

Nation's television eyes on Mrs. S. J. Routon last night

"THIS IS YOUR LIFE"

FEATURES "MISS PEARL"

TV APPEARANCE – December 19, 1956

(From newspaper article)

"Tonight, Pearl Routon, this is Your Life!" shouted NBC-TV's Ralph Edwards before a nation-wide television audience last night, and the cameras in Hollywood focused on Paris' own "Miss Pearl," whose 74 years of kind deeds were brought to light completely with the characters out of Mrs. Routon's past.

A parade of men and women whom Mrs. Routon has befriended during her useful life were brought into the studio and Governor Frank Clement highlighted the list of those paying tribute to her contributions to the state. The first "Miss Pearl" knew of the program was when the cameras swung to her and Mr. Edwards displayed a small vase from her flower shop, with a souvenir greeting "From Paris, Tennessee."

The first guest out of her past was the Rev. Jesse Corum, who was her girlhood beau and who has been pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Norristown, Pennsylvania, for the past 37 years.

Wallace L. Coleman, of Burlingame, California,
told how Miss Pearl had sold him a house,
then later made the payments for him when he was unable to do so.
Finally, he recalled, she took the house back and gave him \$ 46.

When Mrs. L. J. Williams of Jackson
was brought onto the stage, Miss Pearl asked "What did I do?"
She had forgotten helping Mrs. Williams get a crucial job.

Calvin French, of Muskegon, Michigan,
appeared and told of Mrs. Routon's kindness toward him during the depression of the 1930's. After teaching the lad how to read and write, she footed the bill for his wedding in 1935 (he was 17) then cared for his wife during the birth of a child.

Then there was a little girl – she had taken a doll (the china eye of which a boy had poked out) to Miss Pearl and it was fixed.
One of her talents was painting on china, and you could hardly tell which was the new eye.

Edwards reviewed Mrs. Routon's early life, revealing that in 1900 she became assistant superintendent of county schools. Mrs. Cecil Greer Perry, now of Terre Haute, Indiana, confessed that Mrs. Routon had given her a teaching certificate without requiring an examination. "Why, Miss Pearl" admonished Edwards tongue-in-cheek. She had not seen Mrs. Perry in 22 years and the incident took place in 1900.

She was married in 1902 to S. J. Routon,
her beloved "Mr. Jimmy" who was there with his red rose.
Each guest brought a rose to be added to Miss Pearl's growing bouquet.

Her sons were on hand, too, Joe Routon of Paris, and Mrs. Jim Routon who was instrumental in manipulating the surprise telecast.
She and Mrs. Norma Killebrew, formerly of Paris and now of California, had arranged for an artist friend to take Miss Pearl to Hollywood to see some celebrity about a commission for painting his portrait. Mr. and

Mrs. Fred Blanton and Mrs. Christine Reynolds helped arrange the program.

The Governor, who kissed Miss Pearl and brought his red rose, said he was proud to have her as an honorary colonel on his staff. One of her accomplishments were the painting of the Governor's lovely wife, and the portrait was shown on the TV screen.

Mrs. Christine Reynolds, Tennessee Commissioner of Welfare, also appeared and thanked her "for always beautifying the state." Mrs.

Routon has been a florist commercially for some thirty years and has worked beautifying the parks and roadsides for many of those years.

“Miss Pearl was also a leader in the successful move to have the iris declared state flower,” Mrs. Reynolds said.

Walter Williams of Paris, writer for national magazines, said Miss Pearl had helped him get started in his publishing business. A soldier and several others also appeared and recalled ways in which the kindly lady had befriended them.

Miss Pearl always every inch a lady, daubed several times at her eyes with her linen handkerchief, but never actually cried.

Edwards announced at the end of the program that when Miss Pearl returned to Paris, there will be a gleaming new sign on the florist shop. She was also given a 1957 Studebaker automobile, a television set, and a movie projector with a film made during the show.

Her son, Joe, told how Miss Pearl came to be in the florist business.

“Mom always loved flowers and used to give them away.”

Text Under Picture in Newspaper Article

Mrs. S. J. Routon, “Miss

"THIS IS YOUR LIFE" Plans review of Paris Tonight

PEARL SANDERS ROUTON

(MRS. S. J. ROUTON)

TV APPEARANCE – December 19, 1956

(From newspaper article)

The National Broadcasting Company's television program, "This Is Your Life," will feature a program tonight which will be of interest to Parisians, according to reports.

The subjects of the program, whose
life is reviewed, is kept secret until the broadcast.

But a Paris person is in Hollywood, California, for the show and the
network plans to televise it tonight, the report said.

The program was not scheduled to be
seen in Paris since Station WSM in Nashville will be carrying a Vanderbilt basketball game. But another
NBC

stations will televise the program and those who are fortunate enough to receive station WMC-TV from
Memphis here will be able to see it.

Several people, claiming knowledge of the subject's identity,
plan to drive to other towns tonight where they can view the program from Memphis.

Pearl” to the many people to whom she had become a friend, was paid a nationwide television tribute last night by Ralph Edwards on the NBC

Mrs. Routon's TV debut to be seen here

(PEARL ROUTON – MRS. S. J. ROUTON)

TV APPEARANCE – December 19, 1956

(From newspaper article)

Television fans in Paris and Henry

County will be interested to know station WSM-TV has o

officially given a place on its program to the showing of a film of the Ralph Edwards program of
December 19th.

It will be shown at 6 p.m. next Wednesday, January 2nd.

Mrs. S. J. (Miss Pearl) Routon was the honor guest on the Edwards program, "This Is Your Life" on that
date but WSM-TV viewers

did not get a chance to see it as the time

was given to a Vanderbilt basketball game.

Since Mrs. Routon returned home

last Friday she says she has received so much mail it is a human impossibility for her to answer all of it.

Post-Intelligencer has acknowledged all of this mail for her over the UP network.

On the program which many local people received over WMC-TV, Memphis, there were several Paris
and Tennessee people including Governor Frank Clement, welfare commissioner, Christine Reynolds,
Mr. S. J. Routon, Mrs. Joe Routon and Mrs. Jim Routon, Dr. J. M. Corum, native of Henry County who
preaches in Norristown, Pa.,

was also on the program.

program, "This is Your Life". The flowers, both real and figurative, that she has brought into the lives of others were recalled by people brought from all over the country to thank her for her kindness to them.