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SmithHarvey

INTERVIEWER: This is an interview with Harvey Smith, manager of WDEL Wilmington. Mr. Goodwill, to the people of Delaware. Harvey, when did you first begin your radio career?

HARVEY SMITH: Well, I suppose you say I began when I was a high school student, going to Wilmington High School, and obtained a job answering the phone and sweeping up back in 1929 with WILM through the interests of Brad Boylan, who was the owner at that time, along with Joseph Martin of the Wilmington Sunday Star. Mr. Martin was the editor, I believe, and owner also of the Sunday Star in 1929. And then, um, there were other people at WILM in those days who sort of looked out for my welfare. People like Abel Tessman (phonetic) and Kathleen Detling (phonetic). I remember a young lady who did a lot of piano playing and singing named Alice Dugan. And also, Victor Kale was a pianist back in those days, too.

INTERVIEWER: You had live programming. Could you talk about how it happened? What, how you did it?

HARVEY SMITH: Live programming? Is that what you're talking about? Well, they played some records in those days, but basically, we had programs called 'The Five o'Clockers' and that was on at five o'clock. They were local musicians. I had said something earlier about Abel Tessman, well, Abel was a violinist and he not only programmed the station but was a violinist in the Five o'Clockers and his brother Bill was a saxophonist. And also a sideline, if I can remember, Bill Tessman, he tuned pianos and really was one of the finest piano tuners in this area. Tuned all sorts of concert pianos. And, uh, Vic Kayo (phonetic) was the piano player in the group, and occasionally, Alice Dugan would sing. Everybody did two or three jobs in those days. And with visiting orchestras in town, they would come to the studio because they wanted to publicize their dancing, and when we say orchestras, when I say orchestras, they came to town. Well, the favorite dance was in the city was "The Odd Fellows" which was run by the Black community at Twelfth and Orange. It was at Twelfth and Orange. And they brought all the big-name bands and I forget a lot of the names, but, Benny Moten (phonetic), Fats Wise took him down there. And Fletcher Henderson, Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, Blanche Calloway, they used to play there. Well, these orchestras, because we didn't have broadcast lines into the Odd Fellow's building, which I keep saying is at Twelfth and Orange as compared to the one at Tenth and King... They would come to the radio station early in the afternoon if the dance was a Sunday night or a Saturday night and they'd play a program for an hour. And it was... It would attract a crowd and was good for entertainment and good for broadcasting during those days. And western fellows used to play, can't think of them, I remember... I might add a name to the list here. And it wasn't quite 1929, a little later on, but because I think of it, was HARVEY SMITH: Albert Young, who had just graduated from law school. And it was in mid-Depression times, 19, I suppose 1930 or 1931. He came to WILM and became an announcer, salesman, and copywriter and then some of the company who had purchased WILM in those days, about 1929 or 30, was the Steiman (phonetic) Station Group, headed by Jay Hale Steiman and John F. Steiman. The Steiman, Jay Hale, had died a few years ago, but John F. is still alive. And the executive of the broadcasting group was Claire R. McCullough (phonetic). And I can remember Vick Dean who later became an owner of a number of radio stations. Still does. One of them in Hazelton, Pennsylvania. And Vick, at the present time, is on the board of directors of the National Association of Broadcasters, and he's a past president of the Mutual Broadcasting System. Claire McCullough had retired just last year in 1975. And, uh, and still associated with our company all these years. And when purchasing WILM and finding out that Hy Young (phonetic) was an attorney, they gave him probably his first legal

job in the City of Wilmington and he just represented the Steiman Group and still does to this day. Even though it is Young, Conoway, Stargatt and Taylor. It's a very large firm now, but, in that day, I suppose Hy had his desk in his back pocket.

INTERVIEWER: You must have had a lot of room in those early studios to have Cab Calloway in.

HARVEY SMITH: Well, there's the main studio was on the third floor at 1217 Market. And first floor's office. Second floor was control room and a smaller studio and the third floor took in the whole area of the building which was really not a large building at all. But that third floor could handle a large dance orchestra. And these musicians would carry their instruments, no elevator, up the winding steps they went to the third floor. And that's when we would do the broadcast. From there. So really, space was not it. And we did not have a direct control room that looked right on to the studio. The control room was on the second floor, and so I suppose you'd call it playing it by ear to how it was going to sound, but we'd hook the microphones up on the third floor and run it into the control panels on the second floor. Always seemed to work right and everybody used to say, "Good show."

INTERVIEWER: Well, you must have found, then, if the bands wanted to get there, and the people said, "Good show," you must have been successful from the very beginning. Did radio really take off the way TV did in (unintelligible)?

HARVEY SMITH: Well, radio, in the old days, yes. Now, I can't go back to 1922, although I can sure remember broadcasts in those days. And probably that is what interested me and even building up a friendship with Brad (unintelligible) as they say that when I finally met Brad, why, he startled me, even though he wasn't too much of a broadcaster. His brother did most of the broadcasting. Don Boylan did a lot, who later on went to work with Willard Wilson, who was the originator of WDEL. And we didn't... I thought when you did broadcast, everything basically was entertainment in those days rather than news. We did do some news, but it was... Radio is not an information headquarters like it is now. It's, you know, radio, public need, necessity, and convenience. Even though that, really, is the reason broadcasts are on. Entertainment was number one. As it grew up, as you remember, the networks starting, I think, NBC back in 1926, and I knew nothing too much about networks until I was switched over to the WDEL staff after the Steinmens had purchased WDEL. In those days, you could own two properties like that in one city. But later on in the '40s, they thought that was wrong and wouldn't let you own what they would call a duopoly and forced a separation of those holdings. And their doing that now. Justice Department and the Federal Communications Commission today in stations that own AM, FM, television, and newspapers all in the same city, especially if the city is a small one, and there's no other competitive newspaper, television, or radio that really serves that city as an aid. Meanwhile, back to the ranch in 1930, '31... **[10:03]** I really believe that in '31 is when the two stations were combined in Wilmington. WILM and WDEL. (Unintelligible) and the older one starting back in 1922 if my history serves me correctly. And is was WHAV back in those days. And WILM started in 1926 under the call letters WTBQ. I can always remember that because it stood for We Transmit Best Quality. But that was when that station was started in '26 by Grant Boylan, later turning the call letters to WILM and Willy Wilson later taking the HAV call letters and making them WDEL to, sort of, well, make it more representative of the community in which they were serving.

INTERVIEWER: Did you develop some early stars? You mentioned Miss Detling, and I remember seeing a program of something called a musical play and described Kate Detling. In other words, the play was reported in the paper, which meant that people were listening to the radio then.

HARVEY SMITH: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Did you sort of have a star following? Were you getting any fan mail from people?

HARVEY SMITH: Oh, you had fan mail. Mostly people in those days wrote for requests to be played, for records. But if you did something well, they would say, you know, how well they enjoyed it. We used to all get together and do programs called "A Liberty Magazine." They would do...supply the scripts, and we used to use the staff and members of, say, the Wilmington Drama League to come in and do these plays on the air. They took a lot of rehearsal because they were filmed with sound effects and special music and everything. And we always had to say that studio orchestras, some of the old names back in the '30s, George Kelly was a program director. Mr. Kelly died just recently. George Kelly was a program director, musical director. And I said Vick Hale stayed with our company for a great number of years. Ray Raygger (phonetic). And the Burger boys, who were violinists, cellists, and bassist. Let's see, there was Ted, the violinist. And Irving, the cellist. And I forget the name of... Morris! Morris was the bass player. And as far as developing stars, there were people who came through that were popular that started with WDEL. I can remember one who's still... I don't know whether he's still in the music business now or not, but he's out on the west coast. But he was an announcer, and his name was, local name was Larry Tapman (phonetic). He was born in Greenwood, Delaware. And his mother was a schoolteacher up here. And after moving to the Wilmington area, he, great voice and he sang very well. Used to sing with, oh, well, the dance bands he used to sing with. Charlie Barnett (phonetic), used to be a vocalist for that band. Also performed in the Lucky Strike Hit Parade for a couple of years. And he was on the bill of the opening of the Nasbaum (phonetic) Theater in Philadelphia. And he was a music publisher. And later moved to the west coast, he lived basically in New, New York. Did an awful lot of work in New York. Larry would be a fellow who got a start in Wilmington. And Sanford Geyer (phonetic) was a name that was an excellent vocalist. Was trying to think... At Water Camp auditions, he was a winner of one of the auditions and performed on national radio. Henry Hickman was an old announcer here. And Ed Maguire. These are the ones I've tried to think back into the, even say from the year 1928. Before WDEL, these names I've just mentioned. To take you through the '30s of announcers that were prominent in the community. But you're still asking for stars...

INTERVIEWER: Well, no, I didn't mean that. Just the names that people would remember. And what about the news? When did you start your news programming?

HARVEY SMITH: Well basically, news started about during the unrest periods previous to World War II, I would think. And Cousin Lee (phonetic)... Well, uh, news, I was going to say Cousin Lee as an entertainer. Cousin Lee became very popular. He received thousands of pieces of mail in his better days here in Wilmington, and that was in the late '30s and the '40s. And there's still a number of people around Wilmington who remember Cousin Lee and his name was, um, Elsworth (phonetic). But they call him "Cousin Lee." And I was trying to think of his full name. Lee Elsworth, I suppose. And he sure was popular. No doubt about it. He was a country and western and was on two or three times a day. Early in the morning, afternoon, and at night if he wasn't working jobs at night. He also had a park called Radio Park that brought all of the top country and western stars out to Johnson's Corner, Radio Park. And when I say top starts, Roy Aikob (phonetic), Gene Autrey (phonetic), and right on down the list, that caliber. And he made himself a lot of money. First guy I knew who used to carry his money to the bank with a police escort. Could always remember him working 'cause I used to introduce him as an MC out there at Johnson's Corner. At this park that he had established. And at the end of the day, Delaware State Police would escort Lee in his car to a bank depository he used. After paying everybody off, he used to put a lot of cold cash into a night depository. Going back to...

INTERVIEWER: Did he spend all of his career here? Did he stay in Wilmington?

HARVEY SMITH: He did, and then, later on, his popularity waned eventually. And due to some personal problems, he then left town and went up into Pennsylvania. And, I don't, I think he worked in a school system in Pennsylvania, and died maybe five years ago.

INTERVIEWER: Could you tell us how your most well-known program of your own got started.

HARVEY SMITH: You just talked about the Mr. Goodwill Program. Well, I sort of backed into that. We were looking back in 1939 (unintelligible) when we go back to, when Byron Millinson (phonetic), we called him Bernie, was our sales manager. He was looking around for some type of a program to sort of stimulate household interests and would be a good thing for the community, and he came up with a program fashioned after like you dialing for dollars or something. But he called it Mr. Goodwill. And he started it. And in 1941 he was gathered up by the armed forces, and so, the program was very popular, so they took a shot with me doing it, and I've been doing it ever since. And it is a program that really catches a lot of mail and still holds a lot of interest for people here in the immediate community of Wilmington.

INTERVIEWER: Do you find that yourself tired after all these years? Or do you enjoy the program?

HARVEY SMITH: (Unintelligible) myself tired... Tired of doing the program? Well, uh, really, no. Because it never becomes old hat. There's something new to do on it every day. The amount of money changes, you talk to people. Some days, you get three or four no answers, and you say, "Nobody's listening." Keeps you on your toes. You do happy birthdays. You fight the clock to get done in time. And if you're doing a program that's tight, you can't get tired of doing it because it doesn't let you tire of it. You're working on it all the time. You asked earlier about news. When did news start? That I thought that during the period of unrest previous to World War II, when you would hear the broadcasts of, the early broadcasts out of Berlin by Hitler and Mussolini and Churchill [20:00] and then fighting started, and people were very interested in news then. So, we just picked up of doing maybe three or four newscasts a day. I can remember doing them at eight o'clock in the morning. Twelve fifteen was always the time for news. Six o'clock at night. And eleven o'clock at night. They were very popular. You couldn't... People, if you made a mis, an error of some type on it, you were sure called to bear for it. From listeners. And we used, in those days, transradio news and Associated Press. Used to cover everything. We, we, most of the news that we covered was not local, see, it was, probably ninety percent of the news was war news, and maybe five percent would cover other things that were happening throughout America at that time. United States. And we just sort of went along and started to develop things from a local standpoint. And then it grew to, really, a profession. You needed a staff to cover the news because of the interest that you generated.

INTERVIEWER: I was wondering when you would have (unintelligible) when did you think you staffed it? When did you get a news director and people to write copy?

HARVEY SMITH: Well, uh, you always doubled up. Mr. Walsh (phonetic), Gorm Walsh (phonetic), was who I would always say is my benefactor. He came to Wilmington back in 1933 to run WDEL. I was probably too young to place anything of that value in my hands, but Gorm came here and through our combined efforts, I'll say he sure took me into his confidence and I worked very closely with him over the years until he left the company to go on to his advertising field. And then they made me a manager,

then I think it was 1953. But Gorm was a manager and he was basically the top news man. I used to be always doing the eleven o'clock news at night. But I was then, I was an announcer first and then became a program director. And I was always on the news, so you did more than one thing, and at the same time, we were all writers for our own news and our weather. We used to do weather stories. And a lot of it was imaginative on the weather, of course. And we would write our own copy of the commercials.

INTERVIEWER: Imagine (unintelligible).

HARVEY SMITH: That's what it still is. It's still imaginative. But no matter how much you try to figure out the weatherman, it's impossible to do a good weather forecast and have it hold true better than fifty percent of the time in this area of the country. Just this past weekend, everybody (unintelligible) sun would shine on Saturday, would shine on Sunday. Well, we're doing this on a Monday and there's some sun out there. And this morning I can remember the weatherman saying that we're still going to have a lot of cloud and showers and drizzle today, and now the sun's out. So, the good forecasts of last week are catching up with us today.

INTERVIEWER: Um, (unintelligible) worked harder in those days with a small staff and everybody doing everything. Would you say the individual person was work harder than...?

HARVEY SMITH: I don't know whether you work harder. You work longer hours, you know, from ten o'clock in the morning or nine o'clock in the morning til midnight was, uh, was just a routine day. And we used to cover up each other with long schedules like that. You probably worked fifteen hours a day as an average, seven days a week. And it didn't seem to be hard at all because, I think, you felt as if you were a part of a developing industry. Things were happening all the time and it was something that the average person wasn't doing, and I suppose you were egotistical enough to think that yes, you know, this is what I want to do, and if you stuck with it, it might work out. Well, a lot of times, it did, in my case. I say it did in cases like (unintelligible), it did. And there are a number of people who have a great number of years in the business, and look forward to retiring from it. But I don't know what you would do if you ever should retire. From a... You just have to keep your finger in it because it just (unintelligible) turning it off when you would walk out and close your office door and knowing that you never came back to the continual changes every minute. Telephone calls, people, community problems, commercial problems, news problems, everything. It, a radio station is really a center of activity. Which, probably, the average person, if they don't stay around, think maybe all they do is to approach a microphone and say things from off the top of their head. But it really doesn't work that way. And I know about other historic things I can think about at the present time of, of...

INTERVIEWER: What was the big local story you remember? That WDEL... Maybe the first big local remote thing you handled.

HARVEY SMITH: Well, I think in the news stories, the first big stories ever handled were prison breaks. Remember we had a series, large series of prison breaks around here. Danny Norris was a name I can remember as being one of the escapees. And or the tanker crashes, oil tanker crashes in the Delaware River off New Castle, Augustine Beach, Delaware City area. They were exciting. And (unintelligible) they're also to a point... And another fire, the largest fire I ever covered was at Wilmington Sash and Door company fire on a Palm Sunday. Can't tell you what year it was. But I worked out of the Delaware Power and Light Company building in those days, Delaware Power and Light. Just up the street and across the street from it, caddy-corner. And the heat was so intense that windows that you were

standing, watching the fire, would crack, you know, just from the heat. That was a big fire and it went on for a long time. Well, I don't think anybody was hurt in it, but it sure was damaging.

INTERVIEWER: Well, you had technical problems in those early days, didn't you? With the remote job?

HARVEY SMITH: I wouldn't think that we had any more technical problems than we do today. It's always technical problems always develop with new personnel, be it at the radio station or for the phone company. They all have to, I suppose, make the same mistakes I did back in 1930. But now in... Like, if in the old days we went out on a remote two hours in advance, but today, you would like to cut it down and get there ten minutes before you go on, well, as soon as you do that, that's when you have trouble. You should get all of your tests done on your broadcast lines and sometimes you have direct radio broadcasts with small transmitters that are picked up out of cars and things like that. Well, they're always in connection and so you don't have too much trouble with that. If you get in the proper space, just pick up spots so that the reception is good at the receiving end. But the technical problems are always a problem and a bug-a-boo (phonetic) to broadcasters. The most recent one, as you remember, was the one on the Ford-Carter debate of just last, about ten days ago.

INTERVIEWER: (Unintelligible) for people who might hear this years from now, that neither man moved and Marshall McGluan (phonetic), overseer of radio television, said they looked as though they were waiting for their pants to be pressed. Did you hear that?

HARVEY SMITH: Yes. They just, they... Edwin Newman (phonetic) was the moderator and I understand he (unintelligible) well, we'll just call the debate off for a while until we repair the technical problems which lasted for thirty-seven minutes out of a ninety-minute broadcast, which was embarrassing to the three networks, of course, that were carrying it. The hundreds of radio stations, too, were all affected. All the audio and, of course, there's radio depends on audio. Everybody had to go to work with those ad libs and things. [30:00] Which...

INTERVIEWER: That's right. The job was really larger in radio when you have an audio problem.

HARVEY SMITH: Yes, you do. In television, you could just watch without audio and the local station could keep you informed. They, their audio was all right. But the audio from the actual site of the pick-up was what went bad.

INTERVIEWER: (Unintelligible) little bit about your work in the community. You've been manager of DEL since 1953. This is an important part of our community, WDEL. Maybe you could talk a little bit about that.

HARVEY SMITH: Well, we've always, we being the people who own WDEL and the management, always felt that this station was a part of the community and my orders were to keep it that way and make it an even larger part of the community. And to be of assistance to operate in the public need, necessity, and convenience. And you work over the years with most every health and civic organization. I've always had a great respect for those people who operate these health and civic organizations that serve the community. I can remember working very closely with, in the very early days, with the Delaware Association of Police and Yearly Policemobile, DAP, Pushmobile Derbies. That took a lot of work from out of the community with all those stations here working and helping to develop it. And broadcasting it. But as far as the health organizations, in the early days, I worked with the March of Dimes when it was polio. And of course was Doc Salk come along and got the vaccine, and I sort of personally lost

interest in working then with March of Dimes, but I think it's a great organization. They're for child, birth defects right now. I've worked with the Heart Association. And over the years with the Cancer Society. I've been chairman of their, of all of those organizations I've just answered. Campaign funds for the county and the state over the years. And, if we could go down the list, the business groups. Chamber of Commerce, Better Business Bureau. I worked as, still on the board on the chamber and on the executive committee for the state chamber. Now, I'm the past president and chairman of the board of the Better Business Bureau. And I'm chairman of the board presently of the Salvation Army in Delaware. And I try to work closely with the church I've been (unintelligible) Episcopalian. I've been Senior Warden and Junior Warden a couple of times and at Saint Andrews Church at Eighth and Shipley Streets. And having been Junior and Senior Wardens there at Saint Andrews (unintelligible) served a few terms on the Vestry. And one of the things I particularly enjoy is the lay reading, which they have made a little harder to get a license now over the years. And of course the Bishop keeps track of you every year. And you actually take greater parts rather than just reading lessons. You read the whole services, and in the absence of your rector, you run the morning prayer services, although you are not permitted to do the whole (unintelligible) Communion services all the way through the Eucharist, but you do take a part in that. Handle the chalice and things. But these are all special licenses that you get from the Bishop and through examinations or courses that you have taken under the auspices of the diocese. And I worked closely during the, you know, during the war. You're always working on air raids. Watches, and things of that, all night long. (Unintelligible) you work from ten o'clock in the morning. I used to work air raid services from midnight to six o'clock. Then go to work at ten and work til midnight again, you know? And we were, a couple of us, were, had received special exemptions. We had been taken in to the, started to be inducted. And the community stepped in and said that they had to keep people who were, had a know-how in communications in the community and although you work with the second (unintelligible) group and the department of state and with the wardens of air raid and everything, you had all of these responsibilities, but they kept you here at home to run the communications. And to see that everything, because you knew the community, they didn't bring outsiders in to do any of that type of work. And we had to train new people, and that's when radio women started to get into radio back in those days when you ran out of men. I... You'd have to sort of stimulate my thinking into some other field during the years which skipped so quickly from 1929 to here we are up to date.

INTERVIEWER: Well, you might talk about moving from your Wilmington studios and maybe some changes in radio if there are some post war big changes.

HARVEY SMITH: Well, on moving, I suppose if you talked about some of the first moves, I of course was exposed to when WILM in 1931 and WDEL came out of the same ownership. They combined the studios with WDEL, moving the WILM group from 1217 Market up to the third floor of the Oddfellows (phonetic) Building on Tenth and King. And then the studio stayed pretty much the same together until the duopoly thing developed with the Federal Communications Commission and the Justice Department. And WILM was sold by the Steiman Group, but only moved to the first floor of the Oddfellows Building, but you had to separate ownership and studios. And then I stayed with the WDEL staff and we moved the transmitters. I can remember WDEL transmitter being in the Mullen (phonetic) building at Sixth and Market. And then it was moved to the top of the Delaware Trust building. And later on the transmitter was moved to Thirty-Fifth and Bellevue. And then back in 1949 it was moved from Thirty-Fifth and Bellevue because of technical problems there with (unintelligible) and Purina (phonetic) people building a very large water tower of metal construction right in line with the four broadcast towers which interfered so severely with the signals, WDEL couldn't operate within the parameters established by the Federal Communications Commission, and we lost the case with the

water tower construction, so we had to find property and move our transmitters. So, in 1949, the transmitter was moved to this location of 2727 Shipley Road. And then the company, at the same time, was going into television, and so they built a television building and a television station. And in 1951, after a lot of heartache from the television and everything, and finally, a duopoly moving in to a television ownership with our company, owning channel twelve as a promotional station and channel eight (unintelligible), both top-dollar stations. The primary coverage area overlapped and we had to decide to sell one of them and so we sold the Wilmington station because, really, in those days, Wilmington had a much more competition on the air with Philadelphia. Then channel eight in Lancaster, which was all by itself. So we sold the channel twelve, and to continue on with that story, we sold that to Paul F. Harren (phonetic), (unintelligible), PFH, Paul F. Harren. Yes. And he was not successful with it and I must add here, our company was a successful operating channel twelve, although we did have an effort. And we did all of our effort into local programming. But the new owners decided to give up the network because of Philadelphia competition and [40:00] ran into such heavy expense with all local programming. Everything that they learned (unintelligible), and sold it to the Storr (phonetic) Corporation, who also found it not money-making and not profitable, and because nobody then, no company would give, if I remember correctly, two million dollars to the Storr Corporation for the license to channel twelve. He turned it back to E.B. George F. Storr (phonetic). Back to the Federal Communications Commission, and they, in turn, granted it to the educational people.

INTERVIEWER: How do you think this is for Wilmington and Delaware when you look at it objectively? In terms of new, visual news for Delaware.

HARVEY SMITH: Well I think visual news would be wonderful if you could really do it, along with the same type of visual news and of the same caliber as your competitive Philadelphia stations cover the local news there. But you have to remember if a station here would be going out to cover local news and they just didn't have all of the first-class help that they should have. And then they come back and put it on the air, and it just doesn't sound or look as good as the class that you get on your network stations out of Philadelphia. That's what it's compared to. And that is the reason that I feel, with the competitive situation between the UHF and the VHF (unintelligible) six ten and three (unintelligible) channels, you, you, unless you have a network where you can give up some of the effort of turning that time and putting your whole effort into the local picture, it wouldn't be impossible to own a television station in Wilmington, Delaware and expect it to compete with Philadelphia television or Baltimore television.

INTERVIEWER: Uh, I'm just asking this question. It was true...

HARVEY SMITH: That's a personal opinion...

INTERVIEWER: Yes. It was true, though, that WDEL TV was well done and was successful. That needs to be said.

HARVEY SMITH: Right.

INTERVIEWER: You were doing it well. With the network.

HARVEY SMITH: That's right. We had, we were an NBC network station. And you had the image and the quality of the network programming. And then everything else you did surrounded it and you had to do it good and you had to produce fine things, but you had the time to do it. Where if you were

running third-class things, and all of this type of thing that some of the stations have to do, and they have all of this added expense, it's not profitable in this community at the present time. Unless somebody wants to use foundation money and just run it down the drain. But that's not what it's for. Then (unintelligible) talking about the move. We finally purchased this property. We purchased it from Storr (phonetic). The 2727 Shipley Road property. And then in 1961 moved everyone, WDEL studios here. And also WDEL FM, which is now WSTW, out here. And sort of refurbished the studios and put new partitions in and things like that. And today, we're starting to tear partitions down again and in the back of the building try to get proper space to operate with the staff that we have today. But this grows like (unintelligible).

INTERVIEWER: (Unintelligible) WDEL (unintelligible).

HARVEY SMITH: I wouldn't say that. (Unintelligible) of the original WDEL, Willard Wilson is still in town.

INTERVIEWER: No, no, I meant here.

HARVEY SMITH: Oh, here? Well, we have Dick Idelon (phonetic) is here. Dick...

INTERVIEWER: Was he here when you...?

HARVEY SMITH: He... No, he wasn't here originally. But we picked... He's a little younger than I. And we started to use Dick Idelon previous to the war as a part-timer. And he was a student at the University of Delaware. And I can always remember having gone to the University to do a broadcast on December the seventh, 1941. And we were riding back. It was a Sunday. And riding back in a car when the announcement of the Pearl Harbor day came, and that was a shocker that really turned the world around. You never believed that you would live to hear announcements of that nature, but we heard it on that day, and it, we, I suppose we haven't gotten out of the shock yet.

INTERVIEWER: Did Dick join your staff right after the war? Or did he come right from college to DEL?

HARVEY SMITH: Well, Dick came to the staff, he stayed on the staff all during the war. He was in... He was overseas. But anyone who left our staff, the station staff, was never severed. Their jobs were there when they came back. And so that's with Dick Idelon, Bernie Mullinson (phonetic) came back. And Bernie went on to be a manager of another local station, and then went to be one of the finest managers of what they call a real rock and roll type station that started WCAL in Baltimore, Maryland, were owned by Plough (phonetic), the aspirin people who (unintelligible) the pharmaceutical. And Plough Incorporated. And Bernie was the finest, one of the finest managers that company had. Bernie is not with us anymore.

[46:12 Tape seems to stop, then start again.]

HARVEY SMITH: I'd think that radio is definitely here to stay. And if you go back to look at it over the years when people used to say, well, radio is done, and radio is not going to continue to improve, it's going to go off the air, wonder what we're going to do to replace radio. This was the day when television started. But if you can look back to the changes that the radio industry was able to make instead of being a station like WDEL, a station that carried Jack Benny, Fred Allen, Man Half a Merry-Go-Round (phonetic), One Man's Family, Amos and Andy, all of those types of programs for entertainment. When television took over that type or that part of a viewer's or a listener's life, radio then had to find

something to do to entice them to stay with it. And that was information. Because, as you remember, in the early days of television, that's one thing it lacked was information. Although today, it sure is a center of it. But it has a long way yet to go to establish the impact of information that radio can continue to do and the immediacy that radio can afford to that type of coverage. (Unintelligible) back to the early days of television when people thought maybe radio stations were going out of business, if I can just use WDEL as an example. In 1953, I've been a manager since then, and we have never regressed in staff or in income here and have always continually tried to serve the community, which I think is probably the one job, major job, of any radio station. To be of community service. To see that people get all the information they should have, and no matter what effect or the cost of getting this type of information to them is concerned. So now during a time of catastrophe, a time of turmoil, the average listener is not going to turn to the television set to find out what happened. First thing they're going to do is take the station on radio that they feel has the image, the station that has really worked to make that impact on their lives, to make such an impact that when something goes wrong, first thing they do, they might turn a television station or television set on second. But here in Wilmington, Delaware, you can just bet that the first instance is going to be WDEL, and if we don't have it, they'll try someplace else, but you can rest assured that it is the premise and promise of WDEL that it will have this type of information at all times for the people. Our news staff and public service people here, that's the growing part of WDEL. We have our major DJs, fellows that you hear now like, oh, Bill Harmon (phonetic) in the morning, and Dick Idelon and Abe Taylor and Bruce Davis. These are personalities, but the real job being done in the community, in my book, is the news department where we used to have just part-time people and everybody doing two or three types of jobs. Now, you pretty much, if you're on the news staff of, say, WDEL, you are a journalist. **[50:03]** You write well, you sound good, you express yourself, and you are a person of some maturity where the things that you say ring with sincerity and responsibility. So I think radio's job is to continue to do that, and as long as it continues to...

[End Audio 50:28]