

The

Call Letter

March, 2014
Vol. 40 – No. 3



Now celebrating our 40th year in print!

NEXT MEETING: MARCH 8TH @10AM

The Northwest Vintage Radio Society

Post Office Box 82379

Portland, Oregon 97282-0379

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 \$25.00 for domestic membership, due on January 1st of each year (prorated quarterly).

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 society members, the Call Letter has continued to be a publication that informs members of the society's business and that supports the hobby of collecting, preserving, and restoring vintage radios.

Society meetings are held the second Saturday of each month at the Abernethy Grange Hall at 15745 S. Harley Ave. in Oregon City, Oregon. They convene at or about 10 AM for the purpose of displaying radios, conducting Society business, and exchanging information. 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 Portland.

With each issue of the Call Letter, we remember Jim Mason, a charter member of the society who remained active until his death in 1999. A generous bequest from Jim's estate ensures the vitality of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society, and continued publication of the Call Letter.



Society Officers for 2014:

President	Sid Saul (503)869-5280	saulsidney@gmail.com
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On the cover: Dick Howard’s Bendix clock radio from the January meeting display. Photo by staff photographer Chris Butler.

Monthly Features: Your Best Radio. Tech Talk: Below One Ohm by President Sid Saul.

Visit our web site at www.nwvrs.com
 and on Facebook: www.facebook.com/NWVRS

If you have not renewed your membership for 2014 then this will be your last issue of the Call Letter until your dues have been received!

Next Call Letter deadline: March 31, 2014

The *Call Letter* is the official publication of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society. Circulation is limited to the membership and guests of the Society. The Society is not responsible for the material contributed for publication, nor the quality, timeliness, or accuracy of the items or services offered for sale in the SWAP SHOP. By common agreement of the board of directors, the buyer assumes all responsibility for the satisfaction of any transaction.

Sunny 1550 Ad

**...it's always
a Sunny Day at...**



NWVRS Calendar of Events

Most of the hamfest and ham swap meet information comes from: PNW Hamfair web page at www.n7cfo.com/amJradio/hf/hf.htm

The PSARA monthly meeting information comes from The Horn of Plenty.

- March 8** NWVRS monthly meeting 10am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- March 8** **Mike and Key Swap Meet** Puyallup, WA fairgrounds exhibition hall. <http://www.mikeandkey.org/flea.htm>
<http://www.mikeandkey.org/FLYER2014.pdf>
- March 16** **PSARA** monthly meeting 11:30am; Best Portable Radio. Membership Directory released.
- March 16** **CVRS Antique Radio Swap Meet** Burnaby, BC.
http://rac.eton.ca/events/detail.php?event_ID=1645
- April 12** **NWVRS Spring Swap Meet and Sale** Aurora, OR American Legion Hall.
- April 12** **Yakima Hamfest** Selah Civic Center, 216 S 1st Street, Selah, WA.
<http://yakimaamateurradioclub.com/yakima-hamfest/>
- April 20** **PSARA** monthly meeting 11:30am; Annual Auction.
- May 10** NWVRS monthly meeting 10am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- May 10** **Stanwood Camano Amateur Radio Club Hamfest** Stanwood Middle School, Stanwood, WA.
<http://www.scarcwa.org/>
- June 6-8** **Sea-Pac Hamfest and ARRL Northwestern Division Conference** Seaside Convention Center, Seaside, OR.
www.seapac.org

The Aspiring Radiotrician

By President Sid Saul

Exalted?

definition; To rise to a higher level.

I can just imagine what you are all thinking. If he isn't filing resistors or measuring infinitesimally small resistances he is bringing *religion* into The Call Letter. Allow me to briefly point out *some* of the evolution the detector stage has taken.

Certain minerals were found more sensitive compared to the coherer detector. The vacuum tube along with regen and neutro. Of course the Armstrong hetero better still. You are thinking there's an actual connection with radio here? Some of you may remember one of the radios put up for auction at our January meeting, a Sony ICF-2010 portable. Many were amazed at the final fetching price. The bidding war due to its special detector, making it one of the most popular portables ever built. This all-band set made synchronous detection (SD) a must have. Not only for shortwave selective signal fade, but just as effective on the broadcast band for the reduction of adjacent channel interference. Selective fade meaning some frequencies fade more than others.

Fade was never fun to listen to. This in large part due to the skywave carrier taking different paths along its journey from transmitter to receiver, also known as multi-path. This causes the signals to arrive with different phasing. In-phase the signals add increasing signal strength. Out of phase arrivals, and the signals cancel and fade. If we could replace a fading carrier with a stable artificial one (as with SD) we may have a better listening experience. Today there are several portables with SD for under \$150, but any superhet radio can be externally adapted. There is a ready built stand-alone available; do a search for Sherwood Engineering's synchronous detector. A little pricey, but scratch built is just too complex for some. They provide

sound recordings comparing the same signal with and without SD. Astonishing to say the least.

Let me end this article with mention of what exalted tuning is all about. Years ago it was discovered that by using the beat frequency oscillator BFO (although not as effective as the SD) it could artificially improve reception on the HF bands. The idea was to increase signal voltage going into the detector. Tuning in the station as usual, the BFO zero-beat until all vestiges of beating were gone. The fidelity and signal width may go down, but the carrier level may go *up* just enough for that hard to copy station. Regardless of whether SD *or* exalted, there is no rule that guarantees improvement. There must be enough carrier for SD to lock onto. If not, exalted may be no better. Speaking of BFO, old timers will tell you that as we sweep through the HF bands, weak stations are *only* discovered by listening for the tone generated by mixing of the BFO oscillator with the weak station's carrier. Afterwards we may zero beat for exalted tuning. BFO is not just for single sideband or Morse anymore. And you thought this was about me!

Sid



Tuned Into: Bob Walters: Part II

As interviewed by Charlie Kent (continued from the February CL)

I earned my first dollar by repairing an amplifier for the school. It needed a filter capacitor. I tried to test it in my room, but there was too much feedback; so I put the speaker in the hall. It worked. At least eight priests got on my case! I tested it about nine o'clock at night.

I tried to learn the Morse code. I was practicing one early morning before classes. The only code I knew was for the letters S and O. When I got out of class, there were three priests in my room looking at the telegraph key on my desk. One asked if I knew what I sent and I said yes. Another priest said "don't do it", because I was causing static while they were listening to the news. The third priest said to come and see him. His name was Father Sebastian Ruth, OSB. He started KGY radio in Olympia and his office door had W7YS on it. It was his ham shack and most of his gear was home brew. I never learned the code, but I did learn an awful lot about radio from Father Sebastian.

There was a radio in the high school recreation room that didn't work. It was an Atwater Kent 447. Dad got me a Heathkit VTVM for Christmas and I put it to work. The AK needed a 58 tube. I visited about three radio repair shops in Olympia and lucked out and found one. It fixed the radio, but I had to clean and lubricate the band switching mechanism. I don't know what ever happened to that radio, but I would like to find an AK447 so I could 'relive' my (misspent) youth!

All the above took place while I was chasing a particular young lady and was editor of the yearbook. (The yearbook got published and Donna May got away! She joined a convent.)

I attended the U of Washington with the idea of getting an EE degree. About all I learned was how to row and a dislike for differential equations.

I was in the Navy from 1955-57 stationed out of San Diego on the submarine USS Caiman (SS323). I wanted to be an electronics technician (ET), but there wasn't a need. A chief fire control technician (FT) found me and I went to FT school. Now, when I meet an ET, I mention that he must have failed FT school!

The Caiman made a 'shakedown' cruise to Tahiti, then after being in San Diego for several months, the 'boat' made a WestPac run. We made a 42-day underwater cruise off the east coast of Japan. The

Caiman was a diesel boat, so we did a lot of snorkeling. I stood sonar and electronic countermeasure watches.

The fire control gear never broke (!!), but the radar and sonar was in the ditch once in a while!!! I recall one time there was a bug on the BQR sonar that tube swapping didn't fix. I found the maintenance manual (about the size of Rider manual number 19), grabbed a meter and scope, and went to the location of the 'box'. It was in the forward torpedo room. I scoped it down and found an open delay line. I asked the chief ET if we had the part and he said no. The executive officer chewed my butt out for not having one. I must have said something derogatory because I never got a 'shipping over' talk.

I went back to school, and then joined IBM as a customer engineer (CE) in January of 1960. I started out in unit record (key punches – sorters) and retired in 1991 working in large systems.

I've been working on the USS Blueback at OMSI for twenty years doing maintenance and making some of the gear 'light up and make noise'. There is simulated engine starting, simulated emergency blow noises, alarms, bacon cooking in the galley, snoring in the crews sleeping quarters, blinking lights, and I hooked up a sonar head so you can listen to the noises on the Willamette River.

I also rowed on the Willamette. As a member of Station L rowing club, I and seven other guys rowed in the US ROWING Master's National race in Oakland California. We won a gold medal. I also tried dragon boat racing. That IS a lot of work. Melvin Mark sponsored us and we beat the Portland Fire team in a Rose Festival dragon boat race. The rematch was definitely not a winner!!!

I got back in the radio repair business accidentally. One day a guy asked if I could repair his tube amplifier – a Scott 240. I guess I did a fair job, because the owner of Echo Audio called and asked if I could fix some of their gear. Word got around that I could fix tube gear including McIntosh and Marantz tuners. A word of caution, if you are ever called upon to repair a Marantz 10, DO NOT try to tune the IF's.

(cont. on inside back cover)

Swap Shop

FOR SALE: ***I need to finally sell my radio collection. I am using a walker now and have some difficulty getting around and I cannot lift anything of very much weight. I have about 100 radios from the 20's through plastics in the 50's. I have one Catalin in perfect condition, several cathedrals, battery sets, consoles, and chassis of different years including several containing globe tubes. I have a supply of radio knobs including some for Catalin and Zenith radios, some very nice speakers, and other miscellaneous items such as Abbotwares radios and tube checkers. Be sure to call before you come down to see me. Glen Bricker, 1425 Daugherty Ave, Apt. #4, Cottage Grove, OR. 541-942-3717.

FOR SALE: Thousands of tubes, hundreds of radio parts, panels, meters, surplus, etc. R5-D3 electronic surplus, Bob Lee, 9770 S.E. Stanley Ave., Milwaukie, OR 97222, (503) 513-0410

FOR SALE: Many Tubes New and Used – 30-day money back Warranty. For list visit www.antiquetubesupply.webs.com. I can ship OR bring to club meetings. Damon Vandehey, (503) 459-1777.

FOR SALE: Amplitrex professional tube testing at reasonable rates. Curve tracing, plate current matching, noise testing and highly accurate Gm readings. Adds value to high-value tubes!
robertwstephens@frontier.com.

FOR SALE: Questions about restoration of vintage radio? Visit Radiolaguy's web site often for this information plus lots of other interesting displays, photos, virtual museum plus lots of other information on vintage radio and television. Oh, yes, there are items for sale as well and NVRS members get a substantial discount on most of these items. Thank You, Sonny the Radiola Guy
Visit my vintage radio web site: <http://www.radiolaguy.com>

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Tuned Into: Bob Walters: Part II

(cont. from p.7)

I've had items shipped from Vancouver BC, Seattle, San Diego, and Long Island to me for repair. I've scratch built about four or five stereo amplifiers. I use the Tektronix methodology – ceramic terminals with parts over the tube sockets for these scratch built amps. If I don't have the schematic, I try to reverse engineer the unit and draw a schematic.

As for radios, I've had my share of deep chassis Zeniths, Philcos, GE's, and quite a few of the German Telefunken style radios (AM, FM, shortwave with five or six push buttons.) I even had a fellow bring the chassis to his Catalin radio in. I fixed the radio, he installed it.

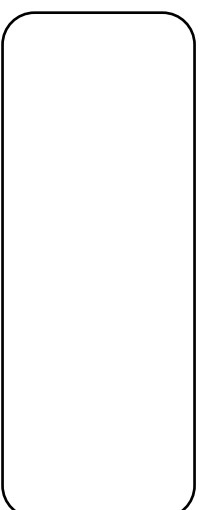
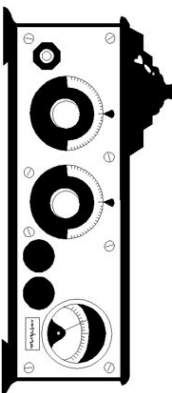
My shop radio is usually tuned to 89.9, but I do like the Good Old Country Western Music, including Lefty Frizzell (I'll walk a mile), Hank Williams (Hey, good lookin'), and Jeanie Shepherd (Dear John). Polka music gets me going to. (My past wife was from Strasburg, North Dakota – the home of Lawrence Welk 'once yet').

I don't have too many radios in my collection, but I do have an Edison R5, a Kolster K120, a GE S22X, among others. I also like to collect test equipment as you can see from the photo. I admit it, I'm a junkie!!! I collect radio tubes, especially the older ones still in their boxes. I belong to the Tube Collectors Association (TCA). Also a member of TCA, Bob Deuel introduced me to NWVRS three years ago, so here I am...

Bob Walters



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