

OSZIE AND HARRIET AND DAVID AND RICKY

Ozzie Nelson had been leading a band since the age of 14 when Harriet Hilliard joined his orchestra as a girl singer in 1932. The bandleader and his singer made beautiful music together and they were married on October 8, 1935.

David was born on October 24, 1936 and Eric came along on May 8, 1940.

In Hollywood, Ozzie and Harriet joined the Red Skelton show in 1941, Ozzie as the bandleader and Harriet as vocalist and comedy foil for Red. She even portrayed the mother of Junior, the mean little kid, for a time. Then Red was drafted and the show broke up.

The radio *Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet* made its debut on the Columbia network on the Nelsons' ninth wedding anniversary, October 8, 1944. The show was a hit, a warm-hearted situation comedy mostly revolving around the incapacities or misjudgements of Ozzie, the man of the house. Slightly patterned after their real lives, the show featured two young actors portraying sons David and Ricky.

The kids wanted to be on the air with their folks, but Ozzie resisted until David was 13 and Ricky was 9. The boys proved to have a fine talent for radio and the Nelson family were welcome guests in the homes of listeners until 1954.

The Nelsons made an almost perfect, painless transition to television in 1952 and the spotlight shined brightly on them as David and Ricky grew up on camera before the eyes of America.

The TV series continued until 1966 and some 200 of the 425 video episodes are still in reruns around the world.

Ozzie died in 1975, Harriet continues to do some work on television, David works mostly behind the scenes in the entertainment world and Rick continues his successful singing career that began when a TV episode in 1956 had him forming a Rock and Roll band in high school.