



OSCILLATOR

DELAWARE VALLEY HISTORIC RADIO CLUB

Radio is a clean hobby and
it keeps a fellow off the street.
I've never heard of a 'bad'
boy that was a Radio Fan.
- Elmer Osterhoudt, founder
of Modern Radio Laboratories

The Official Newsletter of the DVHRC

Vol. 6 No. 2, February 1998

FEBRUARY MEETING

Besides the usual jollity, books, auction, etc., this month's meeting will feature, courtesy of Ted Sowirka, a private showing of the RCA 1936 movie *Electrons on Parade*.

SEE German maidens assembling tubes at the Harrison plant! **VIEW** the white-hot glow of 813s being baked-out! **THRILL** to heroic radio amateurs handling emergency messages using RCA tubes! **GET A LUMP IN YOUR THROAT** as giant U. S. bombers take off, guided surely by RCA tubes! **HEAR** the mighty RCA Symphony Orchestra broadcast on the Red Network, thanks to RCA 6J7s! **CHEER** as valiant state troopers chase and capture bank robbers, dispatched unerringly via RCA tubes!

JANUARY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Mike Koste

A tip of the DVHRC cap goes to Ray Chase for a really memorable presentation on an easily portable "cross-collectible" in the antique radio hobby: Postcards! The 40 members in attendance were informed and entertained with a terrific slide presentation of his extensive collection of radio-related postcards, depicting ham stations, broadcast facilities, radio performers and a variety of artistic and sometimes comical looks at radio and wireless from the turn of the century into the late '40s. To reinforce the slides, Ray showed three display boards from contests at postcard meets and four binders of cards for members to enjoy.

We had a couple of unusual show-n'-tell items too. Phil Fabrizio demonstrated a Singer (of sewing-machine fame) "Ribbonaire" fan - a Deco-styled Bakelite creation with exposed but soft blades made of cloth webbing. Dave Snellman brought in an RCA 1899 Monoscope tube. This was the image-generator tube used in old-time TV stations to produce the "Indian-head" test pattern . . . much rarer today than camera tubes. Dave's new-in-the-box tube is particularly unusual in being late production: it and the carton carry the post-1969 RCA logo.

With Tony Molettiere's "retirement" from the hobby and

our move from North Penn Amusements, the new location at the Family Heritage Restaurant (on PA Rte. 113, SW of Souderton) seemed successful. At the same time, President Bill Overbeck is still asking that if any member is likewise affiliated with a neighborhood church, school, library or social hall that could economically become a permanent headquarters for the organization to give him a call. In the mean time, our base of operation will continue to be the Family Heritage, including the February 10th meeting. Due to the scheduling of the Super Wintermeet, we'll forego a meeting in March. Watch the *Oscillator* for the word on April.

Your Secretary also reports that collection of 1998 dues is far ahead of projections. Over one third of you are in good standing. (Regretfully, that also means two-thirds of you are not). Kindly take a moment and mail a \$10 check in the self-addressed envelope you received last month . . . or better yet, do what Bryan Irwin did and deduct your dues from proceeds of an auction item you donated to the club. January also gave us the chance to welcome our newest members, Chuck Azzaline of Perkasie and Joe Haupt of Ellicott City, Maryland. (Look for Joe's table at Havertown!)

A discussion of the Super Wintermeet indicated favorable consensus for an auction. Since we don't have the advantage of a major lot of estate items this year (but see below), it's up to each and every member to make this aspect of the swapmeet a success. If you're not planning to sign-up for a table in Havertown, but still have a few items for sale (or don't want to take your unsold table items home with you), an area of the Grimes Center will be set aside for preview, consignment and bidder registration at 1 PM. Incidentally, member and out-of-town non-member interest in the event is even stronger than last year. Make your table reservation early by calling me at (215) 646-6488. We'll have a desirable old radio up for raffle (thanks to Lewis Newhard) and good hot food will be available on the premises. Dealer set-ups at 7 AM and doors open at 8. Alice Tannenbaum and Pat Koste will gladly accept your \$2 at the door, invite you to make a purchase from (or contribution to) the DVHRC Tube Program, or buy the latest book editions for your library.

THE OSCILLATOR

Newsletter of the
Delaware Valley Historic Radio Club
Post Office Box 41031,
Philadelphia, PA 19127

The *Oscillator* is published monthly by members of the non-profit DVHRC. Its purpose is to provide a forum to educate, inform, entertain, and communicate with collectors and preservers of vintage radio technology.

We welcome and solicit information relating to radio history or collecting. Submissions should be carefully researched, typed and accompanied with clear photographs or diagrams. Material on-disc (3-1/2" or 5-1/4" DOS) is particularly welcome.

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Personal views, opinions and technical advice offered in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the members, officers or Board of Directors of the DVHRC, nor is the organization responsible for any buying or selling transaction incurred.

To join: DVHRC dues is \$10 per year. The membership year runs January-through-December. Please mail to the club PO box above.

Meetings are held monthly except July at 7:30 PM.

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may be sent to the editor at 44 E. Main St., Flemington,
NJ 08822, (908) 782-4894.

COPY DEADLINE: The 20th of each month.

NEXT MEETINGS: Feb. 10 (no meeting in
March because of the Super Winter Meet
at Havertown), April 14.

NJARC SWAPMEET, FEB. 21

As a warmup to Havertown, those guys across the river are having another swapmeet in the National Guard armory in Freehold, NJ on Saturday, the 21st. This is a good-sized indoor location with lots of paved parking, on-site food, etc. See the full-page story a few pages down.

CHATELLETS & TCHOTCHKES

Free exposure for your wanted or excess stuff! Unless requested otherwise, we'll run each ad for two months, and will send ads to NJARC's *Jersey Broadcaster* for double coverage.

FOR SALE: Philco 19H highboy, Electro-Voice Sentry II speakers, mammoth Howard console ca. 1932, Emerson BA-199, Emerson 255 "Emersonette," RCA 5X, Admiral 21A6 white Plaskon, Airline 04BR-508A, Airline 62-288 "Miracle" w/ PBs and tuning eye, Philco 60-B tombstone, Stromberg-Carlson 125-H, Emerson 250 Ingraham cabinet, others. Check my table at the Super Wintermeet in Havertown. Mike Koste, 57 Tennis Ave., Ambler, PA 19002, (215) 646-6488. (2-3/98)

FOR SALE: Altec speaker systems: four big 'uns, walnut-finished, 15" woofers and horn tweeters, ca. 52" high, 36" wide, 24" deep, from '70s quad system in home of a broadcast engineer; no children in the house, so they're immaculate. Call John Dilks, (609) 927-3873.

FOR SALE: The DVHRC book program offers the new Zenith Transistor Radios, the recent Zenith Radio - The Early Years, the Bunis Transistor Radios, and the workhorse Tube Lore - all priced well below normal retail. Pick up a copy at the next meeting!

FOR SALE: Communications and military radios, test equipment, and some radar items. Send long SASE for large list. No sales until you have received my list, looking for some trade items. Ray Chase, 1350 Marlborough Ave., Plainfield, NJ 07060, (980) 757-9741. (2-3/98)

FOR SALE: Next list of *highly collectible* tubes now being assembled. Send SASE for list of duplicates, to be mailed in May: Jerry Vanicek, PO Box 4743, Chicago, IL 60680. No phone calls, please. (1-4/98)

FOR SALE: The DVHRC tube program offers clean, tested, boxed tubes at very reasonable prices with availability at any club meeting. Proceeds go to the club. About 300 types are currently in stock. Of course, donations of radio-type tubes in any condition are welcome. See Charlie Class at any monthly meeting to obtain or donate tubes.

HAVERTOWN AUCTION PREVIEW

It's a month away, but here's an early look at some goods to be offered in the auction at the Super Winter Meet.

- Philco Predicta, tabletop version, in working condition
- Boxlot: WE mikes, headphones, telephones, tel parts
- Boxlot: phono motors - Victrola and electric
- Boxlots: older car radios & parts
- Boxlot: knobs - TV & radio, ca. 200
- Heath 2- and 6-meter transceivers
- Hallicrafters Sky Buddy, working
- Boxlots: tubes - metal, TV, radio
- 7JP4 7" CRT
- Boxlot: porcelain insulators
- Two homebrews w/ 201As
- Boxlots: manuals and books
- Boxlots: TV tuner assemblies

ON THE HORIZON

Feb. 21	NJARC Swapmeet, Freehold, NJ.
Mar. 7	DVHRC Super Winter Meet, Havertown, PA.
Mar. 28	MoR&T/PARS "Spring Fever," Washington, PA.
June 11-13	MAARC "RADIOACTIVITY," Laurel, MD.

PICTURE POSTCARDS AS A MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATIONS AND COLLECTING RADIO POSTCARDS

Ray Chase

(From the handout accompanying Ray's presentation at the January club meeting)

The use of picture postcards as a common means of communications somewhat parallels the development of radio. Although the use of Government Postal Cards preceded picture postcards, the first picture postcards were issued around 1893 and their use grew rapidly in the 20th Century. The Golden Age of postcards was roughly between 1905 and WW I, a period when few people had telephones, there was no radio broadcasting, and mail service was the only widespread method of private communications. For example, in the year 1908 the U. S. Postal Service reported that 677 million postcards were processed, this when the U. S. population was only 88 million. Early mail was postmarked at each office along its progress, and it is not uncommon to see an early-1900s postcard that was sent in the afternoon, postmarked by the post office in a railroad baggage car, and delivered 100 miles away the next morning.

As postcards grew in popularity, publishers strove to print a wide variety of subjects. The most common cards are "view" cards, or pictures of a local scene. However, the number of subjects covered is literally endless and many can be found with a radio theme. Most postcard collectors (such a collector is called a *deltiologist*) start by creating a pictorial 20th-Century history of their local area by acquiring postcards depicting local scenes throughout the years. The same can be done on topical subjects, including radio development and its use. Interesting side issues can be explored with comical and greeting-related postcards or by searching out other categories. Postcard collecting is less expensive than collecting radios themselves, certainly takes up a lot less space, and is an easier matter for display.

While picture postcards continue in widespread use today, other forms of private communications media have displaced them as day-to-day means of sending the news. But their early popularity and common use present us with a treasure-trove of material from which to build an interesting and informative collection.

SOME GENERAL FACTS ON POSTCARDS

Most postcards are 3-1/2 x 5-1/2 inches in size, although size can vary and later "continental" cards are larger. Older postcards are almost always 3-1/2 x 5-1/2.

Postcard eras are:

- Pioneer - prior to 1898
- Private Mailing Card - 1898-1902, so marked on back
- Undivided back - 1902-07 (no message allowed on the back)
- Divided back - 1907 forward (message allowed on back)
- White border - '20s
- Linen - '20s to '40s, linen texture, air-brushed look
- Chrome - 1939 forward (from "Kodachrome")

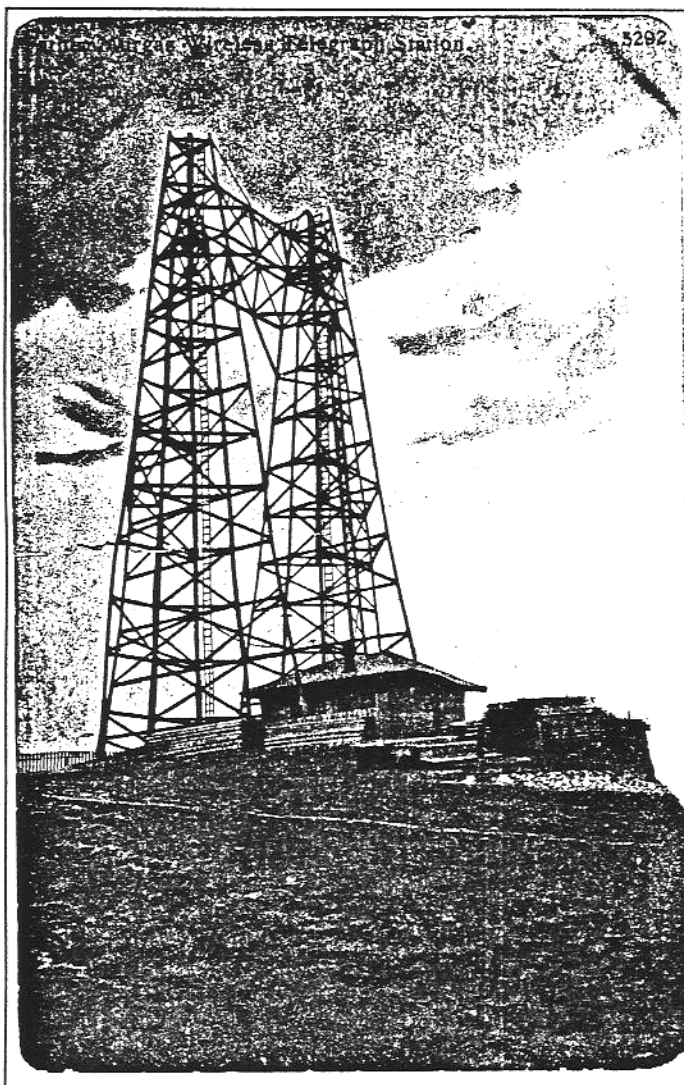
Postcards can be in color or black-and-white. Up to 1920 most color cards were produced in Germany by chromolithography. Throughout the history of postcards, one of the most sought-after types is the "real photo." These are very sharp black-and-white photos which were often made by the local camera shop, often for customers when they had their Brownie box-camera films developed. Many are one-of-a-kind, showing scenes or events that were never published commercially.

STORING AND DISPLAYING POSTCARDS

Paper artifacts are fragile, and require careful preservation and handling. As a minimum, cards should be kept in plastic sleeves (2 mils thick or more) to prevent handling damage. Most collectors use four-pocket plastic pages for three-ring binder albums. Sleeves and plastic pages are usually available at postcard shows and are advertised for mail order in the publications listed below. Plastic pages must be top-loading or else cards fall out and are easily bent. For long-term collecting, insist on acid-free pages and other material designed for the conservation of paper goods. The greatest enemies of paper preservation are high temperatures, temperature and humidity cycling, dust, dirt, and sunlight. Like humans, paper goods thrive in constant moderate temperature and humidity, and with gentle handling. But keep the sunlight away, please.

RADIO POSTCARD CATEGORIES

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. QSL and SWL | 11. Comic | 21. Aircraft |
| 2. Reception Reports | 12. Factories | 22. Radar |
| 3. Applause cards | 13. Ships | 23. Space |
| 4. CQD and SOS | 14. Military | 24. Lovers |
| 5. Radio Party | 15. Greetings, Holidays | 25. Marconi, and Marconi series |
| 6. Children | 16. Radio Station Exterior | 26. Television |
| 7. Advertising | 17. Studios (interior) | 27. Real photo |
| 8. Wireless message ("for you") | 18. Animals | 28. Radio Performers |
| 9. Towers | 19. Religious | 29. Radio City (NY City) |
| 10. Towers on Buildings | 20. Famous people, homes, and labs | 30. Miscellaneous |



For competition and club displays, a 22" x 28" white board is the standard used. Cards are mounted with transparent photo corner mounts available at photo stores. A large plastic cover or board sleeve then protects the cards. If you keep cards in a shoe box, use a sturdy one and make sure the cards are kept upright with suitable spacing material. Please do not use modern static-clinging photo albums for postcards. Modern photos will tolerate them, antique postcards will not. One final note: no thumbtacks, please - I'm sure radio amateurs from the early '20s had no idea that someone else would ever covet their QSL cards, but I feel like crying when I find an early historic photo QSL with four holes in it from when it was proudly tacked up on the wall of the ham shack!

FINDING RADIO POSTCARDS

Old postcards can be found at all the usual sources of antiques, such as flea markets, house sales, antique shops, etc. Usually auctions sell in fairly large lots, and house sales and flea markets do not categorize, so finding a radio card is more "miss" than "hit," although you might find a collection of QSLs from a Silent Key. While

some antique shops may categorize cards, proprietors of most general antique shops do not know much about postcards and often overprice them. They also may not protect cards well, so these often become shopworn quickly.

Postcards may also be located by placing advertisements in newspapers, but unless you advertise in postcard specialty publications you will have to deal with a broad range of cards. The best source is postcard, paper, and ephemera shows. (The term *ephemera* is used to describe collectable paper items that were originally intended to be only short-lived, such as flyers, advertising cards, postcards, etc.)

Every weekend there are shows or postcard club meetings all over the country. If you live near a metropolitan area, there are bound to be at least several shows a year near you featuring dozens to hundreds of dealers. At shows, cards are found sorted into specific categories, greatly simplifying the search effort. While most dealers have a "radio" category, it pays to look in such other sections as "holiday," "factories," "advertising," etc. Be sure to state your desires. Often a dealer will have an especially good card tucked away in "real photos" or "interiors" or some other category. Most dealers will have some or many common QSL cards, but ask about



I HAVE A WIRELESS FOR YOU

C Q D
Come Quick Danger

SERIOUS AUCTION

The Smith Auction Company of Downingtown will hold an estate-liquidation sale on Saturday, April 26. The items to be sold are from the long-term collection of Bill Findley, W3FEA, plus some adders. Most of the goods (440+ items) are listed on the Web at <http://www.eht.com/oldradio>. The catalog was distributed on-paper at the March meetings of DVHRC and NJARC, and will be available at their April meetings plus that of MAARC. It is also orderable in advance for \$5 from Smith. Details are also available via an ad in A. R. C. for April, pp. 30-31.

Preview will be 11 AM to 10 PM on Friday the 25th, and 10 AM - noon on sale day. The sale starts at noon.

The auctioneer's conditions are 10% buyer's premium, cash or PA/"approved" check. The site is the Downingtown Marketplace on Business US 30, 45 min. from Philadelphia or Wilmington. From the PA Turnpike, use Exit 23, go south on Rte. 100 to US 30; go west on US 30 about 4 miles. The auction house is next to the Tabas Hotel, at the left rear of the Marketplace building. Auction info is available on (610) 269-1036. Absentee bids can be arranged.

DVHRC has no connection with this sale, but the following is a sampling of material from the catalog.

TUBE RADIOS

AK 10B breadboard.
AK 20 Big-Box and Compact.
AK 30, 35, 42, 44, 52.
AK 36 (2), one in Red Lion desk.
AK 40 in console.
AK 55s (2); one table set, one in Kiel table.
AK 376 and 711 consoles.
AK 854 Deco tombstone.
Ambler-Holman TR5 3-dialer.
American Bosch 5A, 575.
Browning-Drake "Junior".
Crosley 4-29, 50, 51, 52.
Crosley 58 Repwood cathedral.
Crosley 517 tombstone.
Day-Fan 5106 & 5046 reflex sets.
DeForest D-12 (2).
Dewald C-800.
Distantone B three-dialer.
Du Mont RA346 clock radio.
Edison SRC3R1 console.
Emerson "Universal Compact"
Emerson 502 Catalin.
Emerson 540 "Emersonette" and 652.
Federal 110.
Franklin three-dialer.
Freed-Eisemann FE15 3-dialer.
Freshman Masterpiece (3).
GE 160 2-volt portable.
GE 636 farm set & M-40.
Grebe MU-1 Synchrophase.
Harmon-Kardon 330B receiver.
Kennedy XV battery set.
Knight-Kit Space Spanner.
Magnavox Model D battery set.
Majestic 50 TRF consolette
Majestic 461 Deco.
Motorola 5J1U "Jewel Box".
Navy ATA transmitter.
Navy RBL-3 VLF-LF regen set.
NESCO CGR-5A Coast Guard receiver,
metal-cased, like IP-500 or SE-1420.
No. 19 Mk II tank transceiver.
Philco 20, 60, 84, E-60 cathedrals.
Philco 38-7, 38-14, 38-15, 40-115, 42-321.
Philco 46-1201 radio-phonograph & 46-350.
Philips BX-326A.
Pittsburgh SP2 regen.
Rada Cron clock TRF set.

Radio Shop/Echophone "A" regen set.
RCA Radiola III-A, 16, 18, 25, 60.
RCA Radiola AR-812 superhet.
RCA 56X, RFA30.
Recepton three-dialer.
Sears 6-tube Neutrodyne.
Shamrock one-tuber.
SigC BC-348N aircraft receiver.
Sparton AC62 TRF.
"Standardyne" battery set.
Stewart-Warner 300 3-dialer.
Stewart-Warner 801.
Thompson neutrodyne.
Westinghouse AC, RA, & DA
Westinghouse H-125, H-126.
Westinghouse H-130.
Westinghouse WR15 grandfather-clock
set.
Zenith H500 Trans-Oceanic.
Zenith H511.

BOOKS

Consolidated Call Book, 1920.
AK factory svc. manuals (4).
Philco 1937 factory catalog.
Philco factory service manuals, 1928-38
sets.
Rider's manuals equiv. to Vols. 1 & 2, plus
reg. vols. 3-20.
Tube manuals: RCA RC-11, -15, -17; GE
6-binder set.
Radio's Master '52, '53, '54, '56.
Radio Supply Cat. 1922 (repro).

CONE SPEAKERS

AK E, E2 (3), F4A.
RCA 100A (4), 103A.

HORN SPEAKERS

AK H
Frost "Musette" mini-horn.
Jewett
Kellogg 70A
Kennedy
Magnavox R3 (2)
Magnavox Telemegaphone w/ control box.
RCA UZ-1325 (2).
Sonora Deluxe
Thompson.
Victrola VI adapted to speaker
WE 555W driver.

CRYSTAL SETS

Philmore "diode" kit
Kilbourne & Clark
Philmore "Little Wonder"

MICROPHONES

RCA BK-6 lavalier
Ribbon mic. in alum. sphere.
Shure 51.
Shure 55 Unidyne
Turner condenser, early-'30s w/ preamp
box on nickel cast-brass base, looks like
RCA 4AA, exc. finish (catalogued as
"Shure")

OTHER ITEMS

Antique DC electric motor & water pump,
1890s-1900s
Gates broadcast remote board, ca. 1930.
Headphones: box lot, 21 pr.
Instructograph Morse senders.
Maggard-Bradley silent 35-mm projector.
Morris coil winder.
RCA UL-1000 osc. xfmr. (2)
Signal Corps pigeon cage PG-102/CB
(pigeon not included).
Vibroplex "bug" key (2), one w/ carrying
case.

TUBES

Scarce ones: 2A3s (3); 10s (2); 45s (13);
50s (3); EL37s (2); WE 205Ds (2); WE
215A, WE 217A (2), WE 231D (2), WE
VT-2
24 box lots (a 1L6 included!).

TRANSISTOR RADIOS

GE P761A
RCA Victor T-1EN
Zenith Royal R705Y
Mellow-Tone NR23 "boy's."
Zenith Royal 3000.

TEST GEAR

Tube testers (5) (incl. one with a 60-posi-
tion switch covering "every possible"
tube
Chanalyst
signal/audio generators (6)
VTVMs (a slug of 'em)

TELEVISION

Emerson 637 TV w/ Norelco Protelgram
projection unit.
Motorola VT-71 7" TV set.

SHORTWAVE RECEIVERS - PAST AND PRESENT

By Fred Osterman. Reviewed by Bob Thomas, W3NE

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2nd Ed., 1997, Universal Radio Research, 6830 Americana Parkway, Reynoldsburg, OH 43068.

I encountered the new Second Edition of Shortwave Receivers for sale on the registration table at the renowned DVHRC Havertown Auction. A brief perusal convinced me to hand over the modest price to Alice for a publication destined for "classic" status among references within its scope, that is, commercial table-top and rack-mount shortwave receivers marketed from 1945 to the present. The book is a delight to read, or to just idly page-through. The author is Fred Osterman, president of Universal Radio Research, Inc, a major supplier of amateur and SWL communications equipment. He has compiled comprehensive descriptions of communications-type receivers from 78 manufacturers, each covered in a separate chapter comprised of sharp photographs and extensive specifications of every model produced by the company. Chapters begin with an informative short history of the manufacturer and perhaps some interesting, sidelights, e. g, RACAL is a contraction of the names of its two founders, RAYmond and CALdwell. The historian will appreciate illustrations of trademarks employed throughout the existence of each company. The company logo extant when each model was manufactured is printed adjacent to the receiver's photograph. The rich variety of industrial art conveyed by trademarks is, in itself, an absorbing aspect of this book, particularly the contrast between early visually appealing classic designs, of Eddystone for instance, and the modern fascination with sterile symbols of "corporate identity." A half-page is devoted to each receiver, allowing plenty of space for a photograph and specifications. The latter are elaborate listings of salient features; frequency coverage; performance data when available; a brief circuit description, often including tube types; available accessories; and comments on similar models and production variations. A separate box lists country of origin, line-voltage range, size and weight, current status of manufacturer and model, degree of rarity, and production dates. Clever icons clearly indicate the type of frequency display used by each receiver and show if the display is an analog dial or a mechanical or electronic digital display, and the resolution of the display. Estimates of used-price ranges are given and, although influenced by the usual variables, Osterman's estimates are realistic, at least in the case of several models with which I have had experience. Receiver overall performance is indicated by a "star" rating system, from one- to five-stars. Finally, if a review article has been published

for a receiver, the source and date are listed - a very handy reference for the prospective buyer. Chapters describing receivers are preceded by a detailed Table of Contents listing every model covered and a 34-page section containing a wealth of information on the following: Definitions of receiver terminology; an explanation of every control to be found on a receiver; explanations of all items in subsequent receiver descriptions; advice for novices on what to look for when buying a used receiver; a comprehensive list of books, periodicals, clubs and journals, sources of suppliers, and Internet sites where more information can be found. An additional chapter is devoted to 48 receivers that didn't rate inclusion in the main body of the book, such as several of the ubiquitous German AM/FM/SW table models, the East German HRO knock-off, and other models of passing interest. There are photos and brief descriptions of "Receivers That Never Were," stillborn models that didn't make it to market or were flops that were immediately withdrawn.

Fred Osterman has produced a book that is as near perfect within its scope as one is likely to find these days. Plowing-through page after page of costly commercial receivers can become tedious for the hobbyist but there is no question that they should be included in the name of completeness. One unfortunate error is a listing of the 6BJ6 and 6U8A in the tube complement of the RME-69, which went out of production more than ten years before those tubes were designed. Inclusion of the Sony ICF-6700/6800 is inexplicable. These nearly identical radios in a faux-military motif both have handles and that would seem to classify them as "portables," types that are not treated in this book. On the other hand, the Sony 2010 was omitted despite its overwhelming acceptance as THE small receiver of choice among SWLs for a multi-band receiver in the same category as the 6700/6800.

This book, with its solid editorial content presented in superb typography and excellent photographs on 351 pages of high-quality glossy paper, all at a reasonable sale price, raises an interesting question: Why can't other authors achieve the same results? In recent months we have seen several entries in the same vein and price range as Osterman's book, yet they failed miserably in their physical realization. Without attempting to fathom why this is so, we can only hope that authors of the future will discover Mr. Osterman's secret for producing a book of such quality that, beside its editorial content, possesses all of the qualities to make it a coveted addition to our libraries.

SAUL MARANTZ

Saul Marantz, heavy-hitter in the audio world, died this January. He was in not-quite-retirement at the age of 85.

The Marantz Company Inc. started in the audio business in 1952 with a hi-fi phonograph, the diversifying into component preamps, amplifiers, etc. His firm prospered during the glory days of tube audio, then was sold in 1964 to Superscope, Inc. Marantz successively ran the Lineage Corporation, then was vice president of Ferrodyne, later Bozak, then Dahlquist; the latter being loudspeaker makers. He received a string of awards and fellowships from the Audio Engineering Society and related groups. (Thanks to Bob Lynn for information.)

READERS' COMMENTS

THE ARCA MERGER

I have just finished reading your article, "The ARCA Merger: Two Years Later" . . . in the Dec. 1996 . . . *Oscillator*. I found the article quite informative. Since I knew Harry Houck and have been a close friend of his nephew Gilbert Houck for at least 40 years, I too have had more than a little interest in whatever happened to ARCA's Houck Award after the ARCA takeover by AWA. Moreover, I was surprised that only Frisbie and Terrey made it to AWA's Board of Directors. I thought there should have been more ARCA representation on AWA's board after the merger, all things considered. . .

Your article was written late last year. It is now mid-March. Has there been any reaction to your article by AWA?

Tod Prowell

No. The article was timed such that, if AWA wanted to address its commitments quietly via the February OTB (with a chapter-news item, a cumulative award-winner roster, an ad in support of the WV Museum, whatever), it had time. The *Oscillator* has received no reaction, and neither have ARCA/AWA members. - Ed.

AM BROADCAST ANTENNA ODDITY

And the National Radio Club

Bob Thomas, W3NE

The Feb. 17 issue of *DX News*, bulletin of the National Radio Club* reported a recent FCC grant to KTRC, Santa Fe, New Mexico, of permission to relocate the station's transmitter site. It prompted the following DXN editorial comment:

"We're sorry to see this unique site go, as [the antenna] tower was atop an elevated pedestal in the middle of a city block and the elevated ground radial wires extended over building roofs and even the sidewalks to connect with a square of wire surrounding the block, supported by wooden utility poles; a one-of-a-kind."

* The National Radio Club is devoted to the medium-wave (AM broadcast band) DX hobby. Members patiently tune for signals from distant AM stations and report their results in *DX News*, which also carries updates on station activity.

KTRC's celebrating its 50th year on the air, having signed on in 1947. It operates on "local" channel 1400 kHz with a kilowatt days, 250 watts nights. - Ed.

BOOK REVIEW

WIRELESS RADIO: A BRIEF HISTORY

By Lewis Coe, McFarland & Company, Inc., 1996, 192 pp., \$27.50. Reviewed by David W. Kraeuter.

The usual chapters about KDKA, crystal sets, and antique-radio collecting are here, but the real value of this slender book lies in the extensive survey the author has made of all major uses of radio. The survey ranges across "the Vast Continent" (William Crookes' phrase for the radio spectrum) and from the life of James Clerk Maxwell into the 1990s. So we also have chapters on marine radio (the first practical use of radio), amateur radio, point-to-point, military radio, radar, police radio, television, cellular and satellite telephones, portable radio, attempts to transmit power via radio, etc.

Here are clear, though necessarily brief, descriptions of Ampex video recorders, the DEW line, diathermy, ELTs, Globalstar, GMDSS, INMARSAT, Loral, LORAN, microwave ovens, MSAT, NAA, OMEGA, Qualcomm, SINCGARS radio, Very Long Base Array, etc. Pitcher Nolan Ryan even gets into the act, in a discussion of the use of radar in sports. Most readers will probably recognize some, but not all, of these topics. Coe, born in 1911, points out that he lived through the development of most of them, and he took many of the photographs included in the book.

Do you think you know what's happening in radio? Consider this: a Boeing E6A or Lockheed EC-1300 takes off carrying with it a coil of wire weighing almost a ton. Aloft, the wire is trailed out behind the plane for about five miles. "When the aircraft supporting the wire flies in a tight circle, the wire tends to assume a near-vertical position that is essential for best results." This wire is used as a transmitting antenna, sending signals to submerged submarines using Very Low Frequencies (VLF). Other land-based antennas over 50 miles long transmit to submarines using frequencies as low as 30 Hz, with a range up to 5,000 miles.

No book is perfect, and Coe may be content to know this great law includes this highly readable book. All Pittsburgh Antique Radio Society members (and most DVHRC members!) know that KDKA pioneer Conrad's first name was Frank, not Charles.

Coe has also written The Telephone and Its Several Inventors: A History (McFarland, 1995) and The Telegraph: A History of Morse's Invention and its Predecessors in the United States (McFarland, 1993).

HEADLINE: **SURPLUS PRICE CRASH**
World watches in disbelief as WW-II surplus electronics prices tumble!

Bob Thomas, W3NE

Those of us who are chronologically enhanced (P. C. for "Oldtimers") remember well the heady days of delectable surplus electronic equipment at rock-bottom prices after WW II: brand-new JAN 6J6s for 19¢; complete electronic goldmines that could hardly be lifted, priced at a few bucks; mil-spec variable condensers, hermetically sealed transformers, plugs & sockets, transmitting tubes, new earphones, and neat mechanical assemblies (like a bombsight, for instance) for sale on Arch Street at pennies on the pound. Even if you never used the stuff, it was such a bargain!

The page from a 1959 Fair Radio catalog reproduced in the January *Oscillator* captured some of the old feeling, but by that year the bloom was gone and prices were becoming disgustingly realistic. An item in the ad that caught my eye was for a TG-34A code-tape keyer at \$22.95 for a refurb. The machine is a variable-speed transport for paper tapes pre-recorded with an inked trace representing Morse code. The tape is read by a photocell that controls a built-in audio oscillator to provide code practice. No wimpy digital code-on-a-chip in those days! What made the ad so gratifying for me was that I had bought a brand-new TG-34A at the 1995 AWA Rochester auction for measly \$5.00. In fact, I was the only bidder, and if I had been smart, I could probably taken it home for less than half what I paid, but I'm still satisfied. I get the old boatanchor out of the attic every so often and take it apart, reassemble it, and just marvel at the mechanical and electronic ingenuity that went into it in times when we weren't so confounded smart.

But what makes me feel really good is the realization that, at least in this one case, surplus prices were briefly rolled back to those of the memorable post-war years. Now if I could only get my hands on some of those pre-recorded code tapes!

THE HAMMOND MUSEUM OF RADIO, GUELPH, ONTARIO

Brian Belanger

Boosted, with connivance of the author, from *News of the Radio History Society*, March 1997

Last November, on a trip to Toronto, Canada, my wife Dian and I visited the Hammond Museum of Radio in Guelph, Ontario. This privately owned and operated museum is well worth the trip.

Fred Hammond, VE3HC, has been involved in radio all his life. His family had a business back in the 1920s making battery sets, and Fred has carried on the family tradition. Today, the Hammond Transformer Company makes a variety of modern transformers in an up-to-date factory in Guelph. Because Fred is an antique-radio collector, he understands the need to have replacement audio and power transformers for old radios. Now and then, as a service to our community, Hammond makes up a batch of replacement transformers. They are available for sale from Antique Electronic Supply in Tempe, AZ.

The museum occupies the second floor of a good-sized manufacturing building. It features broadcast radios, tubes, ham equipment, and transmitters. Perhaps the most impressive exhibit is Fred's tube display, which runs nearly the entire length of the building. One large section of the display is wired so that, by throwing a switch, all the tube filaments light. Since they range from Western Electric "peanut" tubes to large transmitting types like the Eimac 2000T, the sight is awesome to anyone who loves old tubes. Besides, in the winter you don't need to use the furnace when the display is on!

Fred has quite a few large transmitters. Examples include the 1-kW RCA Model BTA-1M, the RCA Model AT3, and the Collins Model KW-1. Several of these are in "mint" condition and connected to antennas so that he can operate them on the air on the ham bands.

Broadcast and amateur receivers on display include dozens and dozens of the familiar U. S. and Canadian models from the 1920s through the end of the tube era. Examples include a 1936 McMurdo Silver Masterpiece V, a 1923 Leutz CR7, and a Federal 61 and, of course, some Hammond three-dial battery sets, which Fred is eager to point out. He has a fine collection of amateur receivers from such famous companies as National and Hallicrafters, and from not-so-famous firms like Patterson or Sargent. The remarkable thing is that so many of the sets in the collection are in "mint" condition. Fred said he had to do a lot of restoration work on some of them, but most look original. Early wireless gear includes Marconi receivers, spark transmitters, loose couplers, IP-500s, and more.

The museum is open only by prior arrangement with Fred. Write ahead or call Fred with plenty of lead time to schedule a mutually convenient date and time for your visit. Allow a cushion of time for your arrival if you are driving in from some distance, because Fred will be waiting at the door to let you in at the scheduled time and give you a guided tour, and you don't want to keep him waiting. You can contact him at: Fred Hammond, VE3HC, 81 College Ave. West, Guelph, Ontario N1G 1S2, (519) 822-8323 (home) or (519) 822-2960 (work).

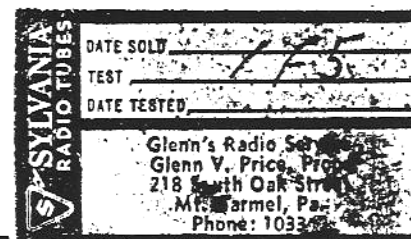
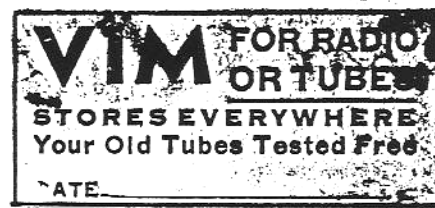
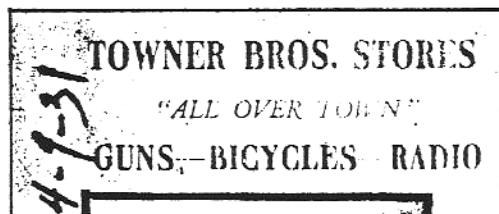
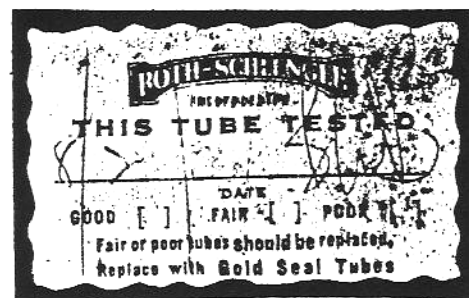
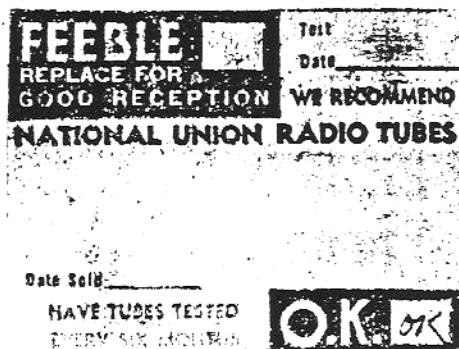
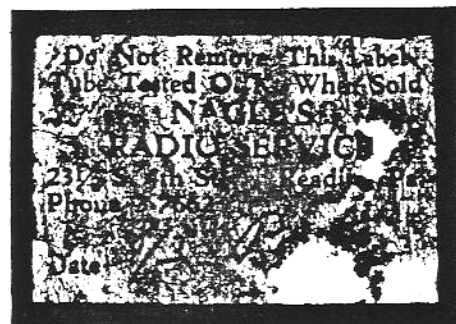
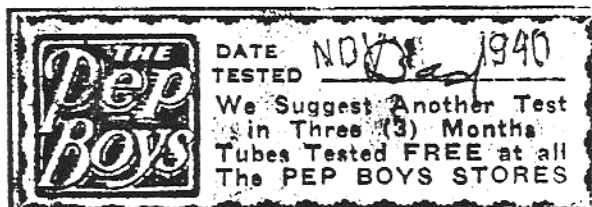
TUBE-TEST LABELS

In the '20s and early '30s, the "culture" of owning a radio included the expectation of frequent tube replacements. This reflected reality (tubes of the day weren't all that long-lived) and the desire of the tubemongers to sell replacements. This was a major source of profit to the repair shop, so set owners were encouraged to pluck out their tubes every six months and bring them in for "free" testing.

In this environment, it was natural for tube sellers to have little gummed labels printed up giving their addresses, with space to record the results of testing. The labels give a modest insight into the repair business, what with their "number please?" or five-digit dial phone numbers. Some labels came from big-time firms - the Penn Phono Co. medallion-like label was in elegant red-white-blue, with embossed lettering befitting "Phila's Leading Radio Music Distributor" - while others represented part-time repairmen operating from their basements. (This was during the Depression, after all.)

The label tradition faded out in the '50s; tubes in TV sets were too numerous to support individual attention, and too small to label conveniently.

Today, of course, the labels turn up on tubes in radios and in bulk lots. In a radio, they might as well remain: they're part of the "life history" of the set. In bulk lots, they are undesirable, but are a sort of collectible in their own right. Soaked off in warm water with a bit of detergent added to aid wetting, they can be scraped away gently with a single-edged razor blade. They're rarely in good shape, but the stronger ones survive removal. The ones shown here don't reproduce well, being stained and browned with age, but the general "flavor" should come through.



TOWARD A PRIMITIVE UNDERSTANDING . . .

DATE CODING ON GE TUBES

Previous short articles in the *Oscillator* have dealt with reading the date codes on tubes from RCA, Raytheon, Sylvania, etc. Most such codes explicitly represent the date of warranty expiration, which was a year or so after "manufacture." (The date of "manufacture" was a porous thing, as a tube might repose in a warehouse for months or years after being made, but before being branded and boxed for shipment. We have to assume that "manufacture" officially occurred at that later point.)

Here's a small break as regards General Electric. I've recently seen a GE distributor brochure from the mid-'60s pointing out that their date code represented the moment of "manufacture": with a date code of "63-17" (17th week of 1963), the warranty expired in April, 1964.

Some further insight comes from military tubes. The MILDEPS didn't want any ambiguity in coding: they wanted a simple "date packed" marked on tube cartons, and had the purchasing power to make it stick. I have a GE-produced JAN-CG-6Y6GT with "Date Pkd. 8/62" on the carton. The tube inside carries two date codes: 62-30, and 62-43. A week "30" is consistent with packing in August. A week "43" is roughly a quarter later, and could easily represent "manufacture," allowing for miscellaneous warehousing and shipping delays.

This leads to an intriguing possibility: the open numeric year-and-week code was an EIA standard. Did the standard include the concept of date of manufacture? If so, then RCA, say, might have changed its practice, and RCA tubes with 64-xx date codes (there were such) would have been "made" in 1964.

Meanwhile, researcher Alan Douglas is advertising for help in reading the little three-dot code that appears on later GE-made tubes. One of our DVHRC veterans used to be able to decode it readily, but that was a long time ago and he has no written reminder. Can anyone help Alan? His address is Box 225, Pocasset, MA 02559. - LAS

NEW CATALOG OUT

Just after Bob Thomas did his *Oscillator* "Consumer Reports" analysis of service from a group of sellers of vintage equipment manuals, W7FG Vintage Manuals put out a handsome new catalog. Expanded to 8-1/2" by 11" size on glossy paper, it offers manuals for roughly 2400 (!) items of vintage amateur equipment and military comm gear, plus a selection of books in this area. The phone for inquiries is 918-333-3754, the number for orders is 800-807-6146, the e-mail address is w7fg@w7fg.com, and the home page is <http://www.w7fg.com>. They take MC and Visa.

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