

“The President’s Own” U.S. Marine Band Radio Broadcasting History

The first broadcast was in 1922 and featured the orchestra.

On June 7, 1922, a series of weekly broadcasts began, believed to be on Wednesday evenings, transmitting from the Anacostia Naval Air Station.

In early 1923 broadcasts were moved from Anacostia Naval Air Station to the John Philip Sousa band hall at Marine Barracks Washington.

On June 2, 1923, the band started a sponsored series of broadcasts titled “Music for the Avenue.”

On Aug. 1, 1923, the band performed for the première broadcast of Washington’s new radio station WRC.

On Dec. 21, 1923, WRC broadcast the program “Marine Corps Communicates with Mr. Night” (WRC had increased its power so that most of the eastern part of the U.S. could hear the broadcast).

In February 1924 WRC broadcast “Marine Band Night” which featured a 25 piece string orchestra and a 14 piece jazz orchestra.

By 1925, the orchestra broadcasts were heard over WRC, WJZ, and WGY.

In March 1925 WCAP broadcast a performance by a 45-piece orchestra, which included the Concerto in E minor for Violin by Felix Mendelssohn, and Symphony No. 41, *Jupiter*, by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

On Jan. 1, 1926, a 41-piece band broadcast over station WRC which was transmitting at increased power to a larger than usual audience.

Dec.23, 1927, marked the first of the radio network broadcasts on the Red Network of NBC.

During December, 1929 the band played a special broadcast sponsored by the *Washington Evening Star* beamed specifically to Commander Byrd and his party in Antarctica.

In 1930 a new series, “The National Farm and Home Hour,” began.

In November 1931 a new series on the NBC network titled “The School Band Series” began.

June 12, 1931, marked the beginning of the band broadcast series “The Dream Hour” This was designed especially for “shut-ins” and consisted mostly of pieces requested by listeners. It was broadcast by NBC and became one of the most popular programs on national radio.

On March 7, 1932, “The Dream Hour” broadcast was for a special memorial program for John Philip Sousa who had died the day before.

In 1935 a new broadcast series began by the Federal Housing Administration. The band recorded concerts for delayed broadcast.

In November 1937 the band began a new series of educational broadcasts on the CBS network.

In late 1937 the Department of Commerce started a new broadcast series of the band which was broadcast each Tuesday, 30 minutes after "The Dream Hour" broadcast.

The band participated in a new CBS series called "Music of the Americas" started in 1940.

On Christmas Day, 1941, a special program broadcast from the band hall by the Mutual Broadcasting System including the band and the Chief Chaplains of the Army and the Navy.

Panic broadcast of 1943 - NBC engineers arrived at the band hall at 1:45 p.m. for a 2:30 p.m. broadcast of NBC Blue Network's "Victory Corps" Program. The band had no prior knowledge of this commitment. A 42-piece band was quickly assembled and the broadcast began on schedule.

On June 6, 1944, D Day, the Mutual Broadcasting System program was changed at the last moment to consist of hymns and marches appropriate for the events of the day.

On May 8, 1945, the V-E Day (Victory in Europe Day) broadcast on the CBS network originated from the Sail Loft of the Washington Navy Yard and included the Marine Band, Navy Band and Army Air Forces Band.

In July 1945, a new broadcast series began on the CBS Network called "Your Marine Corps."

(The above information was compiled from *The History of the United States Marine Band*, doctoral dissertation by Kenneth William Carpenter, August, 1970)