

Donald Jeffry Herbert - SWL - *1917-2007* Born Donald Herbert Kemske in Minnesota. We know and remember him as “Mr. Wizard” - I’ve just ordered my Mr. Wizard tee shirt (XXL) - Of the nearly 200 VIP and SWL listeners we’ve published my desire hoping this presentation to be the best for some unknown reason. Probably because this gifted individual was a master teacher, never looking down or trapping the kids on his science shows. I think it is one of my cooked up reasons not applying myself in the sciences, I couldn’t find a Don Herbert during the early school years.



Mr. Wizard was a general science and English major of the Univ of Wisconsin-La Crosse who was interested in drama. His career as an actor was interrupted by WW II – Enlisting as a private later joining the U.S.A.A.F taking pilots training and became a B-24 bomber pilot flying combat missions with the Fifteenth Army A.F. out of bases in Italy. When discharged in 1945, he was a highly decorated captain and had earned the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with 3 oak leaf clusters.



After the war, Herbert worked at a popular radio station in Chicago acting in children’s programs such as the documentary health series *It’s Your Life* (1949) It was during this time that Herbert formulated the idea of Mr. Wizard and a general science experiments show that utilized the new medium of television. Don’s idea was accepted by NBC in Chicago and the series “*Watch Mr. Wizard*” premiered in 1951. The 30 minute show

featured Herbert as Mr. Wizard with a young assistant who watched while Herbert performed interesting science experiments.

Those gems numbered 547 live episodes created for austerity. There were other major shows for NBC and Nickelodeon through the years. In 1993, children’s science show *Beakman’s World* paid homage to Herbert by naming its two penguin puppet characters “Don” and “Herb” after our subject.

Don Herbert’s list of awards are impressive, Peabody Award for his work on *Watch Mr. Wizard*. Three Thomas Alva Edison National mass Media Awards; In 1991, Herbert received the Robert A. Millikan award from the American Assoc. Of Physics Teachers (AAPT); In 1994 James T. Grady-James H. Stack Award for Interpreting Chemistry from the American Chemical Society.

Mr. Wizard expired June of 2007 at Bell Canyon, Southern California. Mr. Herbert was age 89. Your author as asked Henry Feinberg K2SSQ a technology major, writer and director, if he could add to Herbert’s SWL and ham radio interests. Earlier in his (Feinberg’s) career, worked closely with Don Herbert devising innovative ways to demonstrate the magic and mystery of science in everyday living. Should K2SSQ have additional we will publish with his permission. People such as Don Herbert come along only once, we were blessed with his presence. Scripted from Wikipedia dot org., of course, a great operation. www.w8jyz.com Bob Green is always there at the helm.