



PHIL RUSKIN

Phil Ruskin worked in Chicago television as a Staff Director for about 42 years which Phil himself describes as “something of a feat!” He started at WBKB Channel 4 on January 2, 1949, and retired from WBBM-TV Channel 2 in 1991.

Phil, considered the Dean of Chicago Directors, is perhaps best known for his technically-sharp orchestration of WBBM's *5 O'clock News* and *10 O'clock News*. Phil's directing credits go far beyond the news studio. Among the shows he has directed: *Joan of Arc*, one of Mariette Hartley's first appearances in a live TV drama; WBBM's kids program, *Good Gang Express*; the Joseph Jefferson Awards; several Emmy Awards programs; and various New Year's Eve celebrations.

Phil left WBBM a couple of times to experience directing elsewhere. He went to London to work as Manager of Television for an advertising agency just as commercial television was ramping up in Great Britain. He also worked at WLS-TV for three years as a staff director. He won two Emmy Awards during his career for Excellence in Directing, while being involved with countless other programs that garnered Emmys, in part, because of his flawless direction.

Phil always kept busy even beyond his career at WBBM-TV. He was an Instructor at Columbia College Chicago for about 20 years. Phil served as an officer or board member for the Radio and Television Directors Guild, the Directors Guild of America and the Chicago Press Club. He spent two and a half years in the U.S. Army during the Second World War, and was with the U.S. Infantry in Europe during the Battle of the Bulge.

Phil married his best friend, Esther Slovic, in Chicago on Dec. 21, 1946. Phil and Esther had three lovely children, Elizabeth, Peter and Jane, and four terrific grandkids. Esther died last year just a few weeks before she and Phil would have celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. Phil says he wants to honor Esther with his induction into the Silver Circle. In Phil's words: “She mentored me and nurtured me and stood by me for 60 years. She will always be with me and I will always love her. I am such a fortunate man.”