

STAR RADIO L.I.

wbaw

NASSAU SUFFOLK
QUEENS BROOKLYN

Saturday, February 9, 1985

| | TITLE | ARTIST | 12"/LP | Label |
|----|----------------------|---------------------|--------|--------------------------|
| 1 | KING OF ROCK | RUN-DMC | 12 | PROFILE |
| 2 | BIG MOUTH | WHODINI | LP | JIVE |
| 3 | CHILLIN AT... | RUSSELL RUSH | 12 | DEF JAM |
| 4 | THE REAL ROYANNE | ROYANNE, UTFO | 12 | SELECT |
| 5 | TONIGHT | READY FOR THE WORLD | 12 | MCA |
| 6 | ROYANNES REVENGE | ROYANNE SHANTE | 12 | POP ART |
| 7 | YOU'RE BLIND | RUN-DMC | LP | PROFILE |
| 8 | ORIGINAL | DOUG FRESH | 12 | VME |
| 9 | LARRY'S THEME | GRANDMASTER FLASH | LP | ELECTRA |
| 10 | I NEED A BEAT | LL COOL J | 12 | DEF JAM |
| 11 | MISSIN YOU | DIANA ROSS | 12 | RCA |
| 12 | ITCHIN FOR A SCRATCH | FORCE MDS | LP | TOMMYBOY |
| 13 | SPARK'S TURN | SPARKI D | 12 | NIA |
| 14 | LOVERIDE | NUANCE | 12 | 4 th BROADWAY |
| 15 | STICK EM | FATBOYS | LP | SUTRA |
| 16 | STEP OFF | MEL AND THE FIVE | 12 | SUGARHILL |
| 17 | HANGIN OUT | UTFO | 12 | SELECT |
| 18 | BEASTIE GROOVE | BEASTIE BOYS | 12 | DEF JAM |
| 19 | REQUEST LINE | ROCKMASTER SCOTT | 12 | REALITY |
| 20 | DO OR DIE BED STI | DIVINE SOUNDS | 12 | SPECIFIC |

wbaw IS THE BREAK STATION!

BREAK 1:
KICKIN IT FRESH
SATURDAY NITES
11:30-1AM

Chuckie Dee Butch Cassidy

Super **SPECTRUM**
mixx show:

Wizard K-Jee - DJ Mellow Dee

BREAK 2:
ON SUNDAY NITES 10-1AM
Rusty Jays Groove Show:
The Jedi Jock of the galaxy!

MONDAY NITES 10-1AM is BREAK 3:

THE OPERATING ROOM 90.3 FM
WITH **DOCTOR DRE**
OF THE Concept Crew

Concept III WITH T-MONEY Every first Saturday of month
Funk invaders dont hesitate to call the Groove Line
610 747-4757

Stay tuned for guest stars from the Island - NY area
Nassau, Suffolk, and Queens keep SHOCKIN THE HOUSE!

Notice to all crews, rappers, and Djs send tapes to
WBAAU PO BOX 365
Garden City

SPECTRUM CITY



SATURDAY 10-1130 PM

MC FLAVOR SHOW

WHATS SUH..HUH UP!

PLACES TO HANG OUT:

LEVITTOWN ROLLER RINK WED SUN

LACES

ROLLER SKATING THURS/WKND
3345 HILLSIDE AVE
NEW HYDE PARK

Twilites
The Nite Club
847 SHORE, L.I. 11517

wbaw
POWER 90.3 FM

LISTEN TO **POWER 90.3 FM** ON YOUR FRESH-M DIAL

MONDAY NITE 8-10

THE NIGHT NURSE

BEST IN REGGAE

Def Jam Label
Will Specialize in
'Real Street Music'

NEW YORK Def Jam Records, a new independent label specializing in rap music, is being started by Run-D.M.C. manager/producer Russell Simmons and producer Rick Rubin.

"The purpose of this company is to educate people to real street music by putting out records nobody in the business would distribute but us," says Simmons.

The first single on the Malverne-distributed label is L.L. Cool J's "I Need A Beat." Also on the roster are Run-D.M.C. spinner Jazzy Jay, who will have a single titled "Def Jam"; TLA Rock, whose Rubin-produced 12-inch, "It's Yours," was an underground rap favorite last summer; Jimmy Spicer, who has previously recorded for Spring; and the Beastie Boys, a group of white rockers who rap over heavy metal rhythms.

BOMB THE SUBURBS

ADELPHI UNIVERSITY RADIO STATION
WBAU PUT STRONG ISLAND ON THE MAP

by Jesse Serwer

When Bill Stephney arrived at Adelphi University in 1982, he couldn't have imagined he'd help birth a cultural phenomenon on the order of Public Enemy, turn Long Island into "Strong Island," and play a pivotal role in hip-hop's maturation. But these were just a few of the results of Stephney's involvement at WBAU-FM (90.3), the campus radio station at Adelphi, where he had won a four-year Urban League scholarship. Under the future Def Jam president's guidance, WBAU would become a one-of-a-kind talent incubator from which a relative diaspora of suburban Black kids—many of them only several years removed from Bronx and Harlem addresses—would bum-rush the burgeoning show that was urban, five-borough hip-hop.

To be fair, Stephney would tap into a talent pool that brothers Hank and Keith Boxley (or Shocklee, as they had begun calling themselves) had already begun corralling into Spectrum City, the mobile DJ set they formed in their hometown of Roosevelt during the mid-'70s. By the time of his arrival, BAU already had a handful of R&B DJs catering to the local Black community in Bob Thomas, Rusty J, and J. D. Walker. But, inspired by a summer job he'd landed in the promotions department at local rock station WLIR, Stephney would set into motion a chain of events that would make WBAU one of the country's most unique college radio stations until its demise in 1995.

"WLIR was one of the country's top progressive rock stations—the jocks joked around and played everything from Charlie Daniels to Herbie Hancock," Stephney explains. "Then they changed to 'new music,' playing songs like 'Buffalo Gals' with new wave. It was very contrary to Black radio, which was rigid in only playing love-oriented R&B. When I got to BAU, I wanted to take that attitude and apply it to a format reminiscent of the hip-hop gigs where we heard everything from Kraftwerk to Bob James. College radio at the time was basically new music shows playing the Dead Kennedys, Flock of Seagulls, but it was incredibly white to me. So I'd play something like 'Too Many Creeps' by the Bush Tetras, then T-Ski Valley and Spoonie Gee."

Landing a show from ten to one on Monday nights—a

time-slot that would become synonymous with Long Island hip-hop—Stephney launched *The Mr. Bill Show*, finding the last piece to his show's puzzle when he spotted a member of Long Island's top DJ crew in Adelphi's cafeteria.

"I was eating this horrible quarter-pounder called the Adelphi Burger, and I saw this guy wearing a Spectrum City jacket," Stephney recalls of his first encounter with the future Chuck D, graphic design major Carlton Ridenhour. "Everyone who went to parties in the Black parts of Long Island knew Spectrum, [but] Adelphi was a predominantly White suburban commuter college—most of the population was into Dan Fogelberg or Rush. So I was like, 'Hey, what are you doing here?'" While Chuck recalls this meeting occurring at a bus stop, both agree the conversation ended with Stephney inviting Chuck and the rest of Spectrum to join him at BAU.

Although previous incarnations of Spectrum City had included several DJs, the 1982 version consisted of promoter/idea man Hank Shocklee, MC Chuckie D, hype man Butch Cassidy, and Keith "Wizard K-Jee" Boxley as the sole DJ (Terminator X, then Norman "Melo-D" Rogers, would join shortly thereafter).

"They all had a lot of charisma—Butch Cassidy later worked as an Eddie Murphy lookalike, which is funny because all the Spectrum cats grew up with Eddie," Stephney says. "Having them cemented the idea of combining the cool



Doctor Dre (center) with Web D (left) and Boulevard Tenard (right) of Long Island group the Players Club. Photo courtesy of Ray Davis.

urban DJ thing with this rock and roll-ish format but playing hip-hop, with all these characters and different MCs. And me as the centerpiece, because I sounded like the conventional radio guy. Monday nights became a clubhouse. It was one big snap session, with sports talk, political talk, and music."

As Stephney slid into the program director's role, he gave Spectrum their own Saturday night showcase, *The Super Spectrum Mixx Show*, from 11:30 to one. "We agreed radio gave us way better exposure than the mixtapes we were doing," says Chuck. "We couldn't understand why people would spend money on what you could tape over the radio. BLS and Kiss weren't doing mixshows then, so we were able to be an alternative and give people what they really wanted."

Calling himself "Carl Ryder," Chuck began using his booming voice to call sports games. While answering phones for *The Mr. Bill Show*, he also copped the soon-to-be-ubiquitous term "Strong Island" from a caller.

"We needed a system for answering phones, so I started giving nicknames to all the towns," Chuck says. With the exception of Adelphi's campus, Garden City was an all-White town, but it was adjacent to Hempstead, Roosevelt, and a string of other towns that had become predominantly Black following wholesale White flight in the '60s and '70s. "Uniondale became Chill City, Hempstead was the Hills and the Heights, and there was an area by the bus terminal we called Termiteville. Roosevelt was already the Velt and

Freeport was already the Port, but we really expanded upon it. That these names stuck the way they did really showed the power radio and music had for high-school kids."

Chuck and Hank furthered Strong Island's identity by recruiting and coordinating groups to make tapes for BAU and perform at Spectrum parties. Renting a studio at 510 S. Franklin Ave. in Hempstead with producers Eric "Vietnam" Sadler and Paul Shabazz, they began banging out budget recordings. "We made our own music because there wasn't enough hip-hop records to play on our show," Chuck says. "We needed to fill the space. But people always thought they were actual records."

"N-41," the first song made expressly as a promo for WBAU, featured Butch Cassidy, Chuckie D., and Tony "T.A" Allen of the Townhouse Three, with music and cuts by K-Jee. "N-41 was the bus that went from Roosevelt to Hempstead—all the rappers would be in the back just busting," recalls Butch Cassidy, who later recorded for TNT and Profile Records as Butch Cassidy's Funk Bunch and Aaron Allen (his real name), respectively. "From there, we played it on BAU and people were like, 'How can we be down?'"

Groups like the Townhouse Three (later known as Son of Bazerk) and the Choice Five MCs (who morphed into Arista artists Serious Lee Fine) soon emerged from these sessions; Leaders of the New School, Young Black Teenagers, and Kings of Pressure would form in a similar fash-



The WBAU crew outside Twilites, aka Entourage, circa 1984. Left to right: (back) Hank Shocklee, Rusty J (on van), (middle) unknown, Chuck D, T-Money, Wizard K-Jee, Dubmaster, Doctor Dre, Eric "Vietnam" Sadler, unknown, (front) Butch Cassidy, unknown, and Harry Allen. Photo by Tyrone Kelsie.

ion years later. The Townhouse Three's Tony "T.A." Allen would inadvertently introduce Flavor Flav to the Spectrum fold when he brought his piano-playing friend to play Cat Stevens's "Was Dog a Donut" over a beat.

Chuck remembers ordering the hyperactive Flav to answer the phones during his first visit to WBAU. He never left. "I remember we were joking, 'Can you imagine Flavor having a show?'" Chuck says. "Bill gave him one then and there." The *MC DJ Flavor Show* led into the *Super Spectrum Mix Show* on Saturday nights and quickly rivaled anything on the station in popularity. "You want to talk about classic—if those tapes were unearthed—" Chuck pauses. "His show was the most unique and the most egotistical. As many people loved it as hated it."

The hosts of another popular BAU show, *Who Knows What*—several of whom would later join *The Howard Stern Show* (Gary "Bababoey" Dell'Abbate attended Adelphi at this time)—devised a method to measure the popularity of BAU's shows. "Every phone call you got meant a hundred people were listening," Chuck recalls. "Which was bullshit—in college radio, whoever calls is probably the only ones listening. But we were getting ninety phone calls on a Saturday night."

Interestingly, many of these calls came from the city.

"BAU had a strong fanbase in Southeast Queens," Steph-ney explains. "The signal was only one hundred watts, but they were only twenty minutes away—which was cool,

because that was becoming the heart of hip-hop. The first rap artist we had at the station was Spyder-D. Guys like DJ Divine and Infinity Machine were listening, which was cool, because we looked up to them. Davy DMX and Kurtis Blow came up around this time. In early '83, my loudmouth friend Russell was screaming about his brother coming out with a record with this guy DMC. We had them come for what I think was their first interview, and that's when things started taking off for all of us."

In time, Run, DMC, and Jay would become semi-regulars at BAU, and the Beastie Boys, LL Cool J, and the rechristened Fat Boys (who changed their name from the Disco 3 at Chuck's suggestion following a gig at Adelphi) would do some of their first, if not their very first, interviews at the station.

"The BAU era was when everybody connected with each other," Keith Boxley recalls. "People called Long Island 'country,' but you could hear all the new shit on BAU two weeks before anyone else. We didn't have to wait for what the city was doing. In those days, we ran a club called Entourage. People from Brooklyn and the Bronx came through, which was unheard of, because it was another half hour east of us. Everybody'd be listening to BAU while they were driving out to the club."

While a boost to the station's wattage began pumping BAU as far as New Jersey and the Bronx, the station's signal always faded just twenty miles to the east, meaning

wbaw 90.3 FM

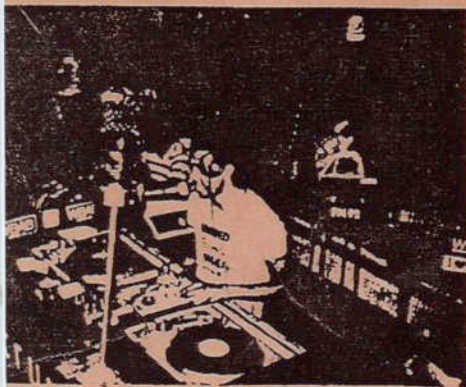
IS GROOVE LINE
(516) 747-4757 to call yall
WORKIN!



**GARAGE
RUSTY J**
SUNDAYS 10-1PM
JEDI !!



**FRRESH!!
MR BILL**
MONDAYS 10-1PM



**MIXX MADNESS:
MUSIC OF WIZARD K~JEE**

SPECTRUM BUTCH CASSIDY
CHUCKIE DEE

ATURDAYS 11:30-1 AM

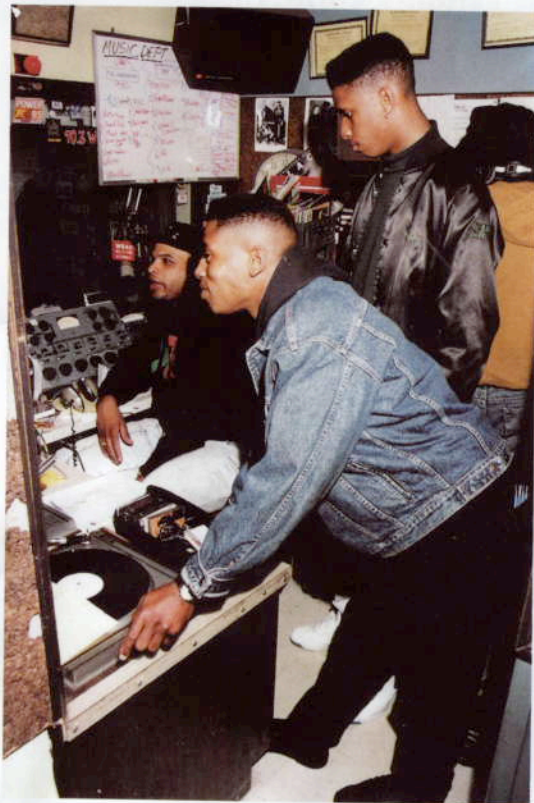
INTRODUCING THE

CONCEPT

ON THE ROCK....



**SATURDAYS, SUNDAYS
AND MONDAYS**



left: "Wildman" Steve Adams (sitting) with friends. top: Marnie 411 (sitting) from *First World Dialogue*. bottom: Wildman Steve (on phone) with Sugar Bear and Thaddeus "Mr. BAU" Robinson. Photos courtesy of Steve Adams.



it was out of range for heads in Central Islip, Brentwood, and Wyandanch—predominantly Black towns in adjacent Suffolk County with their own burgeoning hip-hop scenes. BAU tapes made the trip, however, says AJ "AJ Rok" Woodson of the JVC Force, who credits WBAU as an inspiration for their seminal 1988 hit, "Strong Island."

"We heard Chuck saying 'Strong Island' and started using it. At the time, you still had to be from the boroughs to be considered hip-hop. When they played 'Strong Island' on BAU years later, cats from Brooklyn called saying they were gonna bum-rush the station, because they thought we were dissing them! We were just saying you don't have to be from the city to be hip-hop—you can be from somewhere else, and we were from Long Island."

Another crew who found a home at BAU was the Concept Crew, who would become Original Concept after signing to Def Jam. Led by communications major Andre "Doctor Dre" Brown, Concept would take over Stephney's Monday night slot after Mr. Bill graduated and moved into a paying gig at *CMJ* (*College Music Journal*). Their show, *The Operating Room*, would also be the inadvertent birthplace of Public Enemy.

"Public Enemy No. 1" was made in 1984, two years before there was a Public Enemy," Chuck explains. "Somebody wanted to battle me, so I made a station promo out of it. I was a big rollerskating buff, and 'Blow Your Head' was this big underground thing in our area. Kids at the Roosevelt Roller Rink used to skate their asses off during that part where the guitar went *nyehhhhh*. The DJs would try to bring that part

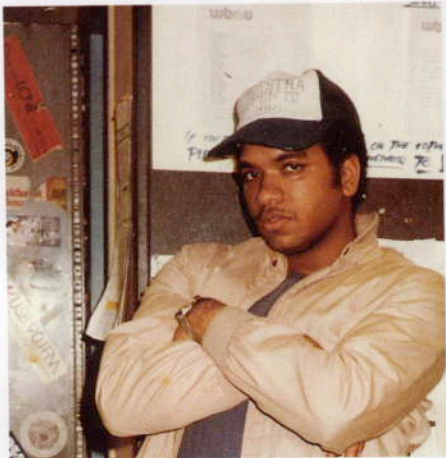
back, but it was impossible! It was always in my head, 'If that beat could just be longer...' I made what I wanted to hear all that time with a pause tape, then rapped over it. When I brought it to BAU, Jam Master Jay was sitting there with Dre. Jay thought it was hot and gave it to Rick Rubin. It became a BAU staple then took on a life of its own."

Another BAU staple that took off was Dre and Tyrone "T-Money" Kelsie's "Knowledge Me." Like "Public Enemy," the song was essentially a station promo ("I went to check out Mr. Bill, most chill") but with its pioneering combination of 808 kicks and chrome-rattling bass, it secured a Def Jam deal for Original Concept. Shortly thereafter, Rick Rubin—who had since hired Stephney as the label's publicist—came looking for Chuck to sign a deal.

While the tale of how Chuck resisted Rick Rubin's record contract offers because he thought he was too old to be an MC has been well-documented, it's also true that he preferred a career as a jock to one as an artist.

"I wanted to do radio more than I wanted to do records," Chuck says assuredly. "If we had gone on [commercial] radio back in the day, we would have been dominant. We were like a combination of Red Alert, the World Famous Supreme Team, and an informational think tank. Back in '85 and '86, we were looking at doing syndicated radio. Russell had brought some pretty credible sponsors like Sprite, Swatch, and Adidas to the table. I really thought it could have been."

While Public Enemy would take Chuck and crew away from BAU, Dre increased his presence at the station even



left: Bill Stephney at WBAU studio, 1983. right: Stephney at a WBAU appearance, circa 1983. Photos courtesy of Bill Stephney.

after making *Straight from the Basement of Kooley High!* with Original Concept and touring as the Beastie Boys' DJ.

"I left the show in [co-host] Wildman Steve's hands, went on tour, and came right back and took it over again," Dre says. "We always kept the crew together, and we'd always find somebody registered at Adelphi so we could put them in the interview so they'd keep giving us shows." Around this time, a pre-LONS Busta Rhymes and Charlie Brown began cutting classes at Uniondale High School to answer phones and hang out at the station. Dre could use the help. "I had Monday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights, and I was on Monday through Friday in the mornings, the first hip-hop morning show anywhere," says Dre, who would go on to host "wakeup" shows on major commercial radio stations like New York's WQHT-FM ("Hot 97"). "I used to go to school, work in a store, do BAU, and DJ parties every weekend. I had a van with a big double bed in the back and I'd sleep there or at the station, get up and go to class."

Following Dre and T-Money's departure for *Yo! MTV Raps* in 1988, "Wildman" Steve Adams's *The Hip-Hop Spot* held down Monday nights until the station's closure. Spinbad, DJ Eclipse, and Cipa Sounds are among the DJs who got their radio feet wet spinning alongside the show's resident DJ, Riz of Crooklyn Clan fame.

While hip-hop shows had become standard on college radio by this time, Steve and co-host Marnie 411 blazed new directions with *First World Dialogue*, a newsy, hour-long call-in segment. "People like Chuck and Doug E. Fresh called in and discussed issues," Steve says. "To this day, no one is really discussing topics *and* playing music."

Long before it would become the nation's highest-rated urban morning show, an early version of *The Star and Buc Wild Show* aired on BAU for several months in 1995. "I needed a way to promote my magazine I was publishing at the time," explains Star, aka Troi Torain. "It was my first dabble into radio. Eventually too many letters of complaints to the dean's office got me tossed off. The things we were talking about, like interracial dating, were too risqué, which was amusing, because Garden City was the same town supporting Howard Stern. Ah, Garden City—the

home of Susan Lucci."

Several months later, Adelphi president Peter Diamandopoulos, who would soon be ousted for using school funds as his own personal bank account, sold off the station's license for a fraction of its value without consulting the student government association, which funded WBAU. "Being in Garden City, some people felt the station might have been too Black," Wildman Steve suggests. "But the administration was probably afraid the faculty might say what was really going on with Diamandopoulos."

The downfall was inevitable, Steve suggests. "Hot 97 kind of destroyed underground radio. Before, hip-hop was only on the weekends. Even two years down the line, kids growing up only knew Hot 97."

Ultimately, Chuck notes matter-of-factly, BAU "went the way of the tape deck." But, while Adelphi itself failed to recognize the significance of their defunct station, its former DJs remain profuse in their praise for their radio alma mater.

"Those were the best years of my life," says Dre. "All the doors that opened for us, opened because of what we did there. Other colleges were doing hip-hop. The difference was, at BAU, the show was the icing. The work, the promotion, the parties, everything else—that was the cake." ●

JESSE SERWER is a writer from Long Island, New York. He currently lives in Brooklyn.