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REMEMBER RUBINOFF AND HIS VIOLIN?



This news photo was taken by Bill Monacelli on March 9, 1962 at the Albion High School auditorium. It was on this occasion when during a school assembly, students were treated to the thrilling sounds of classical music by one of the greats. Shown here, is the master himself, Rubinoff pointing out the strings of his famous Stradivarius violin to Kathleen Nesbitt and Joseph Piazza, students at the time. As a student myself, back then, I remember Rubinoff telling the assembly how impressed he was with the acoustics in our auditorium, noting that newer theaters and auditoriums used fiberboard ceiling tiles which deaden the sound. But that our auditorium was live which very much pleased him. That evening Rubinoff gave a full and dramatically superb concert which was sponsored by the Rotary Club of Albion. The variety program included such pieces as "Clair DeLune," "Rhapsody In Blue," "Around the World in 80 Days" and "Square Dance Fiddlin," plus much more. He was accompanied by a young pianist named David Burk.

Rubinoff's colorful career dated back to 1911 when he graduated with distinction from the Royal Conservatory of Music at Warsaw. He was urged by the immortal Victor Herbert to emigrate to Pittsburgh, Pa., where, as a boy prodigy of 13, he endeared himself into the hearts of music lovers and later became known through radio as "Rubinoff and His Violin."

As his musical horizon enlarged he became nationally famed as soloist-conductor with theatre and symphony orchestras as well as on the radio and in movie musicals. In this capacity he won the admiration and friendship of John Phillip Sousa, Will Rogers, George Gershwin, Al Jolson, Eddie Cantor

and scores of other musical greats.

Before long, both the Capitol and Paramount Theatres in New York emblazoned Rubinoff's name on their marquees. Producers of radio programs realized that radio was the medium that would bring Rubinoff's talents the vast audience they deserved. Soon, millions of people were delighting to "Rubinoff and His Violin" on such famed broadcasts as the "Chase & Sanborn Hour," the "Rexall," the "Pebeco" and the "Chevrolet" programs. It might be noted, incidentally, that among those who responded to Rubinoff's baton on these shows were such famous musical personalities as Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Tommy Dorsey and Glenn Miller.

George Frazier, Life Magazine's entertainment editor, wrote "Rubinoff is undoubtedly one of the handful of authentically great showmen now on earth." Rubinoff in his performances, used a Stradivarius which at that time insured for \$100,000. The instrument was made in 1731 by Antonio Stradivari in Cremona, Italy. In time the instrument passed into the hands of the Romanoff's, the reigning family of Russia until the revolution. It disappeared during that time of stress but turned up later in Paris in the possession of a former Russian prince who had taken the valuable instrument with him when he fled the country.

The violin bears the elaborately engraved and bejeweled coat of arms of the Romanoff family as well as the identification mark of Stradivari and the date. The instrument is of a deep brownish-red lustre, perfectly formed and developed in all its intricate detail in a manner representative of the best work of a master.