

Significant Dates for VOA Bethany Station
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1886 August 18: Powel Crosley, Jr. is born

1893: Crosley family moves to College Hill area of Cincinnati

1906: Powel Crosley Jr. enters University of Cincinnati as an engineering student.

1917 December 13: Powel Crosley Jr. incorporates American Automotive Specialties Company.

1921 February 22: Powel Crosley Jr. and Powel Crosley 111 purchases radio parts and books at Precision Equipment Company.

1921 Last part: Powel Crosley Jr. starts the Crosley Manufacturing Company. First product built was the Harko Radio Receiver.

1922 April: First 20-Watt transmitter at home in College Hill, 8CR.

1922 March 22: First 50-Watt transmitter at Blue Rock Road, WLW, at manufacturing plant.

1922 May: Manufacturing plant moves to Colerain and Alfred Streets. Granted license for 500 Watts using homemade transmitter.

1923 April: WLW starts using Western Electric 500 Watt transmitter.

1923 January 15: Crosley purchases Precision Equipment Company.

1923: General Electric builds W2XAD and W2XAF in Schenectady, New York.

1924 January: Crosley purchases new manufacturing building at Colerain and Sassafras streets.

1924 Summer: New plant opens and WLW moves there.

1925 January: Crosley granted license for 5,000 Watts experimental.

1925 Jan. 27: First broadcast with 5,000 Watts from Harrison, Ohio.

1925 December: Crosley purchases the Amrad factory, Neutrodyne license and the Mershon condensers license. Crosley had made a successful regenerative radio circuit but as these were losing way to the newer Neutrodyne receivers, he needed a license to make these.

1926: Crosley manufacturing 5,000 radio receivers per day.

1928 August 8: Crosley purchases WSAI. Crosley granted license for 50,000 Watts. Begins construction of a new building adjacent to WSAI transmitter building in Mason, Ohio.

1928 October 29: 50,000-Watt transmitter dedicated at Mason, OH

1929: New 8-story manufacturing building at Gilbert and Arlington St.

1930 March 23: WLW and WSAI get new top floor studios, dedicated.

1932 May: Crosley applies for license for 500,000 Watts power.

1932 June: Federal Radio Commission (FRC) grants license for 500,000 Watts power.

1933 June: New Blaw-Knox vertical antenna placed in use at WLW.

1933 August 8: Goebbels introduces the Volksempfänger model 301.

1934 May 2: WLW commences 500,000 Watts power.

1935: Germany begins barrage of radio transmissions in Spanish to Latin America attempting to get several countries to go to war with the United States. A new model Volksempfänger introduced.

1937: CBS installs new 10,000-Watt RCA transmitter W2XE in Wayne, NJ. It became WCBX in 1939.

1938: June, W8XAL power increases to 50,000 Watts shortwave from Mason, Ohio.

1938: Goebbels concentrates all radio operations to Zeessen. Has 1000 employees there, announcers, musicians, writers, engineers, etc., along with longwave, mediumwave and shortwave transmitters.

1938: 50% of German household have a Volksempfänger, 8 million in Germany.

1939 February 18: W6XBE starts broadcasting from Treasure Island with 20,000 Watts for the San Francisco World's Fair.

1939 February 28: WLW license for 5,000,000 Watts rescinded and station returns to 50,000 Watts except for the experimental period between 2 to 4 am.

1939 July: Shortwave license converts from experimental to commercial and given call letters. W8XAL becomes WLWO. W6XBE becomes KGEI.

1940 April: WLWO increases power to 75,000 Watts and becomes the country's most powerful shortwave transmitter.

1940: Crosley establishes a chain of local radio stations in Latin America in 10 countries to rebroadcast WLWO programs.

1940: CBS moves its Wayne, New Jersey transmitter to Brentwood, Long Island.

1940 Spring: Roosevelt establishes a new agency, Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (CIAA), headed by Nelson Rockefeller, to strengthen ties among western hemisphere nations.

1940 July: Roosevelt establishes a new agency, Coordinator of Information (COI), headed by William Donovan. FDR's speech writer, Robert Sherwood, named to head the Foreign Information Service (FIS), a sub-agency of the COI.

1941: San Francisco World's Fair closes and General Electric moves broadcasting to new 50,000-Watt transmitter in Belmont, CA.

1941 Early: COI begins to use KGEI and WLWO for "suggested topics", news, and information. A special teletype from Washington, D.C. brought copy to be read with no editing. FDR leans on his friends at Pepsi Cola, Planters Peanuts and Firestone Tire and Rubber to buy commercials to support KGEI and WLWO.

1941 Fall: Robert Bauer, Giorgio Padovano and Edward Beck broadcast war news to Europe from WLWO and are photographed together as the "Three Musketeers." Photo is discovered in a closet at VOA with other VOA-Bethany memorabilia.

1941 December 7: Pearl Harbor attacked. The COI reorganizes and becomes the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). The FIS becomes the Office of War Information (OWI). Elmer Davis heads OWI. Ten stations exist: NBC has WNBI and WRCA in Bound Brook, NJ; CBS owns WCBX and WCRC in Brentwood, NY; General Electric operates WGEA and WGEI in Schenectady and KFEI in San Francisco; Westinghouse operates WBOS in Boston; Crosley has WLWO in Cincinnati. And Worldwide Broadcasting Foundation owns WRUL in Boston.

1941 December 15: KGEI is leased by the COI, making it the first international station under direct government control.

1942 February 1: OWI begins broadcasting radio programs, leasing time on shortwave stations that are picked up by the BBC and relayed to Germany.

1942 February 22: Members of WLWO staff and broadcasters take the night train to New York for Voice of America broadcasts.

1942 February 23: OWI inaugurates new radio studios on Park Avenue in New York City. John Houseman named as head to radio programming in NY. The "Three Musketeers" from WLWO broadcast in New York for first day on February 23.

1942 May 5: Test transmissions begin on KWID with 100,000 Watts, the country's new most powerful shortwave transmitter. Soon the station broadcasts in 10 languages, 20 hours per day with programming from the OWI San Francisco studios.

1942 Mid: KGEI's one studio quickly overflows with linguists for Japanese, Chinese, Tagalog and various Chinese and Filipino dialects, so OWI studios temporarily move to new facility being built for KSFO. The OWI converts the old NBC studios as its headquarters and moves in on January 1, 1944.

1942 Fall: (August?) Meeting in Washington with networks and manufacturing companies to create new super power transmitters for the OWI.

1942 November 1: OWI leases all shortwave transmitters except WRUL. The OWI ultimately seizes WRUL by executive order. The stations are: CBS - WCBX, WCDA and WCRC, Brentwood L.I., NY; Crosley's station WLWO, Cincinnati; General Electric's WGEI and WGEA, Schenectady, NY, and KGEI San Francisco; NBC - WRCA and WNBI, Boundbrook, NJ; Westinghouse's WBOS, Boston; World Wide Broadcasting's three transmitters WRUL, Boston; and Associated Broadcaster's KWID.

1942 December: Crosley breaks ground for super power shortwave station.

1943: Crosley installs WLWK in Mason, OH. KGEI receives new 100,000-Watt General Electric transmitter and goes on the air with KGEX. KWID receives new 50,000-Watt transmitter goes on the air as KWIX. A Press Wireless transmitter is installed in Palo Alto and becomes KROJ. CBS adds two new transmitters, WOOC and WOOW to its Brentwood L.I. shortwave plant.

1943 October: BBC transmitter plant at Wooferton begins operation with a planned 37 50,000-Watt shortwave transmitters.

1943 December: Crosley has first transmitter WLWL on air before building is completed.

1944: Germany has 15 million Volksempfänger radios.

1944 September 23: Crosley holds the official dedication ceremony for the OWI transmitter plant in Bethany? Ohio.

1944 November: CBS station in Delano, Calif. goes on the air with KCBA, KCBF and KCBR.

1944 December: NBC station in Dixon, Calif. goes on the air with KNBA, KNBC, KNBI and KNBX. KRHO goes on the air from Honolulu, HI

1945: Additional transmitters added at McKay Wireless and become KROU and KROZ. The RCA point-to-point facility in Bolinas, Calif. added KRCA and KRCQ. By the end of 1945, 17 west coast transmitters air OWI programming from the San Francisco studios.

1942-1961: Crosley, NBC and CBS operate transmitter plants under contract to the OWI and VOA.

1962 January: The USIA/VOA takes direct ownership of the three transmitter plants.

1965: Bethany, Delano and Dixon plants modernize. Three 250,000 Watt Collins 821A1 transmitters and two Continental 617A transmitters installed at each plant.

1979: Dixon station closed

1983: Dixon station reopened

1988: Dixon station closed

1989 November: three original WW II Crosley transmitters shut down and asbestos removed from building.

1991: Bethany commissions three new 250,000 Watt Asea Brown Boveri SK 53 C3 transmitters.

1994 November 14: Bethany station closed.

2007: Delano station closed