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How did the college radio station come by its call letters?

St. Norbert College

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January 2007

Question:

Dear Abbot Pennings,

How did the college radio station come by its call letters?

Answer:

The first commercial radio station in northern Wisconsin, WHBY, was built on the St. Norbert campus by a student engineer and inventor, Cletus Collom, in the mid-1920s. He was supported by the Rev. Ignatius Van Dyke, O.Praem., Coach George Carey and a Norbertine seminarian, James Wagner '24.

Wagner, who had always enjoyed experimenting with crystal radio sets, applied for the permit for a campus radio station. The call letters, WHBY, were said to have stood for "Where Happy Boys Yodel."

The Norbertine connection continued after WHBY moved off campus to Green Bay and, later, Appleton, with Wagner and, later the Rev. Isadore Gosz, O.Praem., '41 serving as general manager. Call letters for the college radio station today are WSNC.

Responses to "Ask the Abbot" questions are penned by St. Norbert College staff in the name of Abbot Bernard Pennings, O.Praem., who founded St. Norbert College in 1898.



Ask the Abbot

As the founder of St. Norbert College, and having a prime seat in the center of campus throughout the years, I, Abbot Bernard Pennings, hold the answers to many of your burning questions about the college.

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St. Norbert College

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