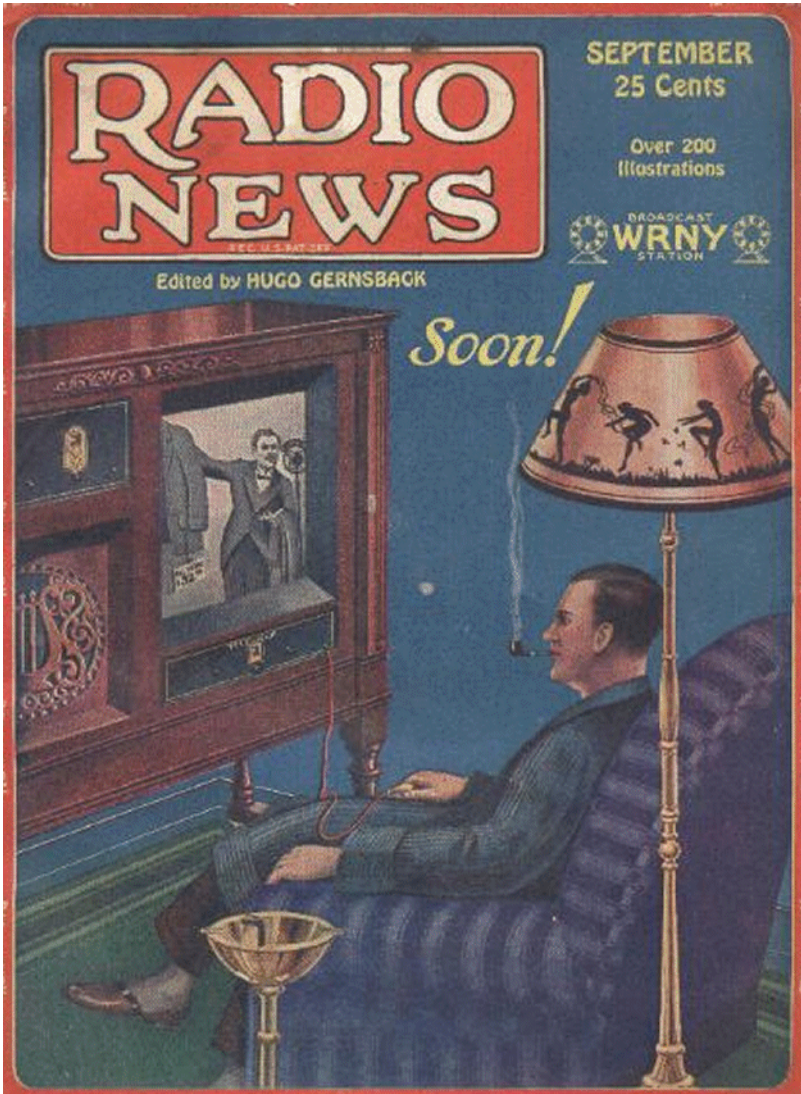


The

Call Letter

November, 2001
Vol. 27 — No. 11



Over 25 years in print!

The Northwest Vintage Radio Society

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

Membership in the Society is open to all who are actively interested in historic preservation. The dues are \$20.00 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 (except July and August) 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).

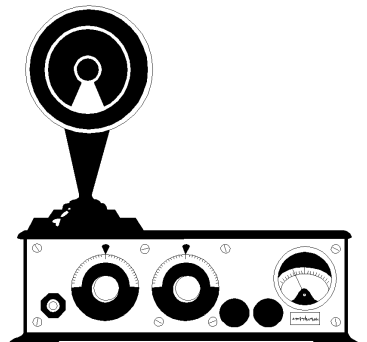
Other Society functions include guest speakers, auctions, radio show, and radio sales which are advertised in the *Call Letter* and are held in and around Portland.

Society Officers for 2001:

President	Charles Kent	(503) 281-9335
Vice-President	George Kirkwood	(503) 648-4809
Treasurer	Ed Charman	(503) 654-7387
Secretary	Liles Garcia	(503) 649-9288
Board member at large	Dave Rutland	(541) 929-4498
<i>Call Letter</i> Editor	Rick Walton	(503) 284-5648
Librarian	John Bucholtz	(360) 693-7135

The Society’s address is:

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



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On the cover: A prophetic rendition of television pictured on the cover of *Radio News* of September, 1928. Notice the remote control in the viewer’s hand. Also note the picture on the screen — Men’s Wearhouse? But best of all, notice that whimsical lampshade.

December Call Letter Deadline: November 26.

The next meeting is on November 10.

The monthly feature is:

Kit receivers - any kind of receiver built from a kit.

Tailgate swap meet starts at 8:30!

Visit our web site at <http://nwvrs.org>.

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 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.

From the Editor

by Call Letter Editor, Rick Walton

It was a smaller but still very busy Swap/Sale last month at the Salvation Army Rose Center. As usually happens, I came home with several items following me, and as always, I had a good time. We owe Cliff Tuttle a vote of thanks and a hearty well-done for this swap meet. This was Cliff's first effort as Swap/Sale chairperson.

There was one dark spot on the swap meet. One of our friends from up north had his motorhome broken into even though it was in full view and there were folks in the parking lot. He lost an expensive camera in addition to the damage done to the motorhome from the break-in. And Cliff Tuttle reported that someone broke into his car, too, and went through it pretty thoroughly, taking only change. Cliff's car was parked on the street. It is a problem we'll need to deal with at future Swap/Sales, perhaps with volunteer patrols. Whatever the solution, the issue is certain to be discussed in the upcoming meeting and probably for several meetings before the next Swap/Sale.

I hope everyone has been giving some thought to the upcoming election of club officers. Charlie Kent has announced that he won't be in the running this time, so we must look for another President. By our constitution, nomination of candidates takes place at the November meeting with the election of officers in December. Take note of the officers' responsibilities that are printed on the inside back cover.

This month's *Call Letter* might be short on pages, but it is long on content. There is a historical piece from Art Redman, two interesting contributions in "Play it Again Sam!", items in "Voila", in the "Swap Shop", and of course, a dozen pictures of last month's Swap Sale.

NWVRS 2001 Calendar of Events

November 10 Regular monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
Nomination of officers for 2002.

December 8 Regular monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
Election of officers and annual Christmas celebration.

Of Mikes and Men

Submitted by Art Redman.

Jane Woodfin wrote the book *Of Mikes and Men* about working for radio station KUKU as the Better Homes Girl of the Golden West Network for \$25.00 a week. The story took place in Portland, Oregon. KUKU was a fictitious station and her book was a work of fiction based on fact in the early days of radio broadcasting beginning in 1929. Following is an excerpt on the control room along with the problems working with old carbon microphones from pages 12 and 14 of the book published by McGraw-Hill in 1951.

Windows and a glass door on the farther side of the reception room looked into the single studio, and it in turn was flanked by the control room, a mysterious affair filled with batteries and switches, a turntable for playing records, and an electric oven for storing microphones overnight. This oven was one of the most important pieces of equipment, since the fine crystals of carbon which carried the voice waves had a tendency to collect moisture and pack down solid during the day. Heat loosened them once more, and our programs, consequently, were always clearer in the early morning than late at night.

“This is a microphone,” said the announcer. “You talk straight into it, like this. Don’t get your face off to an angle, or it will whistle. If you see me pounding on the glass of the control room, that means its’ gone dead on you. Then you pick it up and shake it, like this.”

“What does that do?”

“Jolts loose the carbon crystals. This is a carbon mike. Got to keep them loose. Be sure to keep your eye on me. They’ll probably pack down a couple of times during the show. And remember to keep looking straight at the mike.”

How I could simultaneously watch the announcer through the window and keep looking straight at the mike I couldn’t imagine, but I nodded meekly. I was too much in awe of everything to question his obvious intention of leaving me alone. As a matter of fact, it was necessary that he do so. The early announcers were, in most cases, their own technicians. Many of them had regular operator’s licenses, and it was only an occasional program which was announced from the studio. Generally it was done from the control room where the announcer could flip a switch to turn on the voice microphone and another to pick up the music of a record. Moreover, when anyone was talking, he was required to keep hand on a little dial which was regulated the volume or tone coming over the air.

Photo Display

Photography by Rick Walton

Here are scenes from the October 13 Swap/Sale.



Tailgate action in the parking lot.



Cliff and Ed staff the info table.



Tom and Speed



Looking to the back.



Maybe if I just turn it this way...



Wooden sets



Hot dogs and all the trimmings!



Catalin sets and other exotica.



Going once... Going twice... SOLD!



Packing up to go home.

Play It Again, Sam!

Compiled by Dave Brown

The column where club members can publish their restoration accomplishments!

Dave Wise — Still working on my R-390A. I got the VFO pretty linear, then realized I hadn't baked it first as recommended. Two bakes later, it's still changing. I think I'd better put some run-time on it for a while, and wait for it to settle down.

There's something wrong with the 3rd oscillator socket. It kills tubes. Twice now I've turned on the set to find it dead, and found that the 3rd oscillator tube's base was cracked. I wonder if the socket has a manufacturing defect that puts a lot of stress on the pins. Inserting the tube feels normal. It may also be heat-related. I removed the highly-criticized shiny tube shield, and it has quit happening. Except for a few tubes, the main reason for shields was to keep the tubes from popping out when the big guns fire. Obviously that's no problem for me :-). Anybody got any IERCs?

On the 8kHz bandwidth, the signal level was about 20dB down from the others (.1, 1, 2, 4, and 16). I traced it to an open cap on the 8kHz mechanical filter. On early R-390As, these caps were hand-picked for value; later they switched to trimmers. I got sidetracked for a while because it was intermittent. It tested fine on my TCA-1, then opened up again after I reinstalled it. This was only about the third mica cap I've ever seen bad.

I've noticed that the signal is down about 10dB on bands 0-7, compared to 8-31. Part of it is low 1st oscillator output. Part of that, in turn, seems due to Field Change 7, which I installed. FC-7 increases the 1st and 3rd oscillator screen dropping resistors from 56k to 220k. I'm trying to find out why this change was invented. So far, all I know is that it was "Reduction Of Internal Interference" and targeted only at "Shipboard: Supplemental Spaces", which doesn't sound as important as I thought. I may back it out.

There's an intermittent drop in signal level, every few minutes. The level drops about 20dB over a couple of seconds, then pops back up with a "click". I'll attach a signal generator at various places and isolate it. This will take some patience. I'll try to modulate the gen. so I will at least have something to listen to. First guess is one of the Brown Beauties in the IF. We'll see.

Dave Brown — I was able to locate a very nice looking 1937 Simplex Model D table set on eBay. The Model D has a very nice deco look, an image of a ship in the dial, and a tuning eye. But it came with the understanding that the set was non-functioning.

Upon receiving it, I immediately tested the tubes - a 6A7, 6K7, 43, 75, 25Z6 and a 6G5. But what the heck was this other tube. It was marked L49B and the socket was marked K38B2. This really caught me off guard and I was a bit perplexed.

After plugging in "L49B" into my favorite Internet search engine, I quickly discovered that, yes, it was a Ballast Tube. Things made sense to me then. But, why was an L49B in a K38B2 socket? The following website gave me quite the tutorial on Ballast Tubes and I highly recommend it as reading for folks who know as much about Ballast Tubes as I did coming into this project:

<http://antiqueradios.com/chrs/journal/ballast.html>

From it, I was able to deduce that the 49V Ballast Tube was put in place of the 38V Ballast Tube to probably to compensate for the higher modern line voltage, and that the two were wired the same. But the radio still didn't work. No tubes lit up at all. I took a resistance check of the ballast tube and found it to be about 38K. This sounded a bit high to me but before assuming it was bad, I pulled it from the socket. Then I put a volt meter across the socket thinking if it was bad, I'd end up with full line voltage right there. I brought the set up on the variac and no voltage at all. Hmm, something else.

I started to look at the set and again noted how frail, fragile, old and decaying all of the components looked. Not wanting to even touch any of them, I thought I better check the pilot lights first. I didn't think that the pilot light filaments would actually be in series with the tube filaments but that's exactly what I found - and both of them were bad. I replaced them both, put the Ballast Tube back in, brought it up again on the variac and for a reason I have not yet fully explained, the tubes lit and the set worked perfectly!

Taking into account the visual condition of many of the components in the set, I'm not asking any questions either! It's great to not only have this fine looking radio now but to have it working too. You may have a look at it at

<http://ironradio.com/smd.html>.

Voilà

...new and recent finds by NVRS members

by Sonny Clutter

Dave Brown:

1937 Detrola Model 1137 with tuning eye. A beautiful deco wood table radio with spectacular burlled veneer. Fully functional and sharp looking!

Hallicrafters S-120, obtained from an antique store in Salem. Works great after I replaced the filter caps.

Tesla Talisman 308-U in red bakelite, obtained from Amsterdam. Made in the mid '50s and in almost perfect original condition!

Simplex Model D with tuning eye. A very attractive deco wood table radio made in the late '30s.

Rick Walton:

Telechron 8H59 clock radio. Creme-colored bakelite, 4-tube TRF. Probably the first alarm clock radio.

Philco D-655-123 AC/battery portable. 4-tube, leather case. Looks like some early transistor sets. Probably from mid to late 50s. Works like a charm.

Swap Shop

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

BUY, SELL, & TRADE: Vintage Radio, Early Television and Hi-Fi.

Wanted: Tubes, Parts and whatever you might have related to early radio & TV. Visit my web-site at: <http://www.radiolaguy.com> or e-mail me at: sonny@radiolaguy.com

Thanks, Sonny Clutter, phone (360) 834-5741

WANTED: The INGRAHAM man wants radios with wood Ingraham cabinets. If you're not sure if it's an Ingraham, call Ed Cook in Vancouver, (360) 573-1439, or e-mail "[hopopcol@home.com](mailto:hpopcol@home.com)".

FOR SALE: A wide variety of radios at <http://radiogalerykent.com>. Charlie Kent

FOR SALE: 1950's Packard Bell console AM radio/phonograph model 601.

Radio & phono work. Has unusual dual "stationized" radio dials; one dial has California stations, the other has Northwest stations. Cabinet in good condition and needs no refinishing. \$50 o.b.o. Call Tony Hauser 503-629-4836 or e-mail abhauser@aol.com.

WANTED: *Western-Electric 639B microphone. Jerry Talbott (503-649-6717) or E-mail: jerryt@coho.net

Leads and Needs

Radiolaguy's web page is full of lots of information on early radio, TV and also provides lots of links to other valuable info resources relating to the radio collecting hobby; it's not just a "for sale" site. Be sure and visit the site often. One of the services offered is pictures and information on the entire RCA "Radiola" line from 1921 to 1931 and my "show and tell" page.

Officer's Roles

The President

The President shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the membership and the Board of Directors. The President shall set the time and the place of Board of Directors' Meetings. The President has the power to appoint members of committees as appropriate to enhance the activities of the society.

The Vice President

The Vice President shall be responsible for planning and arranging technical and entertaining activities associated with the society's meetings. He serves as chairman of the program committee if such a committee is appointed. He acts as presiding officer at meetings if the President is unavailable.

The Secretary

The Secretary shall be responsible for recording the minutes of every business meeting and for receiving and preparing all of the society's correspondence.

The Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be accountable for all funds received and disbursed by the society and shall report all monetary transactions and treasury balance at each regular meeting of the society. The Treasurer shall prepare a list of members in good standing for distribution at the next regular meeting following the annual meeting of the society.

The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall consist of the current elected officers of the society plus the immediate past president of the society. The Board of Directors shall direct the care and expenditure of the funds of the society. The Board shall determine a suitable time and place for regular society business meetings.