



STAN CHAMBERS

Biography

KTLA/WB's Stan Chambers is unique among television newsmen; he's been with the same station for 59 years. And in a major market like Los Angeles, where news personalities come and go almost as quickly as one switches channels, such longevity is no small accomplishment. In almost six decades of reporting the news for KTLA/WB, Stan has covered every major news event in and around L.A., including political elections, floods, earthquakes, human tragedies, riots, assassinations and fires.

His career with KTLA/WB began in December of 1947, shortly after KTLA/WB had become the first commercially-licensed TV station in the western United States. There were about 300 TV sets in the L.A. area at the time, and only about half of them working. Stan remembers, "In the early days, the station kept a list of everyone who owned a TV set and we got regular reports from them on their reactions to programming and the quality of their TV reception. Most of the TV sets then were RCA or DuMont, but quite a few were home-made jobs, put together on the order of ham radios, with coat hanger antennas."

Stan spent his first months at KTLA as a stage hand, but was quickly promoted to operations, then sales and at the same time, began reporting and working on live variety shows. "In those days, everyone did a little of everything," he recalls.

In his career, Stan has reported a record 22,000+ stories including every major natural disaster in Los Angeles since 1947 including the Bel-Air fires, the Baldwin Hills dam break and the Northridge earthquake. He has also reported on heartbreaking, high profile stories including the Robert Kennedy assassination, the Frank Sinatra, Jr. kidnapping, the Manson family murder to Sharon Tate and the case of the Hillside Strangler. Stan broke the monumental Rodney King beating story when amateur photographer George Holiday handed over his tape to the trusted street reporter. In 1987, Stan was part of the on-air team that provided two days of continuous coverage of the visit of Pope John Paul II to Los Angeles.

In addition, Stan has reported for KTLA's signature broadcast of the Tournament of Roses Parade almost every year since 1949, interviewing Parade officials and guests live during pre-Parade activities, as well as getting reaction from attendees during the Parade. In 2002 the prestigious Tournament of Roses Association presented Stan with a special award for over 50 years of dedication to Rose Parade broadcast excellence on KTLA/WB.

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In 1949, Stan reported on what he considers the most memorable story of his career: the Kathy Fiscus well tragedy. While playing in a vacant lot near her San Marino home, four-year-old Kathy stumbled into an abandoned well. Within minutes after the rescue operation began, Stan was at the scene. "We were so wrapped up in the tragedy and reporting the story that we didn't really have a chance to wonder if anyone was watching; we had no idea of the impact we were making," said Stan. The story, with its tragic ending, set a precedent in TV reporting and helped build KTLA's reputation for on-the-spot news coverage.

The Stan Chambers Building at KTLA was dedicated in honor and tribute to 50 years of dedicated service to the station and community. At the building dedication, Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan presented Stan with a Los Angeles City street sign that was posted just outside the KTLA studios, at the corner of Sunset and Van Ness. In addition, the Stan Chambers Journalism Awards, an essay competition, annually awards senior high school students interested in journalism careers with cash awards.

Other honors include several Emmy and Golden Mike awards, the Sigma Delta Chi Broadcaster of the Year award, the Governor's Award from the Television Academy, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Society of Professional Journalists, a "star" on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, an L.A. Press Club Award, L. A. City and County proclamations, and from his alma mater, the USC Alumni Association award, among numerous others.

Stan's intelligent and professional manner of reporting critical news stories has made him one of L.A.'s most admired newsmen.

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