

Editor's Note: Tommy Bartlett Show closed permanently in 2020 due to COVID-19. Information provided here is for media working on historical stories.



Tommy Bartlett, 1914 – 1998 – A Master of Entertainment –

- Tommy Bartlett was born July 11, 1914 and was raised in Milwaukee, Wis. He passed away September 6, 1998, in Madison, Wis., at the age of 84.
- Tommy began his career in radio at the age of 13 at WISN in Milwaukee.
- In 1931, at age 17, Tommy was called to Chicago, IL where he landed an enviable staff announcer's job for CBS Radio.
- By the time Tommy Bartlett was 20 years old, he was announcing as many as seven radio soap operas a day.
- Tommy is credited with originating the first call-in radio talk show in 1935 at KMOX in St. Louis.
- Tommy hosted the "Welcome Travelers" program for 15 years on radio and during the early days of television.
- Tommy's broadcasting career included work for 10 radio stations and the three major networks of the day, ABC, CBS and NBC.
- In 1942, Tommy interrupted his show business career to become an Air Corps flight instructor and a Northwest Airlines pilot.
- Tommy turned his show business talent to the production of water-ski shows shortly after seeing a performance of the sport at the Chicago Railroad Fair in 1949.
- In the early 1950s, Tommy had as many as four water-ski shows on the road, simultaneously, in cities throughout the United States, Canada and the Far East.
- Tommy took his ski show performers to four World's Fairs, was part of the President's Cultural Exchange Program and toured with the USO.
- Tommy's touring show was such a success in Wisconsin Dells that the local Chamber of Commerce invited him to make Wisconsin Dells a permanent show site in 1953.
- Tommy Bartlett announced the Calgary Canada Stampede from 1966 to 1992.
- Tommy Bartlett was the Medals Awards announcer for the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.
- Tommy Bartlett was inducted into the Water Ski Hall of Fame at Cypress Gardens, Florida on April 24, 1993.
- Tommy Bartlett was posthumously inducted into the Wisconsin Athletic Hall of Fame on June 12, 2003, honored for his contribution to the sport of water-skiing.