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'Syracuse Television': New book tells the hillocal TV stations, broadcasters



From the book Syracuse Television: For more than 27 years, preschoolers across Central New York tuned into The Magic Toy Shop on WHEN-TV. The program was created with the help of parents, educators and other experts to provide a fun and positive experience. Seen here from left to right are Socrates Sampson as Eddie Flum Num, Jean Daugherty as the Play Lady, and Marylin Hubbard Herr as Merrily. Photo courtesy the Onondaga Historical Association. (Photo by Onondaga Historical Association)

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(http://connect.syracuse.com/user/gherbert/index.html) By Geoff Herbert | gdherbert@syracuse.com (http://connect.syracuse.com/user/gherbert/posts.html) on March 25, 2013 at 9:15 AM

Print (http://blog.syracuse.com/entertainment_impact/print.html?entry=/2013/03 /syracuse_television_book_history_cny_tv_stations.html)

Do you remember what television was like before DVRs, social media, and the Internet? How about when shows were still shot on actual film, aired in black-and-white, and consisted of endless hours of live, local programming?

A new book called "Syracuse Television" aims to show the history of local TV stations and the broadcasting pioneers that laid the foundation for today's programming in Central New York. WHEN-TV first signed on the air on Dec. 1, 1948, followed by WSYR-TV in 1950, but the Images of America publication is packed with photos from channels 3, 5, 9, 24 and even YNN.

Christie Casciano Burns, Tim Fox and Lou Gulino, who all currently work at NewsChannel 9, wrote the book together. It hits stores Monday with a rich collection of memories and snapshots that they compare to a family album.

"It's like you're looking at pictures of your grandparents or great-grandparents," Gulino said. "The difference is we're looking at when they first started in TV and who laid the groundwork for the business we work in."

The three authors, who have a combined 90-plus years of experience in broadcasting themselves, said they wanted to write about Syracuse TV before they themselves are no longer working in the business. Plus, they hope future generations will be inspired by the same broadcasters who inspired them and learn from the medium's humble beginnings.



Enlarge (http://photos.syracuse.com/post-standard/2013/03 /syrtv_hillegasjpg.html) syracuse.com (http://connect.syracuse.com /user/syrsyrcom/photos.html)

From the book 'Syracuse Television': John Frederic 'Fred' Hillegas began his career as a reporter for The Post-Standard in 1938. He joined WSYR radio in 1946 as a newscaster and added television news broadcasts to his duties when WSYR-TV signed on. He remained a fixture in local news until he retired in 1972. Photo courtesy Onondaga Historical Association.

Syracuse Television: Book shows the history of local TV (http://photos.syracuse.com/4456/gallery /syracuse_television_book_shows_the_history_of_local_tv/index.html) gallery (6 photos)



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"We look around the newsroom and there are very few of us who have been with the station for more than 25 years,"
Casciano Burns said. "There aren't many who remember what we grew up watching."

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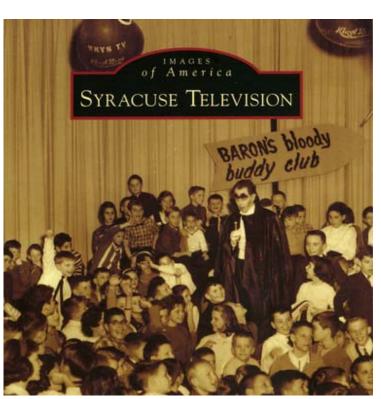
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"We all came into the market at a great time, because all of the pioneers of television were still around," Fox remembered of his start 30 years ago. "Many of them were still working, and the others who had retired or moved on, we had a chance to get to know."

The conversation quickly turned sentimental as the authors reminisced on memorable figures and programs, such as "Monster Movie Matinee," "Magic Toy Shop," Art Peterson's "Club Continental" (which some viewers thought was a real dance club) and a show featuring local students called "One O'Clock Scholar." Tom Kenny, the voice of "SpongeBob SquarePants," has even said his work was influenced by the shows he grew up watching as a young boy in East Syracuse.

The book also features local TV personalities like Ed Murphy, Jim Deline, Fred Hillegas, Ron Curtis and Kay Larsen, plus the Syracuse Media Group's own meteorologist **Dave Eichorn (http://connect.syracuse.com/user/deichorn/posts.html)**. National stars who got their start in Central New York, like Al Roker, David Muir and Mike Tirico, are also included.

"I loved watching TV when I was a kid -- back then you didn't recognize the difference between national figures and local figures," Fox added. "You didn't know that they didn't come from Hollywood... they were [all] the same as Captain Kangaroo."



The project was completed in less than a year from concept to publication. Casciano Burns, who had just finished her children's book "The Puck Hog Vol. 2," and Gulino started brainstorming ideas after reflecting on their beginnings in broadcasting with longtime anchor Rod Wood. Fox was working on the history of WSYR-TV, so it all came together at just the right time.

Many pictures were gathered by carefully handling negatives

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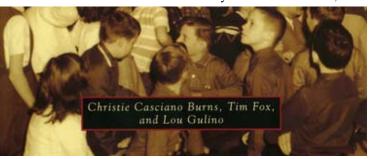


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Syracuse Television': New book tells the history of local TV stations, br...



View full size (http://media.syracuse.com/post-standard/photo/2013/03/syrtvsyracuse-television-bookjpg-e41cb6ea114d1450.jpg)

This cover image shows the Images of America book 'Syracuse Television,' written by Christie Casciano Burns, Tim Fox and Lou

Arcadia Publishing

stored in stations' filing cabinets or in the archives at the Onondaga Historical Association. Other images and stories were provided by the Syracuse New Times, WCNY, Klineberg Photography, NewsChannel 9 and several individuals.

Casciano Burns also credited Wood, who has worked at both channels 5 and 9 in his more

than 45 years on air in Syracuse, with helping identify many of the faces in the decades-old pictures.

"Syracuse Television" is now available on Amazon.com

(http://www.amazon.com/Syracuse-Television-America-Christie-Casciano /dp/0738598348) and will be sold in bookstores throughout Central New York, as well as local pharmacies and gift shops.

The writers will be on hand to sign copies of the book at the Barnes & Noble in DeWitt on Saturday, April 27 at 1 p.m. and Downtown Books & Coffee in Auburn on Sunday, April 28 at 1 p.m. They'll also be at the opening of a new exhibit at the Onondaga Historical Association called the Jean Daugherty Memorial Magic Toy Shop Collection on Thursday, May 9; the OHA's "History House Party" grand opening event starts at noon and concludes with a book signing session from 6 to 8 p.m.

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