



Tommy Tucker *1903-1989* KB4VJG - Sweet music band leader, Radio Host and professor of music. Our man born Gerald Duppler, at Souris, ND in 1903.

Tucker was a graduate of the University of North Dakota in 1929 earning a degree in music.

Tommy's theme song "I Love You" and his familiar tag line "Its Tommy Tucker Time" with the ticking clock. Maestro Tucker and his orchestra recorded hundreds of records and toured widely from 1936 to 1958. The orchestra's biggest hit was "I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire"

Our subject who played the piano, trumpet and trombone was familiar to radio listeners as the host of "Sing for Your Supper With Tommy Tucker" and "30 Minutes in Hollywood." Among his TV appearances were those on Kate Smith's show and on "Strike it Rich." Plus the Jessel show in 1938.

In 1944 Tucker attempted to put together a swing outfit. To help make the transition, he hired arrangers Van Alexander, Claude Hopkins and Fred Norman. The experiment was a failure and a year later he was back playing for the hotel crowd. His orchestra of the 1950s included saxophonist Gerry Mulligan and singer Eydie Gorme.

When the popularity of big bands began to fade, Mr. Tucker turned to a career in education. He spent 20 years teaching music at Monmouth College in West Long Branch, N.J. As Assistant Professor of Music at Monmouth College, he later became Dean of the Music Department. He retired to Florida in 1979. When relocating to Florida, Tommy had a hearts desire to enter ham radio having a fascination in the electronics field. He received his amateur ticket KB4VJG and was known to be enjoying the hobby daily before his death.

He spent his remaining years in the Sarasota area. Aside from leading his orchestra, Tucker ran a home furnishing store and founded the Tommy Tucker School of Music. He also owned his own song publishing company. Tommy Tucker died in 1989.

Maestro Tucker is survived by his wife, Virginia Dare Tucker, a daughter, Trudy Dare Thompson of Chapel Hill and two sons, Lewis Wiley of Boston and Thomas Randall of NYC. He was age 86.

I have many of his early recordings and the Tucker Theme starts out with the announcer stating "Tommy Tucker Time" with the Metronome ticking off the clock, beginning the "I Love You theme." It is good to know this talented amateur radio operator is well remembered still. His particular brand of slow dance music, aimed at the hotel ballroom audience, kept him at the top of his profession for nearly thirty years. Partially scripted with parabrisas.com