

C H A P T E R 2 9: Mr. Big of This Radio Rig

Anyone who has listened to the early PAMS demos, especially Series 10-16, has heard his voice. He was the narrator with the booming baritone and unmistakable Texas accent. On Series 14, "Dramatic Signatures," he played the part of the station manager, Mr. Smith, aka "Mr. Big of this Radio Rig." Another memorable role was the wacky demonstration DJ in "PAMS Musical Funtests," Series 16A. After 1961 he seemed to disappear. I used to wonder, "Who was that guy?"

I interviewed a number of PAMS singers and engineers, but most of these folks arrived after the departure of our mystery man in the early 1960s. Finally I got my answer from the fellow who probably sang more jingles at PAMS than anyone, Dan Alexander, now living in retirement in Arizona. He was a vocalist at PAMS on and off from 1957 through 1971, when he left the staff to become a freelancer.

"That was Charles McLIne," said Alexander. "He was an engineer there and went way back with Bill Meeks (president of PAMS). Charles was kind of heavysset, had blond thinning hair and was a bit older than the rest of us."

McLIne married a woman named Shirley, who worked in the office at PAMS back when the company was primarily an advertising agency. The kicker to this story is how McLIne left PAMS. "He got into a squabble with Meeks about – what else? – money," said Alexander. "Charles went into Bill's office and peed on his desk."

I guess that was his letter of resignation.