

Moxie

a

One-hour Documentary

from



MOXI ENTERTAINMENT

MORE THAN ANOTHER GREAT IDEA

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Moxie

noun: a force of character, determination or nerve

Moxie Whitney's 60-year entertainment enterprise began in disaster. At eleven he was pronounced a piano prodigy. A few months later his father left his mother. A year after that, an accident on the family farm severely burned his hands. His music career was over... until a doctor suggested playing the guitar to strengthen his damaged hands. Within a year, George Moxam Whitney was supporting his mother and younger brother by teaching guitar. No easy feat for a twelve year old kid during the height of the depression. It took moxie.

Forty years later, the Moxie Whitney Orchestra held the longest running, big band gig in Canadian history - six nights a week for 23 years - from 1948 to 1971 in the fabulous Imperial Room, in the 'biggest hotel in the British Commonwealth' – the Royal York in Toronto.

Moxie played for and with the best of the best: Ella Fitzgerald, Tony Bennett, Jack Benny, Sonny & Cher, Peggy Lee, Cab Calloway, Laurence Welk, Guy Lombardo, Duke Ellington and Count Basie to name just a few. In the 1960's, Moxie broke Canadian Pacific's unspoken colour barrier, by bringing the first black entertainers to the Imperial Room - the Mills Brothers. The Moxie Whitney Office was the largest booking agency in Canada and the only booking agent to bring mega star talent to Canadians.

Moxie is credited with launching many entertainers' careers. The day after Anne Murray's barefoot performance in the Imperial Room, the Toronto Star's banner headline read, 'A New Superstar is Born.' He did the same for the careers of Rich Little and Doug Henning. An appearance at the Imperial Room with Moxie gave any entertainer an instant touch of fame.

During 1947 to 1960, Moxie played summers at the Banff Springs Hotel for Hollywood stars Robert Mitchum, Marilyn Monroe, Alan Ladd and Randolph Scott. He and the band appeared as Mounties, cowboys and bad guys in the feature films Saskatchewan and Canadian Pacific.

Moxie Whitney played dance music for 50 years, recorded eight records, was broadcast nationally in the US & Canada, played every Canadian Pacific Hotel in the country and thousands of concerts, balls and benefits. His music touched millions.

That took *Moxie*... this is his story.