



ANTIQUE RADIO CLASSIFIED

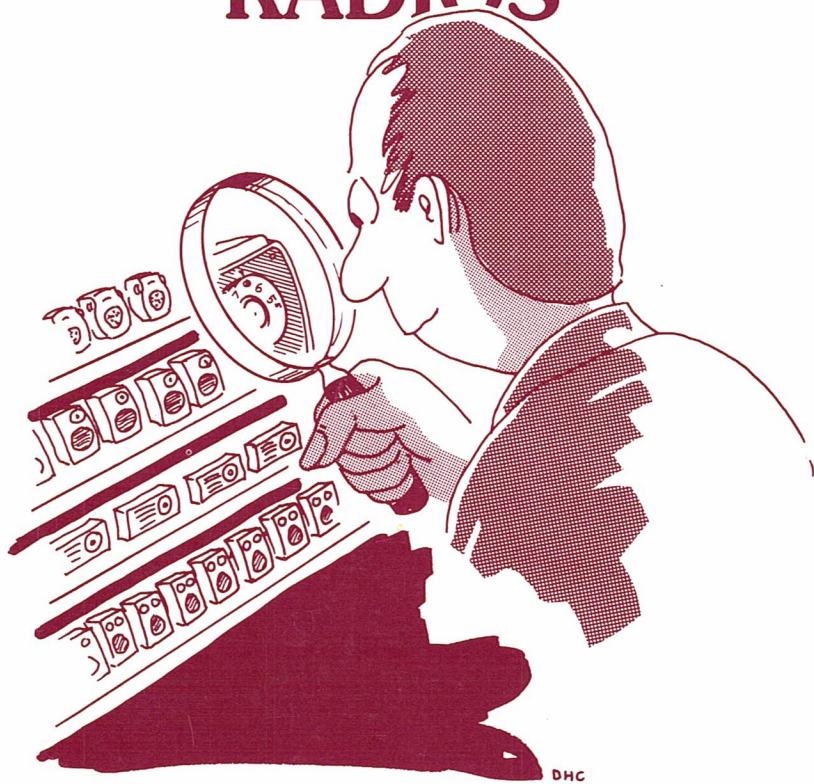


VOLUME 10

APRIL 1993

NUMBER 4

COLLECTING TRANSISTOR RADIOS



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A.R.C. — THE NATIONAL PUBLICATION FOR BUYERS AND SELLERS
OF OLD RADIOS AND RELATED ITEMS — PUBLISHED MONTHLY

ANTIQUÉ RADIO CLASSIFIED

Antique Radio Classified (ISSN:8750-7471) is published monthly, 12 times per year, by John V. Terrey, One River Road, P.O. Box 2, Carlisle, MA 01741. Second-class postage paid at Carlisle, MA, and additional mailing offices. Telephone: (508) 371-0512, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM ET weekdays; machine answers phone at other times.

Annual subscription rates within the U.S. are \$29.95 by Second Class mail and \$44.95 by First Class mail.

Annual foreign rates. By air: Canada - \$48.00; Mexico - \$47.00; Other foreign countries - \$85.00. Surface mail: Canada - \$39.00; Other foreign countries - \$43.00. (Surface delivery to countries other than Canada may take two or more months and cannot be guaranteed.)

Two-year subscriptions are twice these rates and receive an extra month. Sample issues are available free on request.

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PURPOSE. *Antique Radio Classified* is published for people involved in the radio collecting hobby. Its purpose is to stimulate growth of the hobby through the buying, selling and trading of radios and related items, and to provide a monthly forum for the interchange of ideas and information.

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EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Transistor radio collecting appears to have come into its own. Not too many years ago, A.R.C.'s pages reflected little interest in those small items caricatured on our cover and featured in our lead article by Mike Adams, as well as in the annual April Fool's *Eliminator*. In fact, it was not until 1989 that a transistor radio was included in A.R.C.'s *Photo Review* section, while our first transistor radio article did not appear until January 1990.

Today, classified advertising for transistor radios has increased five-fold since 1989, and transistor radios take their place alongside battery, cathedral, console, Art Deco and other radios on collectors' shelves. Mike Adams, in conversation with a collector newly converted from battery sets to transistor radios, highlights several of these small collectibles.

The Eliminator, our April Fool parody, is published by the A.C. Radio Renegades, an organization formed to promote the appreciation of A.C. radios. In this issue, Dr. Radio — always willing to prescribe for any radio bug — presents helpful hints for the transistor radio collector. Also, the new *Zap-po* battery for transistor radios is announced. Although *The Eliminator* is nearly all fictional, the events at the Mid-South Antique Radio Collectors show are real, as is the address in Lexington, Kentucky — so be sure to send along your humorous contributions to next year's edition.

Another item appropriate to this April issue is the Muter Grid Leak Pan, the solution for your leaking grid leak. Mike Kreuser and Ed Taylor contributed this material, which proves that even back in the 1920s, there was humor within the radio community. In addition, we present the first of a series of Ron Boucher's cartoons entitled "Gridley's Radio Shop."

On the serious side, Ian Sanders has contributed another of his excellent articles on British sets — this time, the British Thomson-Houston crystal sets manufactured from 1922 to 1928. He describes the Model A and two Bijou models, including the rare Type C, Form BB.

Dwane Stevens describes the Atwater Kent Model 52 — the 7-tube metal console set often called the "stove radio." Dwane jokingly describes the Model 52 as a thing of "uncanny beauty," but he points out

that it has its place in radio history.

In the November 1992 A.R.C., William Ross raised the question of how to solder litz wire. Ray Bintliff has consolidated the responses, which also included suggestions for tinsel wire, into an article for this issue.

Richard Foster has reviewed a new book applicable to old radios — *Refinishing Old Furniture* by George Wagoner. Richard, an expert on the subject himself, recommends this book for collectors. And after a dearth of books on refinishing, another one, entitled *The Weekend Refinisher* by Bruce Johnson, is also available. Look for a review of this book in a future issue of A.R.C.

Radio Rambblings... returns to our pages with an article by Paul Bourbin that relates to the very first *Radio Rambblings* we ran in January 1989. Paul comments on some good and not-so-good features of radio collecting. A.R.C. invites discussion of this type in the hope that it will improve our hobby.

In addition to *Radio Miscellanea*, we have other short items — an Antique Wireless Association announcement of a new policy prohibiting early flea market openings, and a letter from Irene Ripley who is a radio "wife/collector," not a "radio widow." The *Photo Review* entries this month range from a crystal set to a 1948 television set, in addition to an assortment of table and tombstone radios.

The radio meet season is approaching, and it is time to arrange your traveling schedule. I hesitate to list the major multiday meets, as there are more of them each year. However, the ones that have become traditional include the May Radio Daze '93 meet in Minnesota, the June ARCA '93 meet in West Virginia, the July Extravaganza '93 in Michigan, the August Radiofest 1993 in Illinois, the September AWA Conference in New York, and the October VRPS Convention '93 in Texas.

A.R.C. plans to make it to many of these meets, plus the April Dayton, Ohio, Hamvention and the May British Vintage Communications Fair in Birmingham, England. We hope to see you at one or more of these events — stop by our booth to say, "Hello!"

Happy collecting.

John V. Terrey

OOPS!

Ken Bauer writes that the transistor radio extension speaker in the March 1993 *Photo Review* is 12" long by 3" in diameter (not 13"). He found this item on page 55 of the 1971 Radio Shack Catalog.

PRINTED WITHOUT COMMENT

We have received four complaints about Clarence Lozano, 413 Western Hills, Coralville, IA 52241. As of March 11, 1993, only two have been settled, and there has been no response to our inquiries.

ON THE COVER

The cover this month, which pokes fun at the size of transistor radios, is by Dave Crocker. Although primarily a battery set collector, with Crosley a specialty, Dave appreciates all aspects of radio collecting. A member of A.R.C.'s staff, Dave does most of the illustrations in our articles, including the litz wire drawings in this issue. You may also remember his cover illustration "Here Come the Consoles" gracing our July 1989 issue, as well as the illustrations for Frank Bequaert's *Antique Radio Boys* series.

WITH THE COLLECTORS

Turned On To Transistors

BY MIKE ADAMS

Mike Adams has contributed this interesting story with accompanying photos about his friend Stanley, a convert to transistor radio collecting, who prefers anonymity. We note that Stanley has fallen into the jargon of our hobby when he calls transistor radios "transistors." But, perhaps this is no worse than calling cathedral- or tombstone-style radios "cathedrals" or "tombstones." (Editor)

"I don't buy those anymore," Stanley said as he motioned toward a collection of many hundreds of wireless and battery sets that I would figuratively kill for. "I'm into transistors."

I asked if I heard him correctly. He said, "Believe it or not, the only thing I now live for is to get more and more of these little jewels."

He continued to explain as he effortlessly picked up with one hand a cardboard box crammed with dozens of the tiny plastic sets. "I hear that there will be a bunch of these at the radio meet tomorrow, and I'm going to get up about 4:00, get there by 5:00. I'm going to get more radios. I need them. Here, look at these three — check out the nice rounded lines. These are beautiful little sets." Figures 1, 2, and 3 show pocket-size, 3" x 4"

radios with very soft lines by Global, Realtone, and Vista. The V-like design is very automotive, no?

So this is the story of Stanley ("Don't call me Stan!"), and Stanley is a guy who wants to start something. He wants the collecting community to follow him, albeit from a distance, into collecting pocket transistor radios. But Stanley wants to get them first. And he wants to tell me his story because I am a writer for a major publication.

"Now here are the rules," he began to explain. Since I have known Stanley for more than a decade, I said I would do whatever he wanted. "If you write about me and my collection, you can't tell anyone where I live or use my real name, understand?"

"Sure," I agreed, "but, why?" I started to launch into the usual, "Can you imagine contemporary teenage gangsters breaking into a radio collector's house? They don't want your stuff. They don't understand it, can't sell it, are too lazy to lift it." He didn't answer.

I quickly got my camera, lights, and, for this project, my close-up lenses. "Hold these in your



Figure 1. Global GR711, 1962.



Figure 2. Realtone TR861, 1961.

hand," I suggested. "It'll show how tiny they are, and no one will recognize your fingers."

See Figures 4 and 5 — a nifty Persona and a GE out of its imitation leather case.

"Now let me tell you what to look for in your part of California," Stanley said, "and perhaps I'll trade them for some of these battery sets that you've been eyeing for so long."

He was right. I still would rather have a nice early 1920s regenerative set than most of the little transistors I was photographing. I still like wood.

"Most of these sets," he continued, "will not have dates of manufacture, but there are a couple of obvious things to look for, like the country of manufacture. Anything American-made from the middle 1950s, like one of these early Regency sets, is something I want in my collection." Figure 6 shows one of the first mid-1950s Regencies.

"Anything from the late 1950s through the early 1960s made in Japan is also a set that I think will be popular with collectors. And something else — the most collectible sets from that era will say prominently on the set the number of transistors contained inside." I guessed that this was a practice that fell out of favor by the mid-1960s.

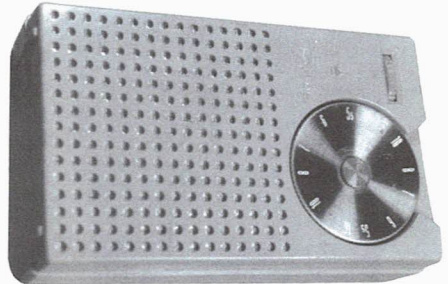
Stanley continued, "And another thing — get me sets that have carrying handles that double as stands."

Figures 7, 8, and 9 show sets that boast of how many transistors they have. Although Stanley had most of them already, he would still take any of the larger Zenith Royal series or the Emer-

(Continued on following page)



**Figure 5. General Electric 678, 1956.*



**Figure 6. Regency TR-1, 1955.*



Figure 3. Vista, 1962.



Figure 4. Persona 600, 1961.



Figure 7. Chic Model KT91, 1961.

(Transistors, continued)

son sets that by the end of the 1950s had bigger speakers, better tuning, and in many ways, duplicated features of earlier tube-type portables.

Figures 10, 11, and 12 are larger sets with bigger speakers and carrying handles that double as stands — too big for the pocket though.

So what had happened to turn Stanley on to transistor radios? How does someone long revered as a "serious" collector of wireless and early battery sets make the transition to transistor radios? How does a guy who has refused to acknowledge any radio life after 1925 miss several entire generations and end up in the late 1950s? The best one word answer is "art" — yes, art. Art is one reason why transistor sets grabbed

Stanley. He couldn't care less about whether they play or what they look like inside. He just likes to look at them, even touch them.

The other reason for the transistor interest could be the dreaded "collector burnout." Maybe, like Stanley, you have started to challenge your collecting beliefs?

Take this simple quiz: 1. Did you start a dozen or more years ago with a plan to get every nice Zenith console or Philco cathedral, and having succeeded, now sit on the sidelines and grumble about how shoddy those sets have become as they pass from one entrepreneur to another? 2. Do you dust your sets as often as you used to? 3. Are you one who rarely goes to the meets, and when you do, do you arrive after 9 A.M.? 4. Do you find yourself poking fun at your fellow collectors and sellers? 5. Are you now able to read an issue of A.R.C. in five minutes, a task that used to take

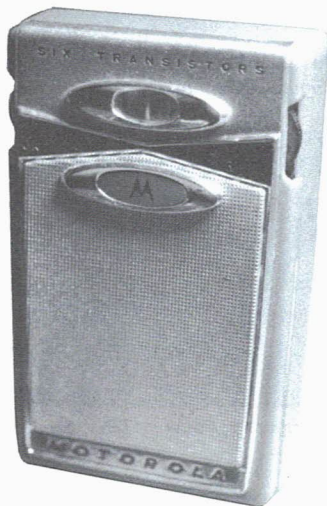
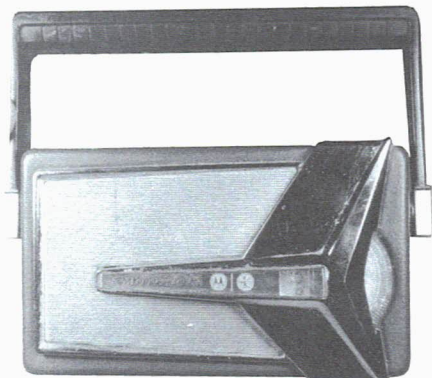


Figure 8. Motorola X11R, 1960.



*Figure 10. Motorola 7X23E, 1958.

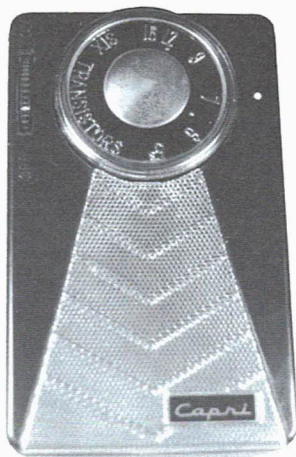


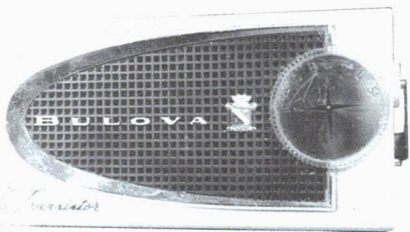
Figure 9. Capri, 1959.



*Figure 11. Emerson 888 Vanguard, 1958.

two hours, including checking out the classified ads in detail, and talking to answering machines thousands of miles away? 6. Do you still spend up to 50% of your disposable income on radio-related stuff?

Before he switched to solid-state, I know how



*Figure 12. Bulova 620, 1960.

Stanley would have answered all of the above. By changing his collecting interests, he says he has met an entirely new group of collectors — new faces, less jaded, less set in their ways. He is a new man.

(Mike Adams, 112 Crescent St., Scotts Valley, CA 95066)

Mike Adams, a regular contributor of A.R.C. articles, is a producer of the PBS television series "Radio Collector." He is also a professor of radio/TV/film at San Jose State University, a director of the former Foothill Electronics Museum [now the Electronics Museum of the Perham Foundation], a former president of the Southern California Antique Radio Society (SCARS), and an officer of the California Historical Radio Society (CHRS).

*Denotes models made in U.S.A. All others are Japanese models.

AWA Improves Flea Market Operation

BY LUDWELL SIBLEY

In the past, when did you have to plan to arrive at a major meet if you wanted to buy on the first flea market day? The announced day? No! You had to arrive as early as the previous weekend! No longer will this be necessary, as we learn from this Antique Wireless Association (AWA) notice. No flea market sales will take place prior to its opening of its annual conference in Rochester, N.Y., September 22-25, 1993.

In recent years, arrivals at the major meets have been gradually pushing back to the weekend prior to the meet. The day before the official opening has become the largest flea market day of the meet, and by the final day, very few sellers remain.

An event is more successful and fair to all, if it has a clear beginning and runs at a steady energy level until the end, especially since not everyone can take an entire week off. Many clubs have been taking steps to curb this ever-expanding flea market time. The AWA is to be commended on its decision to limit the flea market days at its annual conference.

Of course, the flea market is only one of the activities at these large meets, which can include auctions, equipment contests and displays, seminars, banquets, etc. A.R.C. looks forward to seeing many of our subscribers at these exciting events. (Editor)

In 1992, the Antique Wireless Association (AWA) made several changes to improve the flea-market operation at the Annual Conference. Some new ideas worked well, some did not. Learning from that experience and taking into account all comments from the membership, the Conference Committee is pleased to announce these plans for the 1993 flea market.

First, and most important, the flea market will run only in conjunction with the Conference dates from Wednesday morning to Saturday afternoon. Absolutely no flea-market sales will take place at the hotel parking lot prior to Wednesday. The flea-market area will be sealed off and not avail-

able to anyone until the gate opens at 6:00 A.M. Wednesday. The prohibition on nonconference flea marketing is a matter of hotel rules, and of our local Special Use Permit required by the Town of Henrietta.

Second, there will be only one class of site: no "premium" or "one day" sites. All sites are treated the same and are issued randomly on a first-come/first-sold basis. Each member is allowed to preregister for two sites maximum, at a cost of \$20 for the first and \$35 for the second. Two sites to one member will always be adjoining. Preregistration is highly recommended and greatly encouraged to assure a preassigned, numbered spot on the paved area. Everyone wanting to participate in the 1993 AWA flea market will get a spot. However, it is almost certain that the paved-area, prenumbered spots will sell out during the preregistration period. When that happens, we will start assigning spots on the grass on the Thruway side of the parking lot.

Third, the flea-market headquarters will be located at the entrance to the flea market. Look for the big banner. This will be a full-service area where one can pay membership dues and registration fees, and register as a flea-market seller. Everyone needs to register for the Conference — this is not a flea-market-only event. The flea market is only a portion of overall Conference activities. A non-member wishing to sell items in the flea market will have to pay \$12 dues, \$13 Conference preregistration, and \$20 for one site, for a total of \$45.

For information on the Antique Wireless Association and the 1993 Conference, write to: AWA, Box E, Breesport, NY 14816.

A.R.C. is welcome, or encouraged, or requested! to help get the word out on this matter. Obviously, if the attendees perceive that there will be no advance sales, there won't be.

(Ludwell Sibley, 44 E. Main St., Flemington, NJ 08822)

The British Thomson-Houston Crystal Sets (1922-1928)

BY IAN L. SANDERS

Ian Sanders continues his series of articles on British sets, this month describing three British Thomson-Houston Crystal Sets. We invite others to contribute articles on foreign sets in their collections. (Editor)

The British Thomson-Houston Company (BTH) of Rugby, England — an early entrant in the field of wireless — was one of the original members of the British Broadcasting Company when it was established in 1922. Between 1922 and 1928, BTH produced three crystal receivers — the Model A in 1922, also known as the Type C, Form A or Radiola; the Bijou Type C, Form B, in 1923; and the Bijou Type C, Form BB, in 1926.

The first two sets are popular with collectors because of their very high quality. In addition, the fact that they were produced in relatively large volumes means that they can still be found! The Bijou Form BB, although produced later, is much rarer; in fact, I am not aware of any references to this set in any of the standard works covering receivers of this period.

THE BTH MODEL A

The BTH Model A crystal set, shown in Figure 1, was introduced in late 1922 and bears the Post Office Registration Number 106. The schematic for the Model A is shown in Figure 2.

The receiver features a particularly well-finished walnut cabinet with a lid and measures 11¼ x 8¼ x 5¼ inches. A small metal carrying handle is mounted to the lid, which also has the BTH logo imprinted in gold letters on the top and the BBC stamp on the lid front. An instruction card is mounted inside the lid. The sloping panel is constructed from what was advertised as the "well-known BTH brown moulded compound," which was touted to provide better insulation than conventional ebonite.

The set is equipped with two, celluloid-enclosed



Figure 1. The BTH Model A crystal set with twin detectors on the right.

galena detectors, which could be selected by a changeover switch on the panel. Tuning is by variometer and a 3-position condenser switch

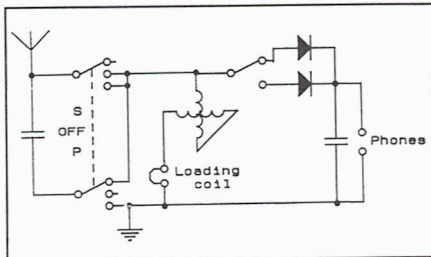


Figure 2. Circuit diagram for the BTH Model A crystal set.

marked "S," "OFF" and "P," which allows a capacitor to be switched in series with the variometer, out of the circuit, or in parallel with the variometer, respectively. The standard wavelength range of 300-600 meters is covered with the switch in either the "S" position (300-400 meters) or the "OFF" position (440-600 meters).

Additional terminals, normally shorted, are provided at the top left side of the panel for an external long wavelength coil to extend the tuning range. Originally this range was intended for coverage of the long-wave Paris station (2,600 meters), but later was aimed at the long-wave BBC Station 5XX which commenced broadcasting on 1,600 meters in 1924. The advertised range of the set was 30 miles.

The recommended list of "accessories" for the receiver was quite extensive, and included the following:

- 1 set BTH headphones, 4000 ohms.
- 100' 7/22 aerial wire.
- 2 egg insulators.
- 1 9" lead-in insulator.
- Earth wire and clip.
- Single pole, double throw earthing switch.
- Rope halyard and pulley block.

The price of the Model A in 1923 was £5.75 with all accessories, or £4.75 with headphones only.

THE BTH BIJOU TYPE C, FORM B

After the Model A, the first version of the BTH Bijou was introduced in 1923 as a smaller, lower-priced receiver of basic design for medium-wave reception only. It carries the Post Office Registration Number 861 and the BBC approved stamp on the front of the cabinet. The BTH Bijou Type C, Form B is shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. The BTH Bijou Type C, Form B crystal set with crystal detector in the rear.

The cabinet measures 5¼ x 4¾ x 7 inches and is of the same high quality walnut as the Model A; the control panel is of the same brown ebonite-like compound. The set is tuned by variometer, and to provide coverage of the 300-600 meter range, a condenser can be connected in series with the aerial by means of a switch on the left of the panel. An approximate wavelength calibration chart was provided on the operating instruction card in the lid. A "special device" was offered in 1925 to adapt the receiver for long-wave reception. The single detector is of the open cat's whisker/galena type. A circuit diagram of the BTH Bijou Type C, Form B is shown in Figure 4.

The advertised range of the set was twenty miles. The Bijou was moderately priced at £1.75 in 1923, excluding headphones and accessories.

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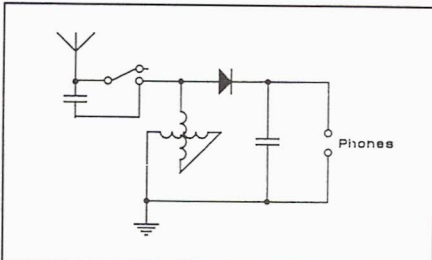


Figure 4. Circuit diagram for the BTH Bijou Type C, Form B crystal set.

THE BTH BIJOU TYPE C, FORM BB

A second, cheaper version of the Bijou, shown in Figure 5, was introduced in November 1926. This model was designated the BTH Bijou Type C, Form BB. Its circuit diagram is shown in Figure 6. The set was constructed in a walnut cabinet of approximately the same size as the earlier Bijou (5 1/2 x 4 3/4 x 6 3/4 inches), but it is of an inferior quality by comparison. An unusual feature is the absence of a bottom to the cabinet which was left open.

Tuning is by a slide-coil arrangement comprising two coils: the first for medium-wave coverage (300-600 meters), and the second for long-wave (1200-2000 meters). A unique feature of this set is the fact that the tuning scale is calibrated directly in wavelength. This practice did not become common in British tube sets until about 1928-1929, and I am not aware of its use in any other crystal set of the period.

Another unusual feature is the automatic shorting of the aerial to ground when the set is not in use by positioning the tuning knob midway between the two waveband scales. This was intended as a safety consideration in the event of lightning.

The detector is of the cat's whisker/galena type, and it is enclosed with the same celluloid material used in the Model A.

The price of the Bijou Form BB at fifteen shillings (£0.75) was much lower than that of its predecessor. The Bijou BB continued to be marketed until late 1928 by Ediswan (Ediswan had earlier been bought by British Thompson-Houston), but it was dropped



Figure 5. The BTH Bijou Type C, Form BB crystal set.

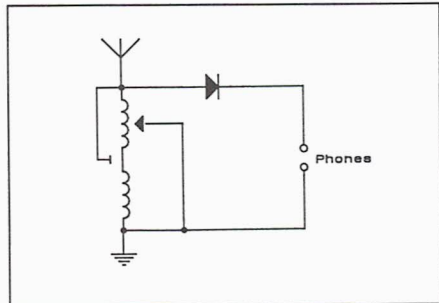


Figure 6. Circuit diagram for the BTH Bijou Type C, Form BB crystal set.

soon afterwards following a subsequent merger with Metropolitan-Vickers.

References:

- Bussey, Gordon. *Vintage Crystal Sets*. London: IPC Business Press Ltd., 1976.
- Geddes, Keith & Bussey, Gordon. *The Setmakers*. London: BREMA, 1991.
- Hill, Jonathan. *Radio, Radio*. Devon, England: Sunrise Press, 1986.

(Ian L. Sanders, 16725 Wild Oak Way, Morgan Hill, CA 95037)

Ian Sanders has been collecting and restoring early 1920s crystal and battery receivers since 1974. He specializes in British sets of this period and would be happy to reply to any reader inquiries on this subject.



RADIO MISCELLANEA

"Antique Radio Classified" invites its readers to contribute letters and information for inclusion in "Radio Miscellanea" and elsewhere in the magazine. The topic should be of general interest and sent to A.R.C., P.O. Box 2, Carlisle, MA 01741. All material submitted should be verified for accuracy and may be edited for publication, which is not guaranteed. See the masthead for more details.

Great Article and First Ad Success

Dear Editor:

James Di Ruzza's article on reforming capacitors in the October 1992 A.R.C. was great. I hope I can save a few this way.

I love A.R.C. My first ad in the January 1993 issue got me the information I needed to get my tube testers working! Thanks for the great publication.

Ralph Day, Auburn, WA

Loop Antennas and Chairides

Dear Editor:

In Dwane Stevens' article concerning loop antennas [A.R.C. Feb. '93], he correctly points out that some early radios used a loop to substitute for the antenna coil. The "early" radios he refers to are early superhets. The practice of using the loop as both an RF collector and a tuning coil, employed by so many AC/DC table radios, actually started in the 1920s. The construction of a loop for an early superhet (Victoreen, Pressley-Apex, etc.) is somewhat critical, as otherwise, the radio will not tune properly.

[Regarding the Ramirez article "Philco Armchair Radios," Feb. '93] — Early chairides? How about the AK 74. Earlier than the Philco. Top meant to be used as an end table. Radio finished on all four sides. No exposed components, no cheap pegboard back. Definitely not a radio meant to be placed only against a wall.

Dick Mackiewicz, Coventry, CT

Boy Scout Radio Merit Badge

Dear Editor:

[Re: "Early Radio and Scouting" in A.R.C. February 1993] I received my Boy Scout Radio Merit Badge in 1931 or 1932; I don't have a record. I did receive my Eagle Scout Badge in December 1933.

R.J. Eastwick, Haddonfield, NJ

Suggestions for Advertisers

Dear Editor:

I must say that the advertisements have been most productive for me. Please inform people to include their names and addresses in all correspondence.

Joe Papovich, Pitman, NJ

Foreign Response Good

Dear Editor:

I wanted to let you know that I have had foreign responses to A.R.C. ads — two from Taiwan, one from Hong Kong, and two from Japan.

Elmer Thom, Saint Marys, OH

Ailing Potentiometer Cure?

Dear Editor:

Every time I work on a classic radio, I find an ailing potentiometer. And it is usually either: a) ganged to another of different resistance; b) tapped; c) oddly tapered; d) fitted with a switch which throws at the *clockwise* end of the range; e) impossible to dismantle; or f) some devilish combination of the above. The more complicated the pot, the more likely it is to have problems. The simple ones, for which you can buy new replacements, never seem to fall ill.

I petition readers to go public with any durable fixes they might have devised for these things, or to reveal sources of rebuilds. I have "cured" quite a few, only to have them return to intensive care sicker than ever. There's one in front of me now, a misbegotten device with a flexible contact band inside. I can clean it, lube it, make it comfortable, but how long will it be before I have to treat it again?

Robert Gates, Mendham, NJ

Remember Quietrole?

Dear Editor:

I want to pose a question to you and your readers. Whatever happened to Quietrole? I used it for years to quiet noisy controls and liked the smell of it. Now it seems to have gone the way of Burma Shave. If some company could bring it back, I would buy it.

Harold Wright, Chancellor, AL

Plating Chemicals & Lubricants

Dear Editor:

...Another source for plating chemicals is Rapid Electroplating Process, Inc., 1414 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL 60605. They are reasonable, and the products are easy to use. On the letter from D.R. Kelly about lubricating variable condensers, the best lubricant I have found for use on electrical moving parts is Channel Master Color Contact Shield silicone-based lubricant spray. It does a good job of quieting noisy volume controls too.

Roy J. Krusberg, Athens, GA

Mixed Ads — A Treasure Hunt

Dear Editor:

Thanks for a great publication! I look forward to getting my copy every month. And I love the mixture of "Wanted" and "For Sale" — it makes it more of a treasure hunt. I've been a subscriber for only 7 months, but I've never had any problems, and I've come up with some great buys.

Greg Nelson, Fayetteville, NC

WITH THE COLLECTORS

The Atwater Kent Model 52 Metal Console

BY DWANE STEVENS

Arthur Atwater Kent was a brilliant inventor, businessman and visionary who eventually held 93 U.S. patents and owned the world's largest radio manufacturing company. It is widely acknowledged that "Atwater Kent radios, more than most other brands, show a logical evolution from one model to another and from one year to the next."

One interesting and unique step in this evolutionary process was the AK Model 52 metal console radio shown in Figure 1. This was the day of the 1-dial, AC model when Kent was trying various styles of metal radios. Although Kent also offered his radios in some of the most beautiful wooden cabinets ever made, one reason for using metal was cost. He knew he could stamp out cabinets of sheet metal more easily and cheaply than he could produce wooden cabinets.

The first advertised date for the Model 52 was August 1928. The selling price was \$117.

The Model 52's 7-tube chassis and speaker are housed together in a brown, crinkled finish, metal console with a gold inset top cover, which provided a dressy trimming. The top cover can be lifted off to provide access to the chassis for tube replacement. Figure 2 shows the chassis with the top removed.

On the back of the console, shown in Figure 3, is the gold Atwater Kent sailing ship emblem, similar to the one on the top of the Model 35, and below it, another speaker grille. The front of the console sports the simplicity of modern 1-dial tuning, as well as a gold metal, caned-front speaker grille.

The chassis for the Model 52 uses a tuned radio frequency (TRF) circuit with all tuned sections ganged together for single-dial frequency control. The tube complement consists of three Type 26s with directly heated cathodes used as RF amplifiers, one Type 27 with an indirectly heated cathode used as a detector, and an additional Type 26 as a first AF amplifier. In addition, there is a Type 71A output tube which has a maximum output rating of 700 milliwatts. Rectification of all DC voltages is accomplished by a Type 80, which completes the 7-tube lineup.

An interesting advertisement appearing in the December 8, 1928, *Saturday Evening Post* reads: "The slimmest, tidiest,



Figure 1. The AK Model 52 metal console radio.

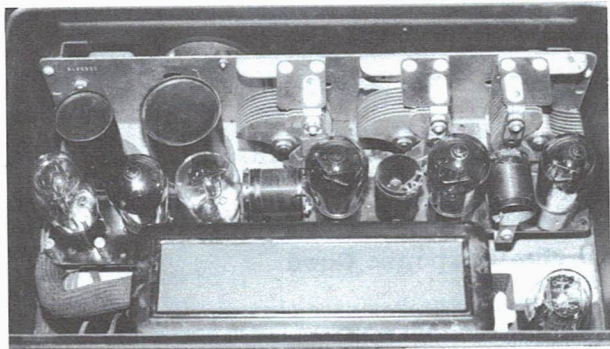


Figure 2. The AK Model 52 chassis with the top removed.

daintiest, friendliest little radio companion you could ever wish for — Model 52, the new all-together set for 1929." The console was certainly compact, measuring only 30 inches tall, 11 inches deep and 18 inches wide, and as the ad said, "nowhere near as high as your waist!"

When I first saw the AK 52, I thought it was the ugliest radio I had ever seen — I mean, after all, a metal console? But, because it was an AK, I couldn't resist adding it to my collection. Since learning its colorful story, I've come to appreciate its contribution to radio history as well as its uncanny beauty.

References:

A.W.A. *Review*, Vol. 3. Holcomb, NY: Antique Wireless Association, Inc., 1988.

Douglas, Alan. *Radio Manufacturers of the 1920s*, Vol. 1. Vestal, N.Y.: The Vestal Press, 1988.

McMahon, Morgan. *A Flick of The Switch*. Palos Verdes Peninsula, California: Vintage Radio, 1981.

(Dwane Stevens, KC5MT, Rt. 3, Box 25A, Ardmore, OK 73401)

Dwane Stevens, an amateur radio operator for 15 years, holds an Advance Class license, while his wife and daughter hold Technician Class li-

censes. New to vintage radio collecting, he enjoys repairing and restoring pre-1940 radios and collecting tubes, repair manuals and magazines.



Figure 3. Sailing ship emblem on the back of the AK Model 52.

Introducing Gridley's Radio Shop

From time to time, we will feature one of Ron Boucher's radio cartoons, which take us back to the good old days when many radio magazines featured cartoons.

George Gridley, owner of Gridley's Radio Shop, and his cohorts may be familiar to some of you from their appearance in the *ARCA Gazette*. We will be following the adventures through the years of George and his rather spaced-out assistant Pete, along with Elmo and other radio kids who hang around the shop.

Of course, the styles of the radios will change with the years, and the characters will age, but perhaps not grow in wisdom. Pete may show up in World War II, while George may reach old age and pop into Ron's other cartoons featuring Oscar, a modern collector.

Ron creates for his characters what he calls "out-of-cartoon experiences." He explains that it's as if the characters are only actors in the cartoon, and we sometimes see them behind the scenes. An example is seen in "Mr. Gridley's Antique Radio Cartoon Calendar for 1937" — that is, 1993, when Pete drops his screwdriver and it falls out of the cartoon.

This calendar, published by the Antique Radio Club of America (ARCA), is still available for \$9.95 from Ron Boucher at the address below.

We are sure that you will enjoy the radio mishaps of Gridley and friends, and we look forward to more of their antics. (Editor)

(Ron Boucher, P.O. Box 541, Goffstown, NH 03045)

After several years in the radio mail order business, Ron Boucher is now doing radio art work and cartoons for various publications. He is also updating his radio-related software for general distribution. Cathedrals and allwave sets of the mid-1930s, as well as some novelties, are his radio interests.

Gridley's Radio Shop — March 1937 By Ron Boucher

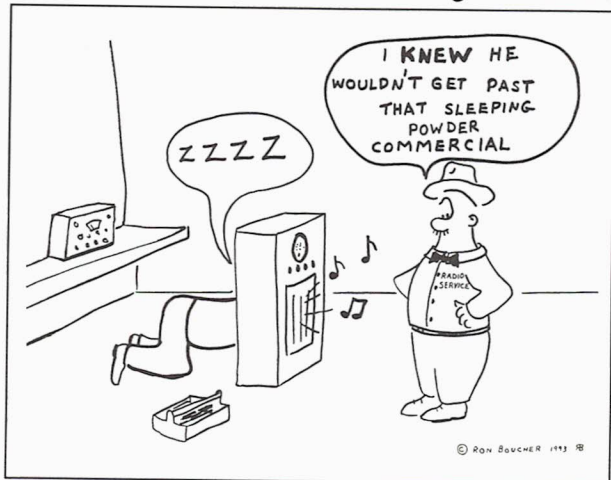
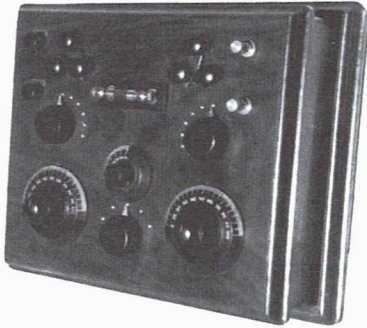




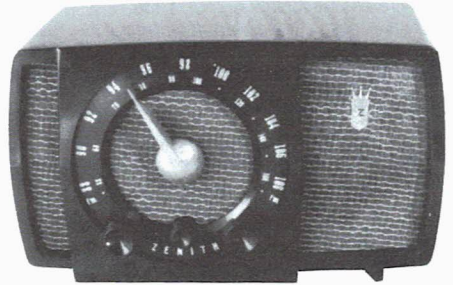
PHOTO REVIEW



This column presents in pictorial form many of the more unusual radios, speakers, tubes, advertising, and other old radio-related items from our readers' collections. The photos are meant to help increase awareness of what's available in the radio collecting hobby. Send in any size photos from your collection. Photos must be sharp in detail, contain a single item, and preferably have a light-colored background. A short, descriptive paragraph **MUST** be included with each photo. Please note that receipt of photos is not acknowledged, publishing is not guaranteed, and photos are not returned.



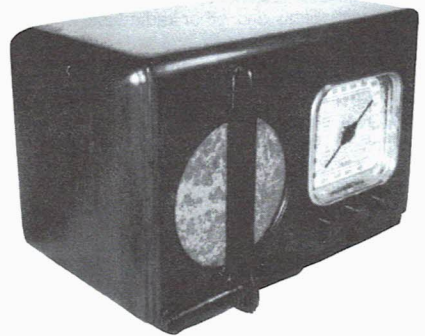
W.W. GRANT – This set uses a fixed crystal, and tuning is both selective and rather complicated. It covers the broadcast band and ranges to about 180 meters. W.W. Grant, a pioneer in early radio, built a number of broadcast stations. (Mark Stein – Baltimore, MD)



ZENITH MODEL H723Z1 – A 1952 AM/FM table radio with a Bakelite case, this very popular model was made with the same basic chassis for several years. (Daniel Schoo – De Kalb, IL)

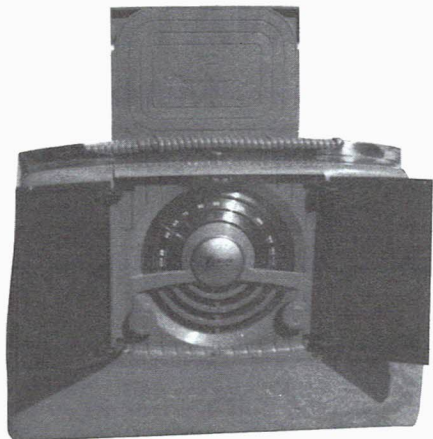


SPARTON – This 1936 ebonized wood and chrome set typifies the high Deco styling by Sparton during the period. As indicated in *Blast From the Past*, p. 167, the trade magazines thought this was a Bakelite radio when first introduced. (Mark Stein – Baltimore, MD)

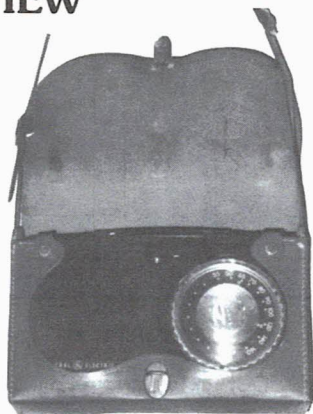


MAKE UNKNOWN – This unusual set purchased last year at Elgin, Illinois, may be an off-brand 1939 World's Fair commemorative. Note the exaggerated fin (trylon) protruding from the middle of the round speaker opening (perisphere). There are no identifying numbers or information. Any help in identification would be appreciated. (Mark Stein – Baltimore, MD)

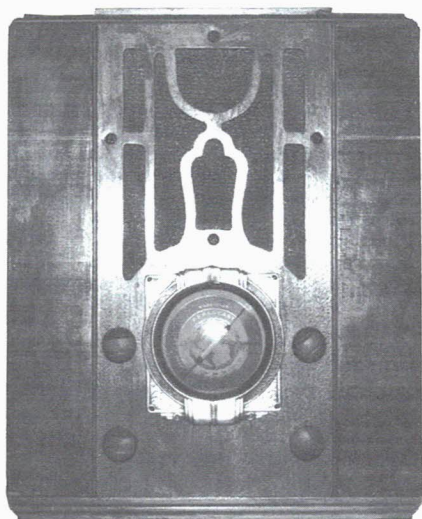
PHOTO REVIEW



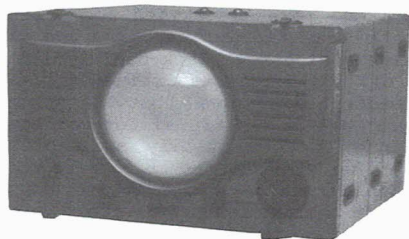
ZENITH 6-G-801 – Push the gold-colored button on the top of this 1948 portable, and the loop antenna pops up, the doors spring open, and the set turns on. To turn it off, just close the doors. (Doug Burskey - Mansfield, OH)



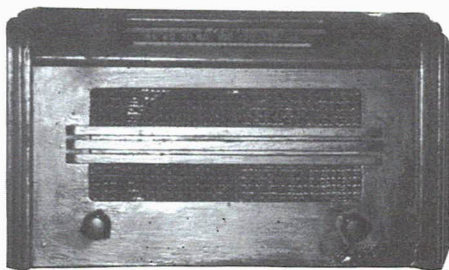
GENERAL ELECTRIC MODEL 635 – Built about 1954 and contained in a leather shoulder bag, this set has 4 tubes with Hi-Lo tone control and CD (Civil Defense) dial markings. (Ron Brokloff – State College, PA)



SILVERTONE MODEL 1954 – This tombstone, probably 1936 or 1937 vintage, uses a Type 6C5 as the AVC tube and has a unique variable inductance on the second IF transformer used as volume control. The primary remains stationary and the secondary is rotated closer or further away by the volume control knob. A very good performing set with BC and two shortwave bands. (Colin Stump - Lancaster, OH)



AUTOMATIC RADIO MODEL TV-P490 – This 1948 portable TV has a built-in magnifier, as well as a front cover with handle (not shown) for easy (?) moving. It uses a 7SP4 picture tube. The cabinet is tan leatherette. (Tony & Lynn DeMara – Mt. Clemens, MI)



REGAL MODEL L-76 – This is Regal's only wood table model. Made in 1946 and fully restored, it has an upper slanted slide rule dial with horizontal bar in the center. (Mauro Viccaro – New Rochelle, NY)



THE ELIMINATOR

Volume VI

Number 1

GLORIA ALTERNATUS CURRENTUS

Page 1

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE A.C. RADIO RENEGADES

EDITORIAL

As April 1993 draws near, we are proud to present our seventh issue of *The Eliminator*, the official newsletter of the A.C. Radio Renegades (A.C.R.R.). For your convenience, we are also including the April issue of *Antique Radio Classified*.

For you new readers, the A.C.R.R. is devoted to lovers of A.C. radio, collectors who aren't very excited about loose couplers or crystal sets but who love a darkened room illuminated by the tuning eye and dial lights of a big black-dial Zenith.

Calls and letters arrive daily from readers concerned that we've been overlooking the transistor collector. Since it does qualify as a battery set, we have devoted this issue to all the transistor radio collectors out there (you know who you are).

Remember folks, it's all in fun. We only hope to add a few laughs to our fascinating, but sometimes humorless, hobby. Thanks for all the letters and keep 'em coming. Remember, "Gloria Alternatus Currentus." Editor

For reasons unclear even to us, this publication has been brought to you by the A.C. Radio Renegades. Sorry, no membership information available at this time. Most of the items contained within are fictional, and any references or resemblances to actual persons or groups should be considered coincidental. All rights reserved, all wrongs reserved, too.

Send all cards, letters and cash gratuities to:

GLORIA ALTERNATUS CURRENTUS

A.C.R.R.
3426 Coldstream Ct.
Lexington, KY 40517

COMING EVENTS

Attention... The A.C.R.R. will again co-host the Mid-South Antique Radio Collectors Show and Swap Meet in Madisonville, Kentucky, on Saturday, April 10, 1993. Last year's meet included the now infamous radio toss and a Fada radio door prize from the cherished vault of Dr. Radio's collection. Not only a butterscotch radio has been donated for this year's radio toss, but new this year is a "Radio Shoot!" Come join us for a day of collecting fun! See the *Coming Radio Events* in this issue of A.R.C. for specifics.

LETTERS

Dear Editor,

I am submitting the enclosed material for the next issue of *The Eliminator*...the only thing I ask for is anonymity - some of my best friends are radio collectors.

Anonymous, Any City, U.S.A.

Dear Anonymous: Thanks for the material, but if some of your best friends are radio collectors, I'd hate to meet your worst friends....Editor

Dear A.C.R.R.,

Thanks for your excellent article about Mr. Deco in your last issue. My AK Model 5 breadboard looks very nice in chrome.

Jerrome Butts, Mashville, AL

Dear A.C.R.R.,

Hey, when are you guys gonna do something 'bout them dab burn transistor collectors? Them durn things are battery radios, ain't they? At the last meet some geek must have asked me 6 times if I had any Mork From Ork radios. Now I know why it's illegal in 17 states to hang around a schoolyard if you collect radios shaped like eggs.

Joe Bob Maxwell, Hoggshhead, AK

Dear Doctor Radio,

Dr. Radio answers those tough restoration problems sent in by our readers



Q: Dear Dr. Radio,
What are these Micronic Ruby things I see in the classified section of A.R.C.? What do radio collectors do with things like this?

Stumped in Washington

A: Dear Stumped,
A Micronic Ruby is one of those small, cheap transistor radios. Great little gadgets! I own about half a dozen of 'em myself. I use them babies when I go fishing for Northern Pike up in Canada. Tie a bright orange spinner with a #4 hook on one of those little radios, turn it on and cast away. Best thing to come along since the night-crawler. Tie One On!

Q: Dear Dr. Radio,
I'm all thumbs when it comes to woodwork, and all those smelly chemicals and finishes give me a rash. In this age of computers and microwave pizza, isn't there an easier way?

All Thumbs in Vermont

A: Dear Thumbs,
Thanks to Yugoslavian ingenuity and the fickle auto market in the U.S., we now have an alternative to the old method of cabinet restoration. The Yugo auto works was on the verge of introducing a mini-van, the "Yugo-Wego II," right before they went out of business. Arthur Deco, of Mr. Deco's Custom Radio Service, has purchased all of the wood grain material left from that project. This material comes in three colors: dark walnut, light walnut and bird's-eye maple (great for those fancy radios). Yes sirree, no more sanding, smelly refinishers and sticky lacquers. Just peel 'n stick! Easy to keep clean too, just wipe down with a damp cloth! For more details, call Mr. Deco.



A tough restoration problem got you down? Don't get mad, ask Dr. Radio for his expert advice: Dr. Radio c/o A.C.R.R., 3426 Coldstream Ct., Lexington, KY 40517



OVERNIGHT delivery for A.R.C.



Do you pride yourself in paying *TOP DOLLAR* for all your radios?

Do you have a better collection because you pay higher prices? Then don't settle for anything less than overnight delivery of your A.R.C. A discriminating collector like you deserves to receive his issue before the other collectors. You know who we're talking about, those collectors who only want to pay fair prices for a radio. There are even collectors out there who will try to haggle down the price of a radio! Yes, it's sad but true. We have evidence that many collectors actually try to pay less than what the seller is asking. With our new overnight service, you'll have your issue read several days before those *other* collectors even receive theirs. The following is a brief description of how the service works. As issues of A.R.C. leave the warehouse for delivery to the post office, they are routinely intercepted and searched by a U.S. Customs agent (you didn't think John Terrey could afford that fleet of stretch limos by selling ads at 17 cents a word did you?). At this point our contact in the Customs Office will pull the issues going to collectors who subscribe to our express service. These issues will then be sent via an overnight carrier for delivery the next business morning. A certified check in the amount of \$10,000.00 will give you a full year of express service. Send to: Dr. Radio, 3426 Coldstream Ct., Lexington, KY 40517. Ask about our Fax service for an additional \$5,000.00. Can a collector who pays *over* \$10,000 for a Catalin radio or *top dollar* for a Micronic Ruby afford anything less?

NEW FROM ZAPPO, THE ZAP BATTERY!

It looks just like a regular transistor radio battery, but it's a lot more! Buried inside each of these babies is a string of miniature lithium batteries. Forty high current batteries rated at 3 volts each are guaranteed to put out a whooping 120 volts! A real powerhouse of fun!

Just lay one of these babies on the ground at your next meet and watch the fun begin. In a matter of minutes a transistor collector will grab it up when no one is looking. Watch for the action to



begin when he slips it into his new Mork From Ork transistor radio. **Wow!** Diodes pop; capacitors smoke; transistors glow; and the putrid smoke of a burning circuit board will fill the air as molten plastic spews all over the ground. Don't get mad at the obnoxious transistor collectors — get even, with a **ZAP** battery!



"No other collector would even speak to me until my ZAP battery blew up Bill Jenkins' radio. Now Jim Kreuzer even lets me watch him drink beer at the meets. Thank you!" F. Heathcote, Indiana



"People were starting to leave our meets before the weekend even started. Now everybody stays around to see if anyone gets zapped with a ZAP battery. Thank you for saving our club!" Bill Lark, Michigan



"Subscriptions were down, radio clubs were closing all across the nation, and the future looked bad for our hobby until the ZAP battery was introduced. Now radio collectors don't have to be bored at the meets. Thanks for saving our hobby!" John Terrey, Antique Radio Publication Tycoon

**THE ZAP
BATTERY
from
ZAPPO**

DON'T MISS OUT ON ALL THE FUN!

Order your very own **ZAP** battery today.

Only \$14.95 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling.

To order call **ZAPPO** today. Quantities are limited!

CLASSIFIED ADS

WANTED: Help! Collector needs replacement lips for Blabbermouth transistor radio (junkier set OK). Wayne King, Shelbyville, KY

FOR SALE: "The Mother of all Radios" - early Radio Shack Godzilla novelty transistor. Minor stress cracks - Best offer. Cash or plutonium trades only. S. Hussan, Bunker #59, Baghdad, Iraq

WANTED: Top dollar paid for Majestic console radios Models 90, 90B, 50 and all other models that weigh in excess of 200 lbs. I desperately need these radios to provide ballast for my winter trailer home. Less Oscillator, Cyclone, TX

Got a letter, ad or an idea for the next issue of *The Eliminator*? Send it to A.C.R.R., 3426 Coldstream Ct., Lexington, KY 40517

FOR SALE: Genuine Catalin radios, large selection. Send SASE and \$8 in cash or stamps (*Elvis only*) for 75-page list. Emerson, Motorola, General Mills, Fada, Bendix, Kellogg, Addison, Goodyear, Sentinel and many more coming in everyday. The Catalin Connection, New York, NY

FOR SALE: Entire collection of antique radios. Over 5,000 pieces (literally), house included in deal. B. Fingers, San Andreas, CA

Transistor Radios

In the last six months I have:

- * Paid over \$15,000 for a Pink Blabbermouth
- * Paid over \$10,000 for an emerald Micronic Ruby with the XR-77 hi-fidelity option
- * Won the "Most Obnoxious Ad" award in all major antique radio publications
- * Inflated radio prices so all collectors can suffer

So who should you call when you have one to sell?

The Price Buster
Micky Wayward
1-800-IMA-JERK

FOR SALE: Television Conversion Kits. Tired of wasting time watching commercials, violence, sex and worse (the local news)? Convert your TV to a radio. Only \$499.95, includes free screen-size picture of antique radio or fireplace screen. D. Lee Signoff, Radio City, NY

FOR SALE: Two blue Fada 1000 bullets (OOPS!), make that one Fada 1000 and one Fada 1000 chassis. Butter Fingers, San Andreas, CA

WANTED: Early transistor radios in console cabinets, and always looking for more Mork From Ork transistors. I. M. Nutz, Turbine, CA

FOR SALE: Sparton Bluebird, small bullet hole in mirror. Taken from my hunting cabin. I. Hunt, Swamp Valley, MI

FOR SALE: (500) mint condition Deco radios, take your pick - \$500 each or all for \$225,000. Joe Bone, Alamo, WV

WANTED: I need to get rid of 500 old radios. You haul 'em, you keep 'em. Mrs. Joe Bone, Alamo, WV

FOR SALE: Antique toy bugging devices made by Tell Ma Co. Bugs Inc., c/o Watergate Hotel, MD

WANTED Cabinet for Midwest Skyscraper. Didn't survive 7.5 on the Richter scale. B. Fingers, San Andreas, CA

FOR SALE: Hey kids! Get your 50 KW power amplifier conversion kit for your favorite console radio. Be the first to break every window on your block! Complete kit, instructions and rub-off tattoo of Jimi Hendrix - only \$500. Antique Hippies, Woodstock, NY

WANTED: Will pay big dollars for small table radios (1936-1946) chassis only. The Catalin Connection, New York, NY

MESSAGE: Old Tech Catalogue publishing date announced: June 3, 2003. Old Tech, Carlisle, MA

NOTICE: The opinions expressed within these four pages of "The Eliminator" are not the opinions of Antique Radio Classified, but of the A.C.R.R., 3426 Coldstream Ct., Lexington, KY 40517, and they are intended to add a bit of humor to the art to radio collecting.

WITH THE COLLECTORS

The Muter Grid Leak Pan

CONTRIBUTED BY MIKE KREUSER AND ED TAYLOR

If you've ever been to Ed Taylor's Radio Museum, you've received as a souvenir a reprint of the Muter Grid Leak Pan ad, shown on the opposite page. Ed tells us that this amusing ad was apparently an advertising gimmick of the Muter Company, which made grid leak resistors. The ad accompanied the drip pan given away as a joke with the purchase of a grid leak at radio stores.

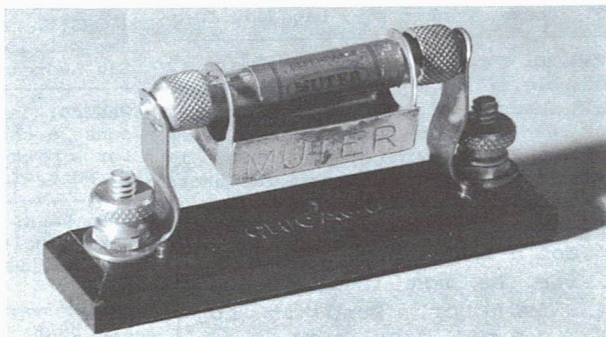
Having found one of the original ads, Ed had it reproduced in its exact size and yellow-gold color. At his museum you can see this ad framed. Mounted on the frame is a Muter grid leak and a little drip pan. This tiny artifact appears to be stamped from nickel-plated brass and probably was also a giveaway in the 1920s.

Mike Kreuser, contributor of the wonderful pictures on this page, has suggested that the grid leak pan was probably marketed for the poor chap who, after spilling battery acid on the rug, gave "grid leak" as an excuse to his wife.

Many thanks to Mike and Ed for sharing this bit of memorabilia.

(Mike Kreuser, 1004 Dobson St., Evanston, IL 60202)

(Ed Taylor, 245 N. Oakland Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46201)



Has your grid leaked lately?



Save your rug from the grid leak bug.

A Radio Wife/Collector — Not A Radio Widow

Dear Editor,

I am writing this letter in response to Tammy Smith's letter [A.R.C. Jan. '91] about being a radio widow. I too am married to a radio collector, but unlike Tammy, I am a radio collector also, so I share my husband's addiction, and yes, some days it is the only topic of conversation. For me, when I'm not at work, radios are my life, and I wouldn't trade it for the world.

Being a radio collector has opened the door to many experiences and new friends that I might otherwise have missed out on. Radio collecting has also helped me personally to get a better

handle on our country's history, and what an easy, fun way to learn!

I also find the radios to be not just a collection of things, but some of the basic functional furnishings of our home. Without these radios, our house would be a bit bare and boring too, I think.

I have to believe that maybe Tammy likes radio collecting more than she realizes since she took the time to write to A.R.C. That also suggests that she reads A.R.C. too, which leads me to believe she's more "hooked" on radios than she knows! Hang in there, Tammy!

Irene Ripley, St. Paul, MN

Muter Grid Leak Drip Pan

**Uniform
Leakage**
[Maybe]



**Automatic
Control**
[Perhaps]

Patented and Patents Pending—Who Cares?

THE tremendous strides of radio during the past year are only exceeded by this remarkable invention. No single radio item has ever been able to accomplish so much, in doing so little. The ability of the Grid Leak Drip Pan to perform as well as anticipate irregularities in remote parts of the set with which it is not connected is almost beyond human comprehension. In fact, the inventor himself could never advance any real necessity for its use.

The exact value of the grid leak has always been a question amongst authorities and yet this simple device easily settles the question for all time. Consider a two megohm grid leak installed with a Muter Grid Leak Drip Pan, in a position requiring a three megohm grid leak. One megohm immediately drips into the pan which with the value of the grid leak itself gives the proper value of three megohms, as the Pan easily understands the conditions and being very industrious maintains this position in spite of the laws of electricity, which it takes particular delight in upsetting with-

out, of course, spilling its vague contents and vice versa.

While testimonials have been rather slow in coming in, we feel confident that a trial on your part will readily substantiate the great merit of this device. While your grid leak might, again it might not. Who can tell? With summer here, this is at least a conservative sound and logical investment by which you alone can prove the numerous shortcomings of the device. As production will be limited to ten percent of the "B" Power Units made this year, we suggest your early action, although there will probably be a great surplus.

We hope that this remarkable invention will give you as much fun as we derive from offering it.

LESLIE F. MUTER COMPANY

76th & Greenwood Avenue Chicago, Illinois, U. S. A.

Manufacturers of

Dependable



Products

The Complete Quality Popular Priced Line

This is a copy of the original Muter Company advertising gimmick found by Ed Taylor.

RESTORATION TOPICS

Soldering Litz and Tinsel Wire

COMPILED BY RAY BINTLIFF FROM RESPONSES OF:
Charles Ahr, Alan W. Dodge, Dick Mackiewicz and Dennis J. Winkelsas

The following article is a compilation of responses to William Ross' letter, which appeared in the November 1992 issue of A.R.C. Ross asked how to solder litz wire such as is found on older headphones, speakers, etc. (Editor)

The types of wire most commonly found in old radios have solid or stranded conductors. These conductors may be bare or covered with insulation. Insulating materials include enamel, fabrics (such as cotton, acetate and silk), and rubber. Some types of wire use these insulating materials in combination. For these wires, stripping the insulation and soldering are fairly simple operations. However, litz and tinsel wire are much more difficult to prepare and solder. Litz and tinsel are special purpose wires that have unique properties. Litz wire exhibits low losses at radio frequencies. Tinsel wire is very flexible and resists breakage.

WHAT IS LITZ WIRE?

Litz wire (an abbreviation of the German word "litzendraht") is composed of a number of fine wires or strands, each separately insulated and woven together so that each strand of wire successively takes up all possible positions in the cross section of the wire. Number 44 AWG is a typical individual wire size. This very small wire size can make working with litz wire very difficult. Litz wire usually consists of 3, 5, 7 or 9 individual insulated wires.

Figure 1 provides an example of litz wire composed of three enamel-covered conductors. These individual wires are spiral-wrapped and covered with cotton insulation.

At radio frequencies, electrical currents tend to flow most readily on the outer diameter of a conductor. This characteristic is known as the "skin effect," and it results in a higher electrical

The advice provided by the letter writers inspired Ray Bintliff to try soldering a rather decrepit headphone tinsel cord to a phone tip. The results were successful, and a satisfactory solder joint was obtained even though the tinsel conductors were corroded. During the tinning process, he found it necessary to apply solder to the wrapped tinsel wire until much of the cotton core was burned away.

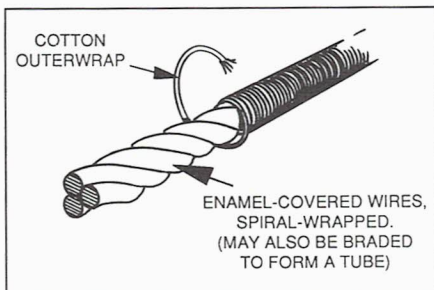


Figure 1. Greatly enlarged view of a length of Litz wire.

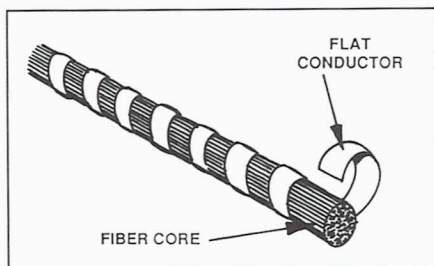


Figure 2. Greatly enlarged view of one of the many individual strands that make up tinsel wire.

resistance which can cause undesirable losses in a wire or a coil. Litz wire overcomes these losses by using a number of conductors which are insulated from each other, producing a larger effective wire size. Litz wire is most useful in the 300 kHz to 3 MHz frequency range and is usually employed in IF and RF coils.

SOLDERING LITZ WIRE

Because of small wire size, preparing and soldering litz wire can be challenging. The insulation can be removed by separating it from the conductors and cutting it off. But a simpler method was used by the old timers. They dipped the end of the Litz wire to be soldered into alcohol, and then set it aflame. After the cotton insulation was burned away and the flame extinguished, the end

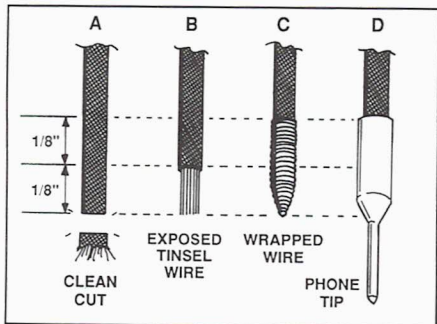


Figure 3. Preparation of tinsel wire for soldering.

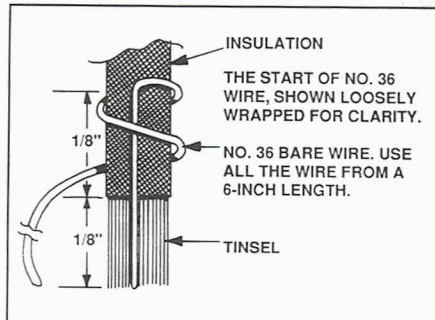


Figure 4. Enlarged view showing bare wire wrapped around the tinsel wire.

of the wire was again dipped in alcohol, wiped clean and then tinned. After the insulation is removed, the conductors should be wrapped together and soldered. The same technique may also work on tinsel wire.

WHAT IS TINSEL WIRE?

As its name implies, an individual strand of tinsel wire is composed of a flat ribbon-shaped conductor which is wrapped in spiral fashion around a fibre thread commonly made of cotton. The conductor, as shown in Figure 2, is usually made of copper or bronze. The finished wire consists of a number of strands which are twisted together, just like stranded hookup wire, and covered with insulation. Again, cotton is the typical outside insulating material.

The use of fourteen strands is common in tinsel wire. Unlike litz wire, the individual strands of tinsel wire are not insulated from each other. The thread, or core material, in combination with the spiral-wrapped conductor produces a very flexible wire. Tinsel wire is used widely in headphone and speaker cords because of its flexibility and ability to withstand bending, kinking and twisting.

FITTING PHONE TIPS AND TERMINAL LUGS TO TINSEL WIRE

As with litz wire, working with tinsel wire can also be challenging. The combination of a flexible fiber core and the wire configuration can make repairs very difficult. Soldering is a particularly difficult operation. However, the procedures described below will simplify the soldering process and produce dependable connections to tinsel wire.

As shown in Figure 3A, the initial step is to cut a small length from the end of the tinsel wire so that you have a clean square cut at the wire's end. Then pull back the outer insulation to expose about 1/8 inch of tinsel wire as shown in Figure 3B. Then wrap a 6-inch length of small-

CAUTION: Excess solder may be squeezed out when the wire is inserted in the phone tip, and precautions should be taken to avoid burns from hot solder splashes.

diameter copper wire (tinned wire is preferred) around the tinsel wire as depicted in the enlarged view of Figure 4.

The writers recommended wire sizes that ranged from numbers 28 to 36. The exact wire size is not critical, and any wire size that falls within the recommended range may be used. Whatever wire size is used, it should be close-wound, as depicted in Figure 3C.

Start by winding the small-diameter wire around the outer insulation and then down to the end of the tinsel. If a suitable small-diameter wire is not available, a single strand may be removed from some stranded hookup wire or test lead wire. The finished wrapped wire, shown in Figure 3C, is then tinned using rosin core solder and a low-wattage soldering iron. Excessive heat should be avoided; otherwise, the relatively fragile tinsel wire may be damaged.

Next, clamp the phone tip securely in a vise. Since the metal jaws of a vise will conduct heat from the phone tip and make soldering more difficult, it is a good idea to insert wooden blocks between the jaws of the vise and the phone tip. Apply heat to the side of the phone tip and fill the hollow portion of the tip with solder. With a soldering iron placed on the side of the phone tip, insert the tinned wire into the phone tip, and allow sufficient time for a good solder joint to be formed. Next, the soldering iron should be removed and the joint allowed to cool. Most likely, rosin flux will accumulate on the phone tip when the tinsel wire is soldered to it. The flux can be removed easily with isopropyl alcohol after the phone tip cools. The finished phone tip appears as Figure 3D.

Connecting tinsel wire to a crimp lug is similar to the procedure for attaching a phone tip except that the wrapped and tinned tinsel wire is crimped to the lug rather than soldered to the phone tip.

Most of the writers offered the recommendation that you should first practice on some scraps of litz and tinsel wire before attempting soldering on a collectible radio or accessory. With a little practice, you should be able to make repairs with confidence.

(Ray Bintliff, 2 Powder Horn Ln., Acton, MA 01720)

RADIO RAMBLINGS...

Are We Having Fun Yet? The Current Status of the Radio Hobby

BY PAUL JOSEPH BOURBIN

Soon after *A.R.C.* ran its first "Radio Ramblings" ("Whither Radio Collecting" by Mike Adams) in the January 1989 issue, Paul Bourbin responded to Mike with a letter. Unfortunately, due to space limitations at the time, this letter was never published.

Still feeling that attitudes and ethical issues related to our hobby need to be addressed, Paul wrote this article for the *California Historical Radio Society (CHRS) Journal* in the fall of 1991. A revised version is presented here, and no doubt it will generate a number of responses. Be sure to watch future issues of *A.R.C.* for further discussion of this topic. (Editor)

A hobby as defined by Webster is "something a person likes to do or study in his spare time; favorite pastime or avocation." Also listed is the phrase "ride a hobby" meaning "to be excessively devoted to one's favorite pastime or subject."

Most of us who are interested in vintage radios are hobbyists. Few of us can claim it as a vocation. Most of us have jobs, families or other obligations that are of a higher priority in our lives than vintage radio. Therefore, vintage radio is a hobby — something that we enjoy doing. It should provide relaxation and a release from stresses and anxieties. In other words, it should be *fun*.

WHEN IT ISN'T FUN

I have observed that for many people the hobby seems to provide more stress and anxiety than it relieves. For example, frequent breaches of common etiquette among hobbyists create stress. There have been cases where a person has agreed to sell an object to another for a specified price. Another interested party, who also desires the object and finds out that it has already been sold, offers the seller more money (frequently backed with a lot of pressure) for the object. Often the seller relents.

The person who originally was supposed to purchase the item is now told, "I must have lost it" or "I decided that I did not want to sell it." Beyond the legal implications, there are moral ones. The seller should not have backed out of the original deal, and the second buyer should not have pressured the seller to sell to him. All three people have become stressed. Is this fun?

Another example is that of one collector who, upon seeing an object he desires in another's collection, incessantly offers to buy it. There is nothing wrong in inquiring as to whether an object is for sale. Applying continuous pressure on the

owner is wrong, for it puts stress on both parties. It certainly is not fun for the owner of the item.

A quite common breach of etiquette is that of surrounding a new seller at a meet before he even has a chance to display his wares (sometimes before he can get out of his car!). A most interesting example occurred at our first meet at a new location. One seller arrived a little later than most. He pulled his pickup truck into the parking lot and paused to see where to park. He was immediately surrounded by eager buyers who were grabbing at things and asking prices. He could not even back his truck into a parking space without hitting one of them!

When he finally was able to park, he never even had a chance to unload his truck. A lot of people were exhibiting stress there. I realize that collectors are interested in getting "the good stuff," but showing a little restraint would make things much easier.

Another facet of the hobby that is stressful (at least to some of us) is the custom of starting meets at the first sign of day, regardless of the official starting time. In some cases, a locked gate forces things to start at the right time. Often, however, the space is open, and people can come in at any time. Buyers get there early to make sure they do not miss anything, and sellers get there earlier in order to be there when the buyers have the greatest incentive and money.

The result is a vicious circle with the lack of light being the controlling factor. If everyone agreed to start at a reasonable hour, people would not be forced to get up so early. They could come from farther distances, and all of us would get more sleep. One can see that, by relatively simple changes in behavior, the hobby could become more fun (and honorable too!).

Sadly, the lust for money can ruin the fun part. At a meet, one collector said to me, "Don't tell me that you are not in it for the money because everyone is!" I do not think that is true for many collectors. It is not for me. I have also noticed that few are really making much money in the hobby.

If you wish to pay large sums for Catalin sets or AK breadboards or whatever, do so; however, it is wise to remember that hobbies and interests within a hobby tend to follow the traditional bell-shaped curve. That is, interest in the hobby starts out slowly, reaches a peak for a while, and slowly descends to the bottom where it starts to rise again. Right now we are on the rise; what will happen in the future is uncertain.

Prices have risen faster than inflation for most material. A look at the want ads in old radio

hobby magazines shows the increase. This rise need not go on forever. One only has to look at the vintage auto hobby to see what can (will?) happen. Car prices are flat or on the decline. I know of a Ferrari once selling for one million dollars which sold recently for \$70,000.

What are the best investments? No one can be sure, but a general rule seems to follow with all objects. Those that have quality and style are better investments than those that follow current fad and fashion. Of course, one can acquire material just for fun and not worry about its value later on.

WHAT CAN BE DONE

The vintage radio hobby is a relatively young one. Almost all radio-related history and equipment have occurred in this century. Perhaps we can benefit from a study of more mature hobbies. Pocket watches, guns and cameras have been collected for a longer time. All have nationally circulated classified ad magazines, most of which require, while others encourage, a specific price for each object offered for sale.

There currently has been a trend in the vintage radio hobby to ask for "best offer." Sellers must know what they want for something, and "best offers" just force buyers into bidding wars. If you are not sure of an object's value, find out what it is worth, and then offer it for sale.

Speaking of prices, the above hobbies have one generally accepted price guide which is accepted and respected by most collectors. Our price guides are fractionalized, varying in their price structures, published irregularly, and no one price guide has become respected enough to be "The Bible." Perhaps, we will eventually have such a guide. As radio prices continue to rise rapidly, the need for a guide will become greater.

Another problem that could be solved is our hobby's lack of a condition standard. As with all collecting hobbies, condition is of paramount importance. Since many of the transactions are done via mail, a condition standard would be most useful. I have discussed the forming of a condition standard with others and offered to help in its formation. This has been to no avail. Perhaps its time will come.

Participation in radio club activities needs improvement. A few dedicated souls often bear the brunt of the work setting up the meets, writing and mailing the newsletters, preparing the exhibits and doing the myriad tasks needed to run a viable association. Many members lust for the meets, yet do little to bring about their operation and success. They enjoy reading the newsletters, but contribute neither articles nor assistance in their composition, editing, printing and distribution. One need not be a professional in any of these areas to make a meaningful contribution. Many hands make light work.

The hobby is still in its formative years; it has much growing up to do. The average time a person spends with a hobby is seven years. Therefore, in order to stay viable, we must continue to add new people to the hobby. People often ask me what the hobby and its followers are like. I tell them how much I enjoy the hobby and the people, and they become interested.

Once they become involved, we must main-

tain a good image to keep them interested. Transactions must be performed in an honest manner with accurate descriptions and good advice. A friendly visit with a member can do a lot. A schematic, part or tube given, even though it has little value, can make someone feel good about you and the hobby.

WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

As collectors, we must remember that we have an obligation to preserve our material, not for our generation but for generations to come. They will not have the privilege of knowing the pioneers and being able to talk with them about when the equipment was new. They will discover fewer unfound radios, because most that survived will have been found and will already be in collectors' hands. They will be dependent upon what we have done to preserve both the material and the concepts of early radio. What kind of legacy will we pass on to them?

During the last few years, many of our vintage electronic artifacts have been exported across both oceans. It has been argued that we are now living in a world market and that those who are willing to pay the most for an object should be entitled to have it. This may be fine for petroleum and gold bullion but not for part of our history. The English are regretting the selling of container loads of antiques during the last nostalgia craze in the seventies. We may regret having to buy back our own artifacts, for far more than we sold them. One must balance short-term profit with long-term historical preservation.

I have often been asked why I so rarely buy a radio at a swap meet. The reason is simple. Whether you or I own the set is far less important than its being in safe hands. Buying a radio from another collector (save a junker for parts) does little to add to the number of vintage radios that will survive into the next century. Saving a set from becoming landfill by getting sets from garage sales, flea markets, and relatives and friends who are not interested in preserving the set is performing a task for the future of humanity.

If we look upon ourselves as historical preservationists instead of radio collectors, we will feel less pressure to acquire a specific set and more satisfaction in what we have done. Before you strip the original finish off a cabinet because it has a few scratches and is not "mint," before you alter the electronics of a set to "improve" it, before you chrome a radio that was never chromed to begin with, remember that future generations will be dependent upon what you have done.

If we take stock of what we can do to make the hobby better, and all of us do our bit to help this shared enthusiasm grow, the hobby will be what it was meant to be — more fun for everyone.

(Paul Joseph Bourbin, 25 Greenview Ct., San Francisco, CA 94131)

Fascinated since his youth with the beauty and sound of old radios and with bringing them back to life, Paul Bourbin has a general collection spanning wireless to transistor radios. He is immediate past president and chairman of the board of the California Historical Radio Society and writes for various old radio publications.



Refinishing Old Furniture

By George Wagoner

REVIEWED BY RICHARD FOSTER

Here is a new addition to the plentiful literature available on refinishing furniture. In this case, it is also one to add to your library — it is a good book. *Refinishing Old Furniture* by George Wagoner covers all that most people will ever need to know and then some. The language is easy to read and understand, while the step-by-step logical approach is intended to teach the reader. Wagoner has taught this craft, and it shows.

Among the good features of this book is a listing of the advantages and disadvantages of the various methods and products discussed. These are presented in such a way that the reader can decide before proceeding whether or not the particular process meets his needs. For example, there is the quick and easy lacquer finish, or the longer, higher quality job; there is even a section on the slow process of French polishing for those with time on their hands.

Another excellent feature of the book is the discussion of products. We learn much about the ingredients of finishes. Many labels seem to be protecting some arcane industrial secret, while the instructions assume an unwillingness on the part of the reader to do something more than open a can. Here we can really learn something about the products.



George Wagoner

Refinishing Old Furniture



The way this book is written assumes a desire on the part of the reader to learn, to think, and to do good work. Wagoner provides the tools and instructions with some sage advice on possible outcomes, and like any good teacher, he lets you get to work.

Of further interest is the chapter on antiques. It contains good advice on resisting the temptation of wholesale stripping of old finishes. The method of cleaning described — starting with the mildest solvent and water, and moving up carefully to stronger substances — is welcome in books of this kind. There is excellent advice too on staining, shading,

and spraying. In addition, there is good material on shop ventilation. It is interesting to find out exactly what methylene chloride-based strippers do to your body.

Refinishing Old Furniture deserves a place in the radio collector's library. In addition to its excellent content, it provides a good glossary, a bibliography for further reading and a comprehensive index. It is published in a 9 1/4" by 7 1/4" paperback format by TAB Books, Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17294-0850, and is available from A.R.C. and other book suppliers.

(Richard Foster, 12 Shawmut Ave., Cohituate, MA 01778)

Detailed step-by-step instructions and working illustrations show you how to:

- Strip, sand and bleach wood without ruining its appearance.
- Apply all kinds of finishes, including sealers, urethanes, varnishes, and stains.
- Add special touches such as antiquing, distressing, gilding and gold leaf, and old-fashioned milk paint.
- Repair furniture damaged by moisture or scratches.
- Replace loose or broken joints, legs, arms, and veneers.
- Fill dents, holes, and pores.
- Clean and care for museum-quality furniture.

(From Wagoner's "Refinishing Old Furniture")

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING POLICY

ONE FREE 20-WORD AD for subscribers in each issue; additional words are 17¢ each. See details below. Classified ads must be received (not just postmarked!) by **Noon Eastern Time** on the ad deadline. Late ads are held for the following issue. Please enclose correct payment with all ads. Stamps or cash are OK for small amounts. (Canadian and other foreign advertisers, please see "Payment" on page 2 for methods.) "Free words" cannot be accumulated from month to month; free words must be requested when ad is submitted.

Please write each ad on a separate sheet of paper, especially when included with other A.R.C. correspondence. Include SUB# with ad. Ads may be sent in advance; but, write each ad on a separate piece of paper and indicate the month (or successive two months) you want the ad to run.

Please write legibly and use both capital and small letters. Do not use dashes between words. Some numbers and letters can look alike, for example 1, I and l (the number one, the capital i and the small l.) Write the following characters clearly (especially in model numbers): 1, I and l; 0, O, Q and D; r and n; 6, b and G; V, U, u, v and Y; A and R; 5, S and s; 2, Z and z. We try to correct spelling errors, so when using an uncommon word or manufacturer which looks similar to a common word or manufacturer, note it so that we do not "correct" it. Editor's comments are in [brackets].

Advertising is accepted only for early items related to radio, communication, etc. All items must be described fairly; reproductions, reprints and not-original items must be so identified. Advertisers agree to respond promptly to inquiries and orders, to resolve problems promptly if the buyer is not satisfied, and to comply with a buyer refund request on unaltered returned items.

Publisher reserves the right to edit ads without notification to the advertiser and to reject ads for any reason. Publisher is not responsible for errors due to illegibly written ads or for any other reason. Since club activities receive free advertising on the *Coming Radio Events* page, the free 20 words may not be used for club activity ads. See inside front cover for additional information.

CLASSIFIED AD DETAILS

Deadline: NOON ET— 10th of the month!

Classified ads must have a standard heading such as **WANTED, FOR SALE, FOR TRADE, FOR SALE/TRADE, SERVICES, MESSAGE, HELP, AUCTION, MEET**, etc. This heading is the only bold or all-capitalized words allowed in the ad. Capitalize only manufacturer names, model names, etc. Wanted and For Sale ads are mixed together to encourage the reading of all ads, including the Wanted ads. This standard ad format makes scanning the ads easier.

Before writing your ad, please look over the ads in a recent issue of A.R.C., and try to write your ad in the same style. Full name (or company name) and address is **required** in all classified ads; we will add it if you forget.

To encourage varied content of the ads, the same classified ad may be run only once per issue and for only two consecutive months. (To run an ad longer, use a boxed classified or display ad.)

Classified Ad Rates per Month

Subscribers:

First 20 words: **FREE***

17¢ per word for extra words over 20 **plus**

10¢ per word for a shaded ad (count all words including free words).

* Subscribers may take 20 free words on only **one** ad each month.

Non-Subscribers:

33¢ per word **plus**

10¢ per word for shaded ad.

Please do not forget to send in the extra 17¢ per word when your classified ad runs over the free 20 words; your payment will be appreciated, and it will help to keep A.R.C. healthy.

BOXED CLASSIFIED AD DETAILS

Deadline: 1st of the month!

Boxed classified ads can run unchanged for three months or more. No words are free. Ads may be shaded and may include bold and all-capitalized words freely. The ad need not begin with For Sale, etc. Minimum run is 3 months, prepaid. Discount: 5% for 6 months; 10% for 12 months.

Boxed Classified Ad Rates per Month

Nonshaded ads:

28¢ per word for all words,* none free, **plus**

10¢ per word for each bold word **plus**

10¢ per word for each all-caps word.

Shaded Ads (All words are bold at no charge):

38¢ per word for all words* **plus**

10¢ per word for each all-caps word.

Non-Subscribers:

Add 20¢ per word to above costs.

*Three words can be bold-all-caps at no extra charge.

PHOTO & DRAWING DETAILS

**Deadline: 1st of the month
for all ads with drawings or photos!**

Drawings and photos are encouraged as the response to your ad is much larger and the reader knows better what you want or are selling. Send in your drawing or photograph, and A.R.C. will reduce it or enlarge it as needed.

Photo and Drawing Rates per Month

\$10.00 per month for each photo or drawing (If ad is canceled, this amount cannot always be refunded.)

CHANGES & CANCELLATIONS

Please check your ads carefully before sending them in. Once ads are received, it is not always possible to refund the amount sent, pull the ad or make changes.

IMPORTANT — COUNTING WORDS — IMPORTANT

The **standard headings**: WANTED, FOR SALE, etc., count as **one word** each time used in an ad. **Name, address** and (one) **telephone number**, count as **6 words**, regardless of length. Ham call letters and business name can be included in the 6 words and do not count extra. Full name (or company name) and address is **required** in all classified ads. Each additional word, abbreviation, model number or number group, extra telephone numbers, etc. count as **one word** each. Hyphenated words count as two words.



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