BHC-MSS 0177
Guide to the Papers of Peter Arnell
By Lisa Furchtgott
2021

Descriptive Summary
Creator: Peter Arnell
Title: Papers of Peter Arnell
Dates: 1936 – 1960, undated
Quantity: 1 manuscript box
Abstract: Peter Arnell, a Bridgeport native, took up radio performance and production when he attended the University of Michigan, graduating in 1941. After working as a disc jockey for several stations across the U.S., he developed a number of popular, nationally-broadcasted television game shows of the 1950s, including the original version of *Wheel of Fortune.* His papers include promotional materials seeking shows' support from consumer-goods companies, as well as scripts, photos of participants, entertainment-industry journals, and newspaper clippings.
Language: English
Repository: Bridgeport History Center

Biographical History:

Peter Arnell – originally Antonelli – was born in Bridgeport in 1918. An ardent participant in theater and radio activities at the University of Michigan, he earned a degree in 1941 and later in the decade began working for radio stations in Beckley, West Virginia; Paterson, New Jersey; Chicago; Detroit; New York City; and Philadelphia. By the start of the 1950s, his focus shifted to television shows based in Hollywood. Over the next ten years, he produced the game-shows *I'll Buy That, Talent Scouts, Take a Good Look,* and *Wheel of Fortune*, among others. Many were projects of IMPA, a New York City TV-production company co-owned by Arnell with Irving Mansfield, who produced several shows for CBS over the 1940s and 1950s. Arnell was a member of the Screen Actors Guild and American Federation of Television and Radio Artists unions. He died in Branford, Connecticut in 1993.

Scope and Content Note:

Arnell's papers begin with his high-school and college diplomas and then document his professional life as a radio entertainer and television producer between 1941 and 1960. Scripts of a number of his game shows, all broadcast by CBS, are joined by photos of participants, media clips, and promotional brochures outlining the shows' popularity and aiming to secure corporate funding to support new seasons. A small set of additional materials includes his list of ambitions declared after graduating college, a publicity photo, and business cards advertising his performance skills and, later, his status as a vice-president for IMPA.

Arrangement note: The collection takes up one box. It consists of three series: education, consisting of two diplomas; a larger set of papers focused on the advertising and substance of Arnell's radio and television shows; and a group of additional materials related to his career.

Administrative information:
Provenance: These papers were donated by Arnell's niece, Diane Antonelli
Preferred Citation: Papers of Peter Arnell (BHC-MSS 0177), Bridgeport History Center.

Names and Subject Tracings

Personal Names
Arnell, Peter, 1918-1993

Corporate Names
CBS Broadcasting Inc
IMPA (production company)

Subject tracings
Television
Entertainment
Media
Television shows

Box and folder listing

Box 1

Series I
Education

1. Diploma, Central High School, 1936
2. Diploma, University of Michigan, 1941

Series II
Radio and Television

3. WPAT schedules, June 3 – June 9, Sept. 3 – Oct. 6, undated
4. "Main Street," *Radio Daily*, p. 4, Dec. 29, 1948
5. Photos and television scripts, "I'll Buy That," Oct. 16, Oct. 20, Oct, 27, Nov. 11, Nov. 24, Nov. 26, 1953
6. Promotional brochure, "I'll Buy That," circa 1954
7. Television script, "Take a Good Look," taped Nov 8, 1959, aired Nov. 12, 1959
8. Television script, "Talent Scouts," taped Feb. 19, 1960
9. Newspaper clippings and publicity photos, "Wheel of Fortune," 1952
10. Newspaper clippings and publicity photos, "Wheel of Fortune," 1953
11. Newspaper clippings and publicity photos, "Wheel of Fortune," undated
12. Promotional brochure, "Wheel of Fortune," 1953

Series III
Additional materials

13. Graduation announcement, c. 1941

14. Press pass to Shibe Park, 1946
15. Business cards, March 1947, undated
16. Publicity photos, undated
17. Complimentary television tickets, 1948-1957
18. Program, “Miss Universe Beauty Pageant to select Miss Connecticut of 1954,” May 23, 1954
19. Presentations Received From Ashley-Steiner, Inc., April 25, 1956
20. Photos, unidentified, undated