

Call Letter

of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society, Portland, Oregon

Volume 19

March 1993

Number 3

This Month:

Meeting March 13th, 1993
Special Guest Wilbur J Jerman
& the novelty radio contest.

Next Month:

Meeting April 10th, 1993
Bakelite repair workshop



The Northwest Vintage Radio Society

The Northwest Vintage Radio Society is a non-profit historical society incorporated in the State of Oregon. Since 1974 the Society has been dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of "vintage radio" and wireless equipment.

Membership in the Society is open to all who are actively interested in historic preservation. The dues are \$15.00 for domestic membership, due on January 1st of each year.

The Call Letter has been a monthly publication since 1974. It was originated with the founder Bob Bilbie and our first president Harley Perkins. Through several editors and with the assistance of numerous members the Call Letter has continued to be a publication that both informs members of the society's business and that has supported the hobby of collecting, preserving, and restoring vintage radios.

Society meetings are held monthly (except July and August) at the Northwest Vintage Radio Museum, 7675 SW Capitol Highway (at 32nd street) in Portland Oregon. They convene at or about 10 AM for the purpose of displaying radios, conducting Society business, and information exchange. Guests are welcome at all Society meetings and functions (except board meetings)

Other Society functions include guest speakers, auctions, radio shows and radio sales which are advertised in the Call Letter and are held in and around SW Portland.

Society Officers:

President	Speed Feldschau (503) 390-3928
Vice President	Gordon Phillips (503) 234-3517
Treasurer	Ed Charman (503) 654-7387
Secretary	Joel Camicia (503) 287-7832
Board member at large and Call Letter Editor	Dick Karman (503) 281-6585
Museum Curator	Frank Rasada (503) 246-3400

The Society's address is:

The Northwest Vintage Radio Society
Post Office Box 82379
Portland, Oregon 97282-0379

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March Meeting

The march 13th meeting of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society will be held at the NW vintage Radio Museum and will feature special guest Wilber Jerman. Mr. Jerman is a radio pioneer in the Portland area. He founded station KWJJ over 65 years ago. He has vivid recollections of the "early years" and promises to share them with us.

Also at this meeting will be a contest and display. The categories are Transistor Novelty Radios; Tube Novelty Radios; and "Before & After" restoration projects. Bring your entry for show, place or win! The meeting starts at 10 AM. don't be late.

COVER PHOTO: Courtesy of Scott MacGregor. Vice President Gordon Phillips (see page 10), and special guest Don Hunker in front of the Society Logo, the "Hunker-dyne" at the February meeting.

Triode Thompson

By Pete Peterson, Seattle

(Reprinted by permission of the author.)

Triode Thompson was an old man when I knew him. A triode, of course, is a radio vacuum tube, but for him the word was a nickname given with love and understanding. He and radio had been infants together and had grown and matured together. He had known the wonder and pleasure of hearing music from distant cities, and had the pride of hearing it on a radio he had built.

Back in the late teens and early twenties most radios were home-made from carefully selected component parts, often following plans appearing in *Wireless Age* or other magazines.

On the way home from school, so I've been told, Triode would stop by Woolworth's or J.C. Penney's where he could spend hours inspecting the radio parts displayed for sale, admiring the workmanship of molded bakelite tube sockets and smoothly turning variable condensers. Most of all he admired the triode vacuum tubes. In later years he spoke of the beauty he saw in the simplicity of their operation and of the grace he saw in the smooth rounded shape of their glass envelopes. He saw warmth, like that from a fireplace on a cold night, in the rich orange glow of their filaments.

During the 1920s Triode could be found most evenings in his armchair, earphones comfortably adjusted, listening to his home-made, five triode breadboard receiver, the filaments glowing as if to assure him they were doing their best to bring him a symphony from WSB in Atlanta or a drama from KPO in San Francisco.

Technology quickly provided tetrodes and pentodes to replace triodes, but claims of their improved performance didn't impress Triode. "How can a sunset or a mozart concerto be improved?" he would ask. He did build a new receiver though, with a mahogany cabinet. It had two small copper-screened windows in the front panel so the glow of the filaments could be observed and their voltages adjusted for just the right orange

color. He set the new radio in place, opened its hinged lid, carefully removed his triodes from the breadboard radio, and placed them gently in their new sockets.

As the years went by, radio broadcasts that had been dedicated to beauty, culture and enlightenment gave way to other formats. Likewise Triode gradually gave way to the infirmities of his years and finally sought his rest. As the funeral service ended his grandson carefully polished a Cunningham 301A triode with his handkerchief and placed it beside the old man. Somehow that simple act gave us all comfort. Perhaps it let us hope that some Power not measured in watts would cause a warm orange glow to ease the darkness of Triode Thompson.

Editor's note: I was both impressed and touched by this simple story when I read it. I called Mr. Peterson and asked him not only if I could publish it, but also if I could publish others of his works. I look forward to more writing by "Pete" and thank him again warmly for his insight, and willingness to share it. R Karman

Tung Sol Tubes

TRANSMITTING
and RECEIVING SUPPLIES

Portland Radio Supply Co.

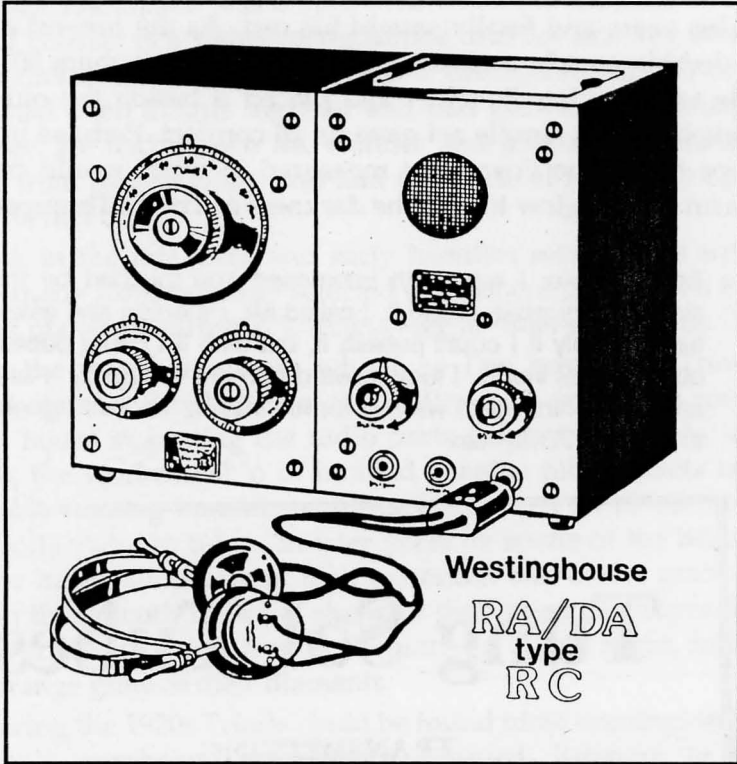
937 S.W. STARK STREET

BEACON 5389

P O R T L A N D , O R E G O N

Feature Set

This technical information was taken from a manual printed in the '20s and loving retained by a collector in the back of a Westinghouse RA-DA set



The Westinghouse Regenerative Receiver and Amplifier

The Westinghouse tuner, type RA, and the electron-tube detector and two stage amplifier unit, type DA, are [pictured here]. The tuner unit, when used alone or with the DA unit, employs the single-circuit principle, that is, there is one coil which acts as both primary and secondary tuning coil. All connections except for the telephone receivers, are made on the back of the units.

The antenna terminal also connects to a variable condenser which is mounted on the tuner shaft, and turns with that dial. A

small vernier condenser is connected around the larger condenser and permits fine tuning to the desired signals. A variometer is mounted on the back end of the tuner shaft so that their capacity and inductance, respectively, are increased simultaneously, and are at maximum with a dial setting of 100, its highest reading. These properties are reduced at the lower dial settings. A variometer acts as an auto-transformer to transfer energy from the antenna circuit to the receiver circuit proper. The metallic shield on the back of the panel which prevents disturbance from outside capacity effects is grounded by the grounding connection.

The tickler coil in the set consists of turns of wire wound quite close to some of the tuning inductance, and performs its regenerative action by feeding back some of the plate-circuit energy into the input circuit. The amount of energy fed back into the input circuits varies by changing the number of turns of this coil which carry current by a switch arrangement.

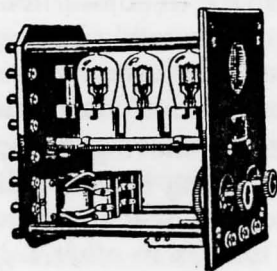
The grid leak and the grid condenser help the detector tube to perform its rectifying action. The filament rheostat controls the filament current of the detector tube. The plate circuit of the detector tube includes the tickler coil and also the primary of the transformer and a twenty-two and a half volt battery whose negative terminal connects to the filament circuit. A front panel jack permits the connection of telephone receivers in the plate circuit of the detector tube in place of the primary of the first stage transformer. A condenser forms a high-frequency shunt for the feedback current around the battery and the primary of the first stage transformer (or telephone receivers). The first amplifier tube is connected to the audio transformer so as to feed its amplified energy into the second amplifier tube. A common rheostat controls the current to both of the amplifier tubes in parallel. The telephone receiver may be plugged into the plate circuit of the second amplifier tube. The negative terminal of the 90 volt battery connects to the filament circuits.

Tuning should be done by moving the tuner dial over its full range of values while listening in. The dial should be moved very slowly so as not to pass over any signals coming in on a sharp wave-length. In this, as in other regenerative sets, the presence of a continuous-wave signal, or message, is indicated

by a sharp whistling sound as the wave-length position is passed over. When such a position is located, the dial should be returned to that point, and fine tuning made for the signal by varying the vernier condenser. Preliminary tuning of some stations seems to be easier with the tickler on its zero position, while others are more easily picked up with higher settings of the dial. After the signal has been picked up, different settings of the tickler should be tried, making a readjustment of the vernier condenser each time.

The tuner unit, type RA, may be used with a crystal detector and telephone receivers connected across the terminals marked "Grid" and "Fil." The antenna and ground connections are made to the terminals so labeled. The set then operates as a crystal detector set, and only the tuner dial and vernier condenser affect the tuning. The tickler coil is not used when the set is used with a crystal detector.

Where still greater selectivity is desired, another unit may be added to make a two-circuit arrangement. This unit has a variometer and condenser similar in design and tuning to those in the RA unit. There is an antenna terminal and a ground terminal, and only one tuning dial on this unit, which is placed next to the RA unit, and on its left. The antenna and ground terminals on the RA unit are connected together through a condenser, and both units are tuned nearly simultaneously. After tuning is accomplished, the coupling may be reduced by moving the antenna-circuit tuning unit away from the RA unit as far as consistent with the reception of good signals.



RA - DA The Rest of the Story

By TEX SLOAT

In the early days of broadcasting where listeners lived quite close together such as in towns and cities, they had a common interference problem: the radiation from regenerative receivers. With the tickler coil coupling adjusted by a panel control too tight, the oscillations were radiated for quite a distance. In fact if a microphone was placed in the ground lead one had a low powered transmitter. There would be a screech, high pitched and then low, as the receiver was tuned through a station's carrier. Then someone else would join in and it would be almost impossible to enjoy the program. In some locations disgruntled listeners petition the town council for relief proposing an ordinance prohibiting the use of such gear. The writer remembers no such legislation actually passing. *A Radio in the Home* reports interference from regenerative receivers became so bad in the New York area that such a law was requested.

One identifiable offender was the Westinghouse RC, a very good receiver, by most offensive if improperly operated. Differing from other receivers, the tickler coil was adjusted by taps and not by rotation. The clicks and taps as the switch was adjusted could be plainly heard by other listeners when the regeneration was set too high.

A 1922 publication with quite a wide distribution, after giving the preliminary steps for tuning, wrote, "If the third dial in the lower right hand corner of the tuning unit is now turned, this will help in eliminating other noises that are heard and will bring out the broadcast much clearer than before." Common sense dictates that the tuning should be started with the tickler control at a minimum and increased until the howl begins at which point the coupling is decreased one tap or so. If these instruction had been publicized, much trouble and hard feelings could have been averted.

Meet Gordon Phillips

by Scott Macgregor

A Society member for five years, Vice President Gordon Phillips and his wife, Della, make their home in the Laurelhurst area of NE Portland. Gordon is a true Portland native, living in the area since he was one, when his parents moved to "stump town" from Grants Pass.

While raising three sons, Gordon and Della spent their spare time living in and remodeling a number of Portland homes. About seven years ago Gordon became interested in vintage phonographs and old radios soon followed. Gordon has always loved garage sales. At a sale five years ago Gordon attended on of Dick Howard's sales and found out about our society; and soon joined.

Gordon, who is retired from the electrical control system field, had hobbies prior to his collecting days which include golf, RV camping and traveling. Gordon still hosts a weekly snooker pool get-together in his basement. Gordon still travels also. A recent trip included visiting his son in Maipu, Chile (near Santiago) where he assisted in the construction of three church buildings. That was December of 1991. Gordon is looking forward to making another trip to Chile in the near future.

A challenge is something that Gordon relishes. A few years back at a Seattle garage sale Gordon picked up a Philco 70 cathedral which had been stored in a damp basement. It was literally falling apart at the seams. It cost him all of \$5, but he is proud of the before and after restoration photographs which show what he did with that "pile of veneer." A current project is a Zenith Tombstone which started out as a basket case.

Gordon is faithful in his duties as Vice President of our Society, takes care of the refreshments at society meetings, and is the straw boss who gets members to collate, fold, label stamp, and mail the monthly Call Letter.

What a New Member Might Want to Know

These are questions that have been asked by people getting started in our hobby. If the society takes on the "first-timer's book" we will need well-rounded answers to all of these questions. If you have input, please get it to VP Gordon Phillips so he can compile the data.

- How do I start?
- What kind of radios should I collect?
- If I start collecting wood radios, what kind are valuable?
- I hear that there are books showing radios with published price guides. Where do I get these books?
- How authentic are the price guides?
- I have heard that there are books published monthly on radio information. How do I find out about these books?
- If I restore an old wood radio, where can I get matching wood and veneer?
- Where do I get matching stains and finishes?
- If I have no knowledge to repair the radio chassis, where can I go to get it working?
- Where do I get tubes?
- If I can repair the chassis, where do I get replacement parts?
- Where can I get technical information?
- How collectible are bakelite and plastic radios?
- What are catlin radios?
- What early transistor radios are collectable?
- Where is the best place to start collecting radios?
- Where should I go?
- Are military radios worth collecting?
- Are old battery sets worth collecting?
- Where do I get diagrams on radio chassis?
- What is the NWVRS library?
- Are early radio phonographs with electric turn tables worth collecting?

Swap Shop

Wanted

Any old field coil-type speakers, prefer 8" size. Gordon Phillips, 610 NE Royal Court, Portland, Oregon 97232 (503) 234-3517.

1935 Zenith model 5R312 "pancake grill" pushbutton table set; Ryders service manual for a reasonable price. Scott MacGregor (503) 661-1294.

Coat and shirt pocket tube & transistor radios of the 50's and 60's. Sonny Clutter, 14407 NE Fremont Street, Portland, Oregon 97230 (503) 254-9296.

Dud tubes with 7-pin standard base, like 6A7, need the tube base only. Bob Campbell, 2175 SE Pine, Hillsboro, Oregon 97123.

For Sale

3 radio chassis: Majestic M90; Amrad 81; and Philco 70. \$30 for all - U-haul, Bob Campbell, 2175 SE Pine, Hillsboro, Oregon 97123.

Kemper SG-7 (Mfg. by Gilfillan Bros.) AC operated, Broadcast Band, with Maganox speaker, walnut case with matching pedestal/stand \$275.00. Joel Camicia (503) 287-8732.

Coronado ('37) table radio AC Broadcast band and shortwave, refinished walnut case. Joel Camicia (503) 287-8732.

Temple model 150, AC operated, Broadcast Band and shortwave, six-legged, high boy walnut cabinet, original finish. \$275 Joel Camicia (503) 287-8732.

For sale or Trade

Victor Model R Disk Phonograph (suspended horn); Philco model 70; Radiola III; '33 Zenith 288 Deco tombstone; "Trimm Horn-type Speaker;" Sonny Clutter, 14407 NE Fremont Street, Portland, Oregon 97230 (503) 254-9296.

Leads (offered by non-members)

FOR SALE over 25 various tube and transistor small radios- all or part. Contact Cheryl at (503) 698-6634 in the Sunnyside area.

Vintage Radio & Related Nostalgia Show and Sale

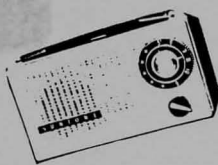
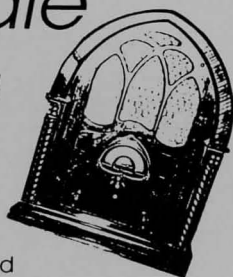
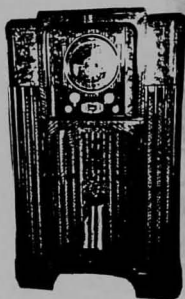
Back to the Past!

Saturday, May 8th, 1993

at the Multnomah Arts Center
in the heart of Multnomah Village
SW 32nd Ave & Capitol Hiway, Portland

9:30 AM to 12:30 PM

- Vintage Nostalgia
 - Vintage Radios
 - Vintage Television
 - Vintage Phonographs
 - Transistor Radios
 - Radio & Television advertising
- Over 4,000 square feet



This is the first event of this size and kind in Portland.
It's fully 4-fold larger than other sales hosted by the NW Vintage Radio Society.
Collectors, hobbyists, and resellers will all be present. Table space is available.
For directions and vendor reservation contact Sonny Clutter **(503) 254-9296**.



From Downtown Portland, Take I-5 southbound to Multnomah Blvd Exit,
From Multnomah turn right on SW 31st.

A community event sponsored by

the Northwest Vintage Radio Society,

P.O. Box 82379, Portland, OR 97282.

