

Richard Red Blanchard W6AG Born Gardner Mass in 1920, Red's parents moved to LA early on and Red didn't return to Gardner until age 15 and then received his first ham call, W1LDI.



During the war Red worked at General Electric, Schenectady and was sent to Kansas City on the famous BC-375 project.

After the war he entered broadcasting, working for the following stations in a 35 year career as announcer and engineer. KPRO - KCBQ - KLAS - KCBS - KPOP - KABC - KXLA - KNX & KHJ-TV During those years Red held six ham calls,

currently W6AG. We pick up Red's career as a favorite and a huge hit in the Bay area in the 50's - Local sensation and Zorch Cat! KCBS introduced a nightly half hour comedy program hosted by former big band trombonist Red Blanchard, a five year airwaves veteran.

This was no deejay show, however he would spin the occasional novelty platter (Red Ingle & The Natural Seven being a personal favorite) the centerpiece of the Red Blanchard Show was its jokes and sketches, tightly scripted to allow Blanchard to focus on his characters and dialects. The shows target audience were school-kids and teens, a group of whom would pile into the studio each night to comprise a live audience. Red kept his listeners with zany projects. He does not openly suggest green hair or cat's whiskers, which seem to come naturally to his audience.

He had kept his audience busy mailing him dirt to "Help fill up San Fran Bay" or sending in empty orange juice cans to be used in building a 60 foot antenna. Twenty five bottle caps earned a listener an "I Dread Red" card and a usable joke is repaid with an "I Write For CBS" certificate. It seems a lot of broadcast areas in the Post WW2 days had some enterprising deejays that were capable of going Zorch, on almost any subject.

Cleveland had them, Mad Daddy Pete Myers and The King of Rock N Roll Allen Freed. NYC had them around and for a while, Allen Freed took the NYC path. It was Pete Myers downfall to move to NYC. WLAC had one in particular, who hit 40 states at night from Nashville, that was jockey "Big Hugh." Buy that "Dixie Peach Palmaide, Ya Hear?" I'll never forget Ernie Kovacs over WABC, Ernie took NYC by storm and then appeared over WABD the Dumont flag ship.

Red was a rage in the Bay Area, peaking in the summer of 53, its popularity prompted him to cut a series of novelty records of his own. Backed by Paul Weston, Blanchard's biggest hit was in 55, Columbia release "Captain Hideous" and the B side "Zorch!" -Zorch was a mock jive lingo created by his writers, inspired in part by Slim Gaillard, whose patois Blanchard had absorbed when their bands shared bills in the 40s. Nervous Norvus got inspiration too, Ape Call Doodlie Yabba.

Red was married for 40 years to Phyllis, WB6IYA and has been a widower for the past 18 years. He is heavily into computers, building them up from scratch. Don't confuse our subject with the Old time WLS broadcaster "Donald Red Blanchard, National Barn Dance, comedian and deejay." Partially scripted from time.com - songpoemmusic.com qrz.com - W8SU 2006