1936 issue of PICK-UPS.

New operating room at KWK-FM for W.E. 10 kw FM transmitter.

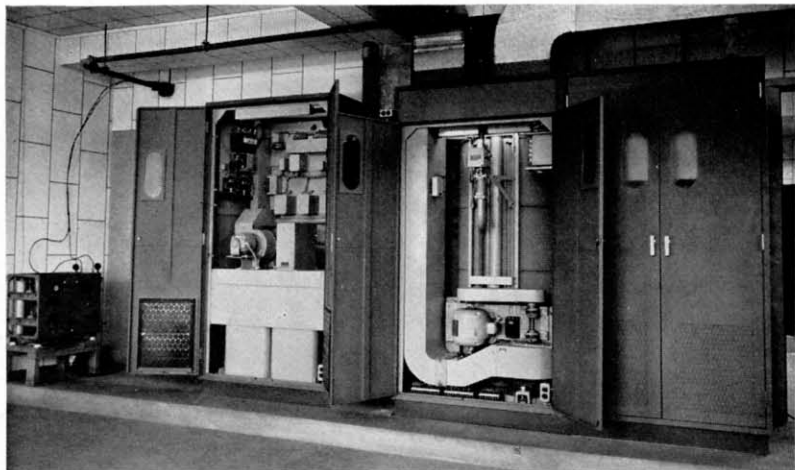


N. J. Zehr, Chief Engineer of KWK and KWK-FM.

KWK-FM, St. Louis, Missouri

KWK, now at 5,000 watts on AM, has been serving the industrial area of St. Louis since 1927. The Thomas Patrick station, a Mutual Broadcasting System affiliate, is a thoroughly established enterprise in the shoe making, beer brewing, manufacturing city on the west bank of the Mississippi.

On April 1, 1948, a Western Electric 506B-2 transmitter was put into service for KWK-FM, to enlarge the "voice" of KWK throughout the St. Louis area. So far, KWK-FM has been duplicating programs of KWK. Results have been up to all expectations. Ray E. Dady, Vice President and Station Director, says: "No special ceremony was held to signify the opening of improved service from KWK-FM, but it was definitely another day in the development of the broadcast art and an extension of KWK's effort to provide a better service to the listening public in this area. KWK-FM offers service to areas which heretofore have not been able to hear the KWK-AM signal, and also offers better reception to our primary area AM audience."



Rear view of FM transmitter shows arrangement of air ducts for cooling, and routing of transmission line from top of 10 kw amplifier.