

It was summertime in LA in 1960. I had arrived from NY a couple of months earlier to look for some work in the "Entertainment Business." Trying to create a new start for myself, I tried whatever connections I thought I had in TV, film, and/or agency. For various reasons (biggest being they didn't want me), it all ended up in a big zero.

So, since I needed a job, any kind of job, I began to rekindle some acquaintanceships with a number of music people I'd met during my previous year and a half experience working out of NY's fabled Brill Building. From these sources, I heard that the top "Independent Promotion" guy in town had recently lost a couple of prized East Coast record company accounts. Since I knew those people, I called and convinced each of them to hire me to represent them in the LA, San Francisco, and Seattle markets. I was then looking forward to starting my new gig as an "Indie Promo Man" the following Monday.

That Monday turned out to be a kind of historic day as well, since it marked the L.A. debut of the great Alan Freed on the all-new 50,000 watt daytimer radio station KDAY.

Alan, at that time, was perhaps the most famous DJ in the country on the basis of his huge appeal in NY as well as what he'd accomplished through his TV dance shows and his movies. If Elvis was considered the official "King of Rock and Roll," Alan certainly was right behind him. He'd actually coined the term, but, at this time, had to leave NY in the wake of the "payola" scandal back there.

Because I knew Alan, slightly, and knew just how big a personality he'd been in NY, we quickly got friendly and he invited me to join him on his side of the table to welcome all the record promotion people of the LA community who had been invited to visit Alan on his first day at KDAY.

As the promo people all lined up, they then proceeded (on the other side the table), to hand over their calling cards and lay a record or two (or three) on the newest DJ in town. Scanning the room, I couldn't help noticing Gil Friesen, the rep from Capitol Records. He was cool, somewhat detached, and the only one there wearing a suit and tie. Most of the other men appeared somewhat more casual. Most of them wearing the very happening, at the time,



Alpaca cardigan sweaters, presumably making a stop at a radio station before they got to hit the golf course for nine holes later in the afternoon.

After everyone dropped off their records and introduced themselves, and left, Alan turned to me and announced, "I'm gonna scare the shit out of that guy Friesen, and make his record my Pick of the Week!" (For the curious, Gil remembers it was a recording by Peggy Lee.)

The event was then over, and, after thanking Alan for the experience and making a plan to see him the following day, I took off for Aldo's. This restaurant was the promo man's hang-out at the time, and I had important information for this Gil Friesen person. Finding him there, I relayed the good news and let him know that Alan's Pick of the Week generally meant "or until he'd find another record to make his Pick of the Week". Gil appreciated the story, and flushed with his successful result from the Alan Freed visit, invited me for a celebratory drink later on. And that's how Gil Friesen became my first (and irreplaceable) friend in California.

Gil...Love, always..