University Dedicates WUOM Studio

The University paused last month to take a long and reminiscent look at past achievements in the field of radio broadcasting, then turned its thoughts and full resources toward the boundless potentialities of the future.

Immediate occasion for the self-appraisal and reaffirmation of objectives was the week-long dedication ceremonies of the modern new facilities of WUOM, the University’s eighteen-months-old Frequency Modulation station.

It was a significant event that officially marked a milestone of progress in the history of radio broadcasting at the University. It served as the climax of one era in which pioneers struggled to develop educational broadcasting to its present stature, and as the genesis of a new era that offers promise of vastly expanded service in the public interest.

The story of radio in its early days at Michigan has been told before. For more than a quarter of a century the University has endeavored, within its limited means, to utilize the medium of radio as one avenue through which it could meet its educational and cultural obligations to the public. A year and a half ago the University began to beam programs to listeners over its own long-awaited radio station when WUOM opened operations from temporary studios in Angell Hall Alumnus, August 28, 1948). Now WUOM’s physical plant and equipment is complete.

During last month’s dedication week ceremonies, January 8 through 14, the attention of radio listeners throughout the state and nation was directed to WUOM’s acquisition of its splendid new facilities atop the Administration Building on State Street.

A pair of nation-wide broadcasts over the National Broadcasting System opened the week-long observance and a special broadcast featuring the University’s Symphonic Band and Glee Club concluded the ceremonies six days later. In between, there were a variety of radio features keynoted to the occasion, including special salutes to the University Broadcasting observers among the many hundreds who inspected WUOM’s shining new studios. Some of them had knowledge of the airless tent in University Hall which served as the first Campus studio and most of them had undergone their initial radio training in the inadequate facilities of old Morris Hall, which was razed to make way for the Administration Building.

Understandably, these alumni marveled at the transition to studios and technical equipment which rank among the best in the state or among educational stations anywhere. They inspected proudly every corner of the WUOM studios (sketch below), which occupy the entire fifth floor of the Administration Building, and they listened carefully to a resume of present-day programming achievements in the realm of educational broadcasting.

Entrance to the new studios is gained from the two elevators which service the building. At one end of the attractive reception lobby is a large picture window which frames Studio D, one of the four air-conditioned units from which broadcasts are made. Smallest of the four, Studio D provides the setting for interviews, quiz programs, and faculty and student roundtable discussions.

The other three studios are reached by a corridor extending to the north. Studio A houses many of WUOM’s dramatic programs and some of the music broadcasts. Like Studios B and C, it is irregular in shape with a combination of saw-tooth and polycylindrical walls which are acoustically treated. An adjoining audience room provides thirty-eight comfortably upholstered theater seats to accommodate listeners who observe the shows in production through a double-paned window.
Station visitors get this view of roundtable discussions and interviews conducted in Studio D.

Frequent participants in WUOM broadcasts are the School of Music faculty members who comprise the Stanley Quartet.

Actor Adolphe Menjou is interviewed by members of the Faculty Women's Club during his campus visit.

WUOM broadcasts are beamed from this 440-foot transmitter tower on Peach Mountain, highest point in Southern Michigan.

Senior Studio Operator Dean W. Custon (at right) operates control panel which
TEN OF THE ALUMNI WHO RECEIVED THEIR FIRST RADIO TRAINING AT MICHIGAN UNDER DIRECTOR ABBOT HELP TO PRESENT A REMINISCENT HOUR-LONG VARIETY SHOW, OTHERS WERE PRESENT BUT MISSED THE PICTURE, WHILE MANY MORE SENT DEDICATION WEEK GREETINGS FROM RADIO STATIONS THROUGHOUT THE NATION.

From left to right are: Stephen J. Filipiak, ’39, of WHRV, Ann Arbor, who acted as Master of Ceremonies; Robert Ufer, ’43, Sports Director, WPAG, Ann Arbor; Robert Bouwsma, A.M.’47, Holland, Michigan; Marvin Levey, ’43, Sales Promotion Manager, WDFD, Flint; Frank Finschchild, ’40, Program Director, WCAR, Pontiac; Max Bryer, ’47, A.M.’43, Assistant Manager, WAFL, Flint; Ward Quaal, ’41, Director of Clear Channel Broadcasting Service, Washington, D. C.; Donn M. Chown, ’38mus, M.Mus.’40, Continuity Editor, WJR, Detroit; Karl R. Nelson, ’37, National Sales Manager, WTOL, Toledo; and Mary Bell, ’39, Recording Engineer, National Broadcasting Company, New York City.

Studio C, largest of the four, features a tiered ceiling and the parabolic surfaces of one long wall were specially designed to provide proper acoustics for music recitals. It is used almost exclusively for live music broadcasts, for it can accommodate a small orchestra or band or a large vocal group. The smaller Studio B provides facilities for many of the broadcasts which are made up of recordings and generally it is the point of origin of "Hello, Alumni," the weekly broadcast produced by the staff of the Alumni Association.

WUOM’s entire studio section is "floated" and completely separate from the building in which it is housed. Thick pieces of felt between the studio walls, ceilings and floors suspend these rooms so that they "float" in restricted space.

Four control rooms enable WUOM’s technical staff to provide the programming department with the wide variety of facilities requisite to program production. All of the control booths are elevated so that announcers or actors standing in front of the control room windows will not obstruct the operators’ view, and two of them may be used to control two adjoining studios.

Office space for staff personnel—station director, program director, script and continuity editors, music director, engineers and announcers—is provided in a series of rooms, each of which contains a monitoring system enabling auditions or programs to be heard from any studio.

Because many of WUOM’s outstanding programs originate from other parts of the Campus and the city, adequate provision has been made for reception of remote broadcasts. One hundred and fifty-six telephone lines come into the studio area from auditoriums, assembly halls, theaters, athletic fields, and classroom buildings. There are also six outgoing lines which are used in feeding programs to other stations.

From the sixth floor tower of the Administration Building, which houses a 15-watt transmitter with the call letters KQA, studio programs are beamed to the main transmitter at Peach Mountain, 16 miles distant from the Campus. The effective radiated power of WUOM is 45,000 watts and surveys indicate that there is a potential FM audience of 250,000 FM receivers in the signal area to which the University

DEDICATION WEEK CEREMONIES GOT UNDER WAY WITH THE PRESENTATION, FROM THE CAMPUS, OF THE REGULAR WEEKLY BROADCAST OF THE CHICAGO ROUND TABLE OVER THE NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY NETWORK.

A pair of University faculty members joined with two leading educators from other institutions to discuss "The Rape of Culture." Left to right are: Warner G. Rice, Director of the University’s General Library; Kenneth Burke, Professor of English at Bennington College; Howard Y. McCluskey, Professor of Educational Psychology and a consultant in community adult education at the University; and Moderator Harry Sams, Chairman of the English Department at the University of Chicago.
station broadcasts its 55 hours of programs each week.

In fulfilling its responsibility to offer programs which meet the needs of both the Campus and the general public, WUOM utilizes its opportunities to draw upon the resources of a great university. The talents of students and faculty are employed in a wide variety of programs, ranging from musical presentations through dramatic productions, round table discussions, interviews, news summaries and analyses, and faculty lectures direct from the classrooms. Broadcasts of University athletic events, public service programs from off-Campus sources, and transcribed musical presentations complete the WUOM broadcast day.

In addition to listeners served by direct broadcast, WUOM provides informative and cultural programs to many additional thousands through three methods. A single program can be sent simultaneously to as many as five different stations by direct telephone wire. Any number of stations within range of the WUOM signal may re-broadcast a program just as it is heard on the air. Extensive use of tape recorders and disc recorders make it possible to distribute outstanding University presentations to other stations for re-broadcast at a later date.

AM and FM stations throughout Michigan and in nearby states regularly re-broadcast WUOM programs, including WJR, WDET, WLDM and WDTR, Detroit; WPAG and WHRV, Ann Arbor; WAKR, East Lansing; WJW, Wyandotte; WABJ, Adrian; WCAR, Pontiac; WELF, Battle Creek; WFRS, Grand Rapids; WYFC, Alma; WLEW, Bad Axe; WHFB, Benton Harbor; WHTC, Holland; WKZO, Kalamazoo; WMLN, Mt. Clemens; WMMP, Flint; WOAP, Owosso; WSAM, Saginaw; WTCM, Traverse City; WJPD, Ishpeming; WATZ, Alpena; WATT, Cadillac; WMBN, Petoskey; WMJS, Ironwood; WRZE, York, Pennsylvania; WBAA, Lafayette, Indiana; and WFIN, Findlay, Ohio.

An illustrated schedule, listing all programs and special feature events of the University Broadcasting Service, is published each month and distributed without charge. Alumni and other listeners who forward their addresses to Station WUOM will be placed on the permanent mailing list.
Warren R. Good, Instructor in Educational Psychology, presents "Record Rarities" from the A-B control room.

Disks and tape provide the means by which WUOM recorded programs are re-broadcast over many stations in other communities.

Observers seated in the audience room may watch presentation of dramatic productions in Studio A. At left is a half-ton sound truck which provides recorded sound effects.