



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tale of Blonde Bombshell Bandleader's True Identity Honored with Gracie Award

SEATTLE - A historical discovery in the music library of KUOW 94.9 FM Seattle has been acknowledged today with a 2012 Gracie Award.

Ina Ray Hutton was known as "The Blonde Bombshell Bandleader" in the 1930s. Decades after Hutton's death, KUOW reporter Phyllis Fletcher discovered Hutton had obscured her black heritage from public detection, and had "passed" for white since her childhood. Fletcher reported the discovery in 2011 for the online history encyclopedia BlackPast.org, and the public radio program Studio 360 with Kurt Andersen. The Alliance for Women in Media Foundation announced today that Fletcher's radio report, "[Secrets of a Blonde Bombshell](#)," has won a 2012 Gracie Award for Outstanding Profile/Biography.

"In 'Secrets of a Blonde Bombshell,' we learn that this discovery began in the KUOW music library, when Phyllis saw Ina Ray Hutton's face on a CD cover," said KUOW Program Director Jeff Hansen. "It's KUOW's fortune and privilege to be the stewards of a great collection of music from the swing era. With today's Gracie Award announcement, our collection is a part of music history."

"Ina Ray Hutton and her family lived, worked, and socialized as black people in Chicago, until Ina was discovered by a vaudeville producer at the age of eight," said Fletcher, now an editor for KUOW. "I'm thrilled for the late Ms. Hutton and her family that this new telling of her life story has been acknowledged with a Gracie Award, and has shone new light on Hutton's contribution to music history."

The 37th Annual Gracie Awards Luncheon will be held in Beverly Hills, California on May 23, 2012.

"Secrets of a Blonde Bombshell"

<http://www.studio360.org/2011/sep/30/secrets-of-a-blonde-bombshell/>

The "Blonde Bombshell Bandleader" on BlackPast.org

<http://www.blackpast.org/?q=aah/hutton-ina-ray-nee-odessa-cowan-1916-1984>

The mission of KUOW is to create and serve an informed public, one challenged and invigorated by an understanding and appreciation of events, ideas, and cultures. KUOW serves the Puget Sound region, Western Washington, and Southern British Columbia.

Studio 360 with Kurt Andersen, from Public Radio International and WNYC New York, is public radio's smart and surprising guide to what's happening in pop culture and the arts.

The Alliance for Women in Media Foundation presents the Gracie Awards to encourage the realistic and faceted portrayal of women in entertainment, commercials, news, features and other programs.

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