



Edna Whittington Cathcart

September 3, 1910 - June 25, 2013

Edna Whittington Cathcart, a charter member of Broadcast Pioneers, and founding member of American Women in Radio and Television, died on June 25, 2013 at the age of 104, while in Hospice care at her residence at Waverly Heights.

Edna began her broadcasting career in the 1930's, at WIP in Philadelphia. It was the heart of the Depression, and in those early days of radio she became the voice of "Bess Buy", doing comparison shopping at various local stores, to provide listeners with the best bargains of the week. The idea for the series, the forerunner of consumer advocacy, was the brainchild of Ben Gimbel, owner of WIP and heir to the family's Gimbel Brothers department store. Edna's broadcasting career spanned 5 decades beginning with the era of live broadcasts, featuring full studio orchestras and vocalists.

In the late 1940s she co-founded, along with the late James Tisdale, radio station WVCH, "the voice of Chester", Pennsylvania. During this period she "discovered" and put on the air a number of local youngsters who went on to become household names, i.e., the Four Aces, Joe Pyne, the father of talk

radio, Bill Haley and the Comets (“Rock Around the Clock”) and many others.

In the early 50s she moved to New York to work at World Transcriptions and WOR.

As television grew in popularity, Edna returned to Philadelphia and worked at both WPTZ and WCAU. This was the era of live television and her work week included meeting, greeting and helping script and schedule talent for programs such as The Ernie Kovacs Show, who was a friend and particular favorite.

Throughout her long life, Edna remained an active devotee to broadcast news.

She is survived by her son, retired broadcast comedian, Dick Whittington, who lives in southern California, a daughter, Judy Whittington McKay, who lives in Mexico, and five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.