

Significant Dates for VOA Bethany Station

By Dave Snyder

This timeline is a work in progress and will be updated and expanded as time and information becomes available. Updated May 02, 2019. Created by Dave Snyder, March 2014

1886 Aug. 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 Dec. 13	Powel Crosley Jr. incorporates American Automotive Specialties Company.
1921 Feb. 22	Powel Crosley Jr. and Powel Crosley 111 purchases radio parts and books at Precision Equipment Company.
1921	Last part of 1921 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 Jan. 15	Crosley purchases Precision Equipment Company.
1923 April	WLW starts using Western Electric 500 Watt transmitter.
1923	General Electric builds W2XAD and W2XAF in Schenectady, New York.
1924 January	Crosley purchases new manufacturing building at Colerain and Sassafras street.
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 Amrad (acquires Neutrodyne circuit)
1926	Crosley manufacturing 5,000 radio receivers per day.
1927 Feb 23	The bill creating the Federal Radio Commission was signed into law by President Calvin Coolidge. The FRC regulated all broadcasting in the United States.
1928 Aug. 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 Oct. 29 50,000 Watt transmitter dedicated at Mason, OH
- 1929 New 8-story manufacturing building at Colerain and Arlington Streets. WLW and WSAI get new top floor studios, dedicated March 23, 1930. (1329 Arlington St.)
- 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 Aug. 8 Josef Goebbels introduces the Volksempfänger model 301.
- 1934 May 2 WLW commences 500,000 Watts power
- 1934 June 19 The Federal Communications Commission replaces the Federal Radio Commission to regulate radio communications.
- 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, New Jersey. 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 receiver. That means that by 1938 various companies had manufactured 8 million receivers.
- 1939 Feb. 18 W6XBE starts broadcasting from Treasure Island with 20,000 Watts for the San Francisco World's Fair.
- 1939 Feb. 28 WLW license for 500,000 Watts rescinded and station returns to 50,000 Watts except for the experimental period between 2 to 4 am.
- 1939 July The Federal Communications Commission converts the licenses of the shortwave stations from experimental to commercial and given regular call letters. W8XAL becomes WLWO. W6XBE becomes KGEI. These stations were now permitted to sell commercials to support their operation.
- 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" and 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 Dec. 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 Dec. 15 KGEI is leased by the COI, making it the first international station under direct government control.
- 1942 Feb. 1 OWI begins broadcasting radio programs, leasing time on shortwave stations that are picked up by the BBC and relayed to Germany.
- 1942 Feb. 22 Members of WLWO staff and broadcasters take the night train to New York for Voice of America broadcasts.
- 1942 Feb. 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 Meeting in Washington with networks and manufacturing companies to create new superpower transmitters for the OWI
- 1942 Nov. 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 WGEO 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 superpower 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 kW shortwave transmitters.
- 1943 December Crosley has first transmitter WLWL on air before building is completed.
- 1944 Germany has 15 million Volksempfangers.
- 1944 Sept. 23 Crosley holds the official dedication ceremony for the OWI transmitter plant in Union Township, Butler County, Ohio. It was named the Bethany station.
- 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 WWII Crosley SWT-1 transmitters shut down and asbestos removed from building.
1991	Bethany commissions three new 250,000 Watt Asea Brown Boveri SK 53 C3 transmitters.
1994 Nov. 14	Bethany station closed.
2007	Delano station closed