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OUT OF THE OLD: 2ZA staff men, led by Basil Oliver, begin shifting the station's 20,000 records

VOICE OF THE MANAWATU

(continued from previous page)

which required the presence of a studio audience were occasionally enlivened when someone fainted in the crush. So far as is known, this never happened to an announcer; like Himalayan mountaineers, 2ZA announcers became acclimatised to lack of oxygen.

The increasing use of tape recorders added a few more difficulties. There were two ways of recording: (1) Choose a time when a recorded feature (usually fifteen minutes) was being broadcast on the control-room turntable, and dash into the studio to make as much of the time as possible. Sound insulation wasn't too good, however, and bits of the feature usually filtered in. (2) Choose a time when the Station Manager wasn't in his office (or just chase him out into the street), and record there. But this room, besides being disputed territory, was not acoustically perfect either, and not all recordings are improved by the sounds of a bustling town; train whistles and such. The 2ZA staff were not happy about the quality of their recordings, and they pointed out they could do better all round with more room to work. In time, as these things tend to come about, the principle of new premises was approved. The NZBS bet on the future of Palmerston North by buying rather than renting a building about 300 yards from 2ZA's original home. Tradesmen were called in to fit out the framework, and by November 30, 1955, the framework was ready to take the gear which would make the building a radio station.

W. P. Huggins, NZBS Senior Engineer in charge of installations, sent a team to Palmerston North under H. W. Nixon, whose last job of this nature had been three years ago at 2XP, New Plymouth. The installation took two and a half months, and amongst other things, used up three and a half miles of lead cable. One of the fancier operations was moving the 83-foot mast for the emergency transmitter, which stood on the roof of the old building. As it

was not possible to get this into the lift and out of the building as it stood (the lift was an obsolescent, non-expanding type), it had to be stripped right down, moved 300 yards down Broadway, and reassembled on the new roof. This was completed within two weeks, using conventional tools like wrenches, rather than helicopters and ice axes.

The mast is doing the same job as it was on the old building: acting as aerial for the 2 kw. emergency transmitter, but with the new electronic gear installed in this building the transmitter can be controlled from the studio panel in case of failure in the main transmitter, instead of the previous method of control from the transmitter site, which entails long breaks in transmission.

Technical refinements abound in these studios. Much preliminary work was done in the way of acoustic measurement, so that the correct placing of dampening and resonant materials in the walls, floor and ceiling will ensure that the acoustic properties come near the ideal for the purpose and dimensions of the rooms.

The microphone switches controlled by the announcers have complex functions: in fact, they seem to do everything but lock the doors and set off the burglar alarms. There are the well-known red lights, of course, discouraging casual visitors from entering and making irrelevant talk in front of an open microphone. The microphone switches also cut off the speakers of the talk-back communications system, of which there is one in each room. The announcer's telephone is forbidden to ring merrily, or even buzz, at the wrong moment. When the announcer's microphone is open, a green light shows on the telephonist's board at the reception desk, so the receptionist will know that she cannot put a phone call through to the announcer. In the same way, a white light shows when the microphone in the main studio is open.

From the control panel the technician can give cues with a switch which



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CONGRATULATIONS 2ZA ON YOUR OUTSTANDING SUCCESS!

Like Station 2ZA, we keep up with the times and our personal service stores offer the highest quality up-to-the-minute Contemporary Furniture and Furnishings along with the finest in Traditional Decor. The very latest in Household Appliances and Radios are also available in our qualified Home Service Division and what's more we offer the service that everybody is seeking—the wonderful budget-saving, easy credit, easy terms plan that is the perfect answer to happy homes!

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