

The
Indiana
Historical
Radio Society

BULLETIN

Volume 43

July 2014

Number 2



The
Marconiphone

Indiana Historical
Radio Society
2014 Spring Meet
“Founders Award”
presented to
Bob Sands
for his
MARCONIPHONE V-2

Right: Bob Sands demonstrates the insertion of a 300-390 metres tuning block. A tuning block has two ‘pancake’ coils. The inductance of each coil is adjusted by sliding adjacent copper plates—visible at the at back of the cabinet.



The BULLETIN
A PUBLICATION OF THE INDIANA HISTORICAL RADIO SOCIETY
FORTY-THREE YEARS OF
DOCUMENTING EARLY RADIO

The Indiana Historical Radio Society Bulletin

July 2014

The cover: A Marconiphone V-2 earned a front cover spot in this issue of the "Bulletin". This rare receiver was selected as 'Best Of Show' in the 2014 IHRS Spring Meet Old Equipment Contest. Entries selected Best Of Show are presented the Founders' Award plaque, this year the honor went to Bob Sands. It is a frequent occurrence with the Old Equipment Contest that other entries, because of rarity, extensive documentation, quality of restoration and presentation of a complete package are equally deserving of recognition with the Founders Award. This accomplishes the intent of the IHRS founders, to recognize excellence in vintage radio preservation. Ed Dupart met this criteria with his Reflex Circuits In Transistor Radios entry. Michael Feldt met this criteria with his working eleven tube superheterodyne receiver, complemented with a loop aerial and speaker. Bob Sands had a second entry, a complete spark gap transmitter that also competed for top honors in the contest.

A hand of appreciation goes to the contest judges who accepted the task judging in both the Old Equipment and One tube DIY contests. They did a great job with a difficult task.

The lead article for this issue—"Stand By!" by Andy Ooms. You'll remember the June 2008 Bulletin and "Nard's Radionics and Other Musings" by Andy. This time Andy reports on the content of his many issues of the Stand By! magazine.

Jeremy Schotter writes about his "Restoration of a Delco 1129" console receiver on page 21. Jeremy has grown while a member of the IHRS. We've known him through high school, technical school, and Purdue. He is now an Electrical Engineer working in southern Indiana.

IHRS Meeting Alert! Pay attention to page 13—the IHRS Summer meet has been relocated with a new date!

See you at Lawrence Park, August 23!

Stand By!

By Andrew Ooms

Data source contributed by Dan Lux

As someone interested in radio programming history and radio station history, especially that related to Chicago, I recently was an appreciative recipient of a great gift. At a yard sale in Payson, Arizona a friend of mine bought a box of magazines published by Chicago radio station WLS more than 70 years ago. The magazine was titled *Stand By!* It was published weekly, and mailed to subscribers for \$1.00 per year. Individual copies were five cents. My friend paid \$5.00 for the magazines and gave them to me. The copies I now have were originally mailed to an individual in Farmersburg, Indiana; I have more than 160 issues dating from February 1935 to February 1938.

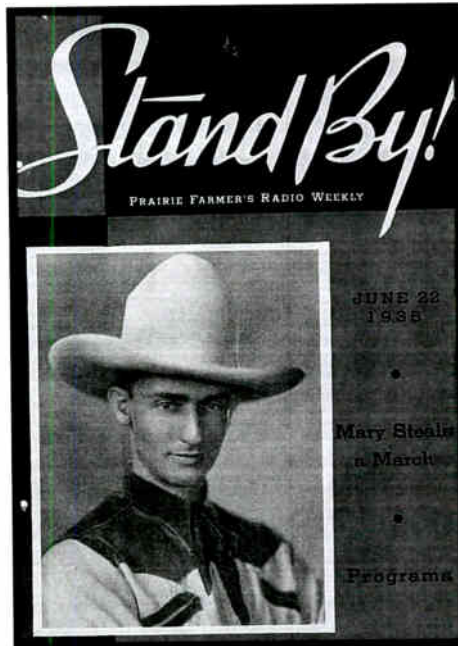
Some context may help here, although likely redundant for some of you. WLS in the thirties, as now, broadcast at the maximum allowable power for United States AM stations, 50,000 watts. Back then, WLS was at

870 on the dial. After a North American broadcasters' agreement reached in the 1940's, WLS moved to its current position of 890 kilohertz. (Kilohertz replaced kilocycles as the conventional term of choice a few decades ago.)

WLS was operated by Sears shortly after its beginning in 1924 and the company was happy to encourage the understanding that WLS referred to World's Largest Store. (The Federal government licenses station call letters, but is not involved in station slogans or determinations as to what the call letters stand for.) WBBX, WES, and

WJR (assigned to Detroit almost immediately thereafter) were considered as call letters, but the final decision was WLS.

By the 1930's, Sears had sold the station to the Prairie Farmer company. The *Prairie Farmer*, one of the company's products, was an immensely successful and respected farm magazine circulated through-



Stand By! (continued)

out the Midwestern states. WLS' programming was thoroughly consistent with the company brand, happily accepting its urban audience (many of whom had moved to the city from the farm not too long before) but really emphasizing its rural outreach during an era when rural America did not have nearly the access to mainstream media and culture that it does now.

So what did the American farm family do during its evening leisure hours before the 1920's? It is a little hard for us to imagine a time when radio and television broadcasting was non-existent, and newspapers were hard to get on a timely basis for many rural readers.

Rural evenings were then spent playing games, making music and listening to family members make music, reading, and chatting when guests visited. By today's standards, bed time was much earlier.

Try to imagine the growing excitement created by the fantastic new pastime of radio listening. What started as mostly younger and middle-aged males who experimented with non-user friendly crys-

tal sets and earphones and erratic programming schedules (early radio geeks) became by 1930 a huge audience of all ages, no longer predominately male, that listened to the magic of information and entertainment every day and night from local and long-distance sources.

Stand By! entered the picture as Prairie Farmer solidified listener

loyalty by making its listeners part of the growing WLS family of staff and audience. The magazine contributed to a fabulously successful combination of city-dwelling, regional, and somewhat isolated sometimes distant rural listeners,

with extremely popular country music programming, information services of unlimited variety, and an emphasis on a human, folksy, and charismatic staff. WLS was not the only station to utilize a magazine to emphasize being part of the listener's family and probably not the only Chicago station to do so. But the essence and evidence of WLS' success is captured in these issues of *Stand By!*



The magazine began in 1935 with 16 pages and grew to twenty pages within a few months. It was printed on cheap paper, identical to that used by comic books back then. The only color used was on the cover, consisting of a solid color background framing a black and white photo of a station personality.

Magazine content covered an extensive landscape including recipes, sewing patterns, dress and hat sketches, and other homemaker hints pages with regular writers.

Also several folksy comment columns were included, some humorous, some personality oriented, and some describing various station operations matters.

Many poignant depression era items appeared in *Stand By!* Descriptions of street urchins trying to sell shoelaces or shoe shines even after dark and in the winter, and of adults wandering the streets looking for work, and stories of listeners in dire need of basics for their families are not uncommon in the magazine. A lasting word picture was that of the row of 30 or more unemployed adult men waiting at the elevated and subway exit stairs for the newspapers that employed riders gave them after they had read them on their way to work.

Personal items about station staff, musicians, announcers, and technicians were published each week. Staff marriages and births were announced, often accompanied

by photos. In some cases, the subsequent birthdays of staff children would be noted, along with birthday party pictures involving cakes and siblings. Within a few years, more than 15 weddings in which both bride and groom were station personnel, so plenty of marriage and family news was available. Because so much programming was live, the staff was very large, including easily over 100 performers in addition to technical and administrative support personnel. Consequently, there was never a shortage of staff news items of various types.

Other personal news items included that of staff involved in traffic accidents and more pleasantly, fishing success stories and vacation trips.

News of staff illnesses and deaths was also commonplace. In those pre-antibiotic times, deaths due to pneumonia and flu-like diseases sometimes happened to young performers and others, and frequently after very short periods of illness. An illness would be reported, and within an issue or two, a resultant death might be noted. Then the listeners' responses would often be described, and consolation letters from listeners and readers would be printed.

One or more pages of listeners' letters were published each week. Letters covered appreciation of on-air staff, condolences for staff-related deaths, expressions of music prefer-

ences, questions about previous staff no longer with WLS, and questions about station personalities. The marital status of on-air staff was of great interest, and related questions were answered factually. Unusual now, the new airwave location of personnel leaving the station was reported.

Listeners wrote in their opinions on a variety of radio related subjects, such as whether listening to exciting radio programs was okay for children. A great number were comments about styles of music broadcast on WLS and other stations.

There were one or two humor columnists writing each week; a regular was Pat Buttram, later famous for being Gene Autry's sidekick on the CBS radio show, Melody Ranch. Pat was mocked for his Arkansas roots in other columns, and he gave as good as he got with his hillbilly dialect humor in a regular column.

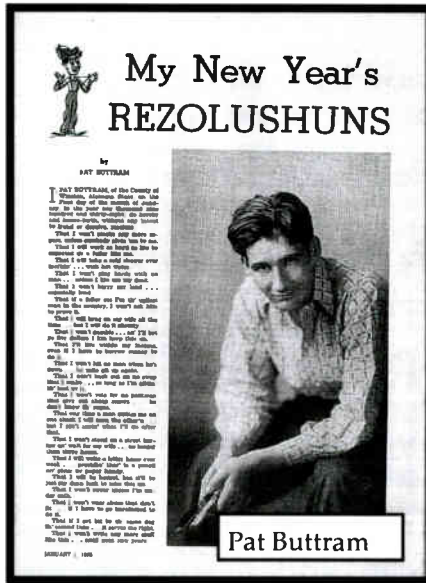
Poems were also printed, humorous or serious and folksy in

style. Edgar Guest, at one point a nationally syndicated newspaper poet and author of several poetry volumes, was a regular. His work was low-key, cheerful, homespun, common sense oriented; and it is easy to see how encouraging and popular his work was during the

depression years. Actually Edgar was a Detroit, traveling by train each Tuesday to Chicago for his WLS weekly program, as almost all programming then was live. Pictures were an important feature. In addition to the large cover picture of the "star of the week" were pictures of new ba-

bies, new personnel, orphanages blessed by the largesse of WLS contributions, womens' clothing designs, and electronic gear like remote broadcast trucks.

A regular feature was a musical library page. The content of that page did not necessarily involve the music heard on WLS, but consisted of a full printing of the lyrics of forgotten or lost old songs requested by readers or listeners



who had dim memories of long-ago heard melodies, or who could no longer find their copy of the sheet music of the song. Sheet music was still popular then, soon to be replaced by increasingly available records and phonographs, and apparently the music columnist had access to thousands of sheet music booklets. He reported that he had hundred of requests for information monthly so frequently reminded readers that he could not begin to answer all of them. The lyrics of many of the printed songs were very touching and sentimental involving dying children or relatives or lovers, disappeared lovers, non-returning military sons and husbands, dear old mothers, and wonderful childhood memories. There were also some upbeat lyrics involving happy lovers and great religious faith and hope. Not so upbeat were songs titled: "Don't Sell Mother's Picture at the Sale," and the euphemistic "Baby's Gone to Sleep."

Copies of sheet music were called songs. Offers to trade songs by listeners were listed weekly. One woman eager to trade claimed to possess 2895 songs, not all sheet music but some painstakingly copied from listening to broadcasts. She was trumped by a Francis Queener of Marinette, WI who claimed to own 18,000 songs and was willing to trade.

The station produced and sold

one book of 100 songs; another was the WLS Book of Hymns, advertised in *Stand By!* They were gratefully referred to by many letter writers.

Each week the program schedule for the following week was published. Surprisingly by today's standards a column of additional listening suggestions was also carried which listed highlights of programs on other networks and stations. Apparently the bond of being part of radio in the earlier days was greater than loyalty to a single station, even on the part of station management.

During the second year of *Stand By!* classified ads began to appear, and soon filled an entire page. Ads ranged from corporate (ways to make money, health remedies) to individual (need a live-in maid, have a farm for sale). A couple of comic strips were carried from time to time, always humorous, usually making sport of hillbilly ways and speech.

One of the curiosities of early broadcasting was the situation of frequency sharing. That meant that more than one company broadcast on the same frequency, obviously at different times. I do not know if any frequency sharing now exists; about ten years ago there were still some sharing cases in Kansas and Texas Chicago had one frequency, 1240, which for many decades until not too long ago had 3 stations; WSBC,

Stand By! (continued)

WEDC, and WCRW. They usually broadcast in a variety of mostly European languages which may explain to some of you why they don't sound familiar.

WLS shared 870 and later 890 kilohertz with WENR, another venerated but now silent set of call letters, until the late 1950's. I remember hearing station identification announcements as WLS WENR Chicago often, although I presume that during certain hours the calls were announced separately. What were those hours? Well, they could puzzle an average listener and I expect many did not care as long as they were hearing something of interest to them.

The schedule for much of the time-sharing period for WLS was: Sunday, 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.; Monday through Friday, 5 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.; and Saturday, 5 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. The daytime gaps and the last evening hours except for Saturday belonged to WENR. Although some technical and managerial employees of both stations knew and interacted with each other, the stations were entirely separate entities with offices and studios at separate locations. Although the magazine did not list all the WENR programs, its WLS schedule did show "sign off for WENR" at the appropriate spots.

If listeners cared about stations and networks, they had to pay at-

tention. Besides hearing two sets of call letters on the same frequency, another confusing factor was the NBC Red and NBC Blue network situation. In the 1940's the Federal Communications Commission ruled that NBC improperly owned two networks, the Blue and the Red. So NBC (National Broadcasting Company) spun off its Blue Network which was named ABC, (American Broadcasting Company) shortly thereafter and which continues as such today.

Before the spin off, NBC moved programs from one of its networks to the other at its managerial discretion. The unofficial practice was that the better programs with the more famous performers and the higher ad rates were on the Red network; Blue carried the B list. Programs were moved from Blue to Red or from Red to Blue depending on schedule issues, sponsor and listener attitudes, and subjective opinions as to which programs were better than others.

In Chicago, NBC Red was usually carried by WMAQ and NBC Blue by both WENR and WLS. So WMAQ had Fibber McGee and Molly while WLS frequently broadcast programs almost no one remembers now. Programs sometimes moved from WMAQ to one of the other two and back again.

Adding to the confusion, the first issues of *Stand By!* for about a year referred to the NBC New York

feed stations so NBC Red references were printed as NBC WJZ and NBC Blue as NBC WEAJ. While of not much interest to many listeners, others (such as the kind I would have been) were intrigued by all of this and indicated that by their questioning letters.

Obviously one of the greatest services rendered by *Stand By!* in addition to publishing its own program schedules, was its printing of some news of other stations, and its

network listening suggestions including some Mutual and CBS programs never carried on WLS. Also, the CBS New York flagship station was sometimes mentioned, WABC. As the ABC network and company did not exist then, CBS owning WABC was not remarkable. Today it would be puzzling; the New York flagships today are WABC for ABC and WCBS for CBS.

One of the station news items published was that Fort Wayne, IN now had 2 new NBC affiliates. WOWO would be NBC Blue; WLL would

have an option of NBC Blue or NBC Red. Even a radio detail hobbyist like me would be puzzled by that time. After those years of ample NBC possibilities, it is a somewhat remarkable that it has been several years since NBC has had any radio presence whatsoever.

As mentioned previously, *Stand By!* was not bothered in the least by mentioning the competition. Chicago stations mentioned in various contexts included WGN, WCFL (now WMVP), WSBC, WBBM, WMAQ (WSCR now at that frequency), and long-gone stations WOK, WQJ, WBCN, KYW whose call letters now reside in Philadelphia, WGES, WIBO, WAAF, WEBH and the greatly missed by some of us, WJJD.

A diversion here: my favorite call letters at one time or another included WREN,

Topeka because of its musical symbolism, and WIND, Chicago because of its reference to the magic of sounds being carried through the air. Not too long ago, I found out that it was named WIND because its transmitter was originally located in Indiana (IND), bit of a disappointment, that. Its first call letters were



Red and Blue Network Children's books



Stand By! (continued)

WJKS and it was licensed as a Gary station. *Stand By!* refers to it as WIND, Gary.

Some of the interest in station news on the part of WLS listeners and subscribers is that DXing (DX being radio shorthand for distance) was a big part of the early years of radio broadcasting. The frequencies were much less crowded in the early decades of broadcasting than they were later, so distant stations were easier to catch. Quite a few stations were on frequencies occupied by no other station anywhere in the United States or Canada. Also many of today's sources of interference and static were absent or less intrusive back then. Few stations, including those of the power and scope of WLS, broadcast after midnight, so those who did broadcast during the night throughout the country could be heard at tremendous distances. Some Chicago stations in the twenties even voluntarily ceased broadcasting Monday evenings so that Chicago listeners could catch signals from other cities. This was reciprocated by other cities that had different nights of silence.

WLS was heard to some degree throughout the country. It was not always possible to tell if listeners writing in had heard WLS or had heard its Saturday Night Barn Dance which was carried, in part, by NBC and its increasingly numer-

ous affiliates. Many listeners in Alaska or Montana didn't really care about the details; they heard WLS one way or another. But responses to non-network programming came from people in the Atlantic seaboard states, the far West, and from several Canadian provinces. New Zealand and Australian listeners were also heard from. Listeners wrote from Hudson Bay and Churchill, Manitoba. We can only imagine how appreciated radio was in those Arctic places, which were actually probably pretty good locations for catching North American and European signals.

Some of the many drop-in visitors to the station were reported such as the group of Wyoming sheep men who had accompanied several rail car loads of lambs to the Chicago Stockyards (then the largest in the country, handling 11% of the nation's meat). The Wyoming men dropped in to say hello to one of their sources of farm news and music and to say that they were on the way to Detroit to buy about a dozen new vehicles for citizens of their town, using the lamb sales proceeds. *Stand By!* reported this as a wonderful example of capitalism in action; during those dismal depression years, good economic news was highly regarded when it could be found.

Groups visiting the station included schools, scout and Brownie

troops, the baseball Cubs, and the hockey Blackhawks.

Now that we know what could be read in the station magazine, let's get on to what could be heard on the station.

Music is the most famous aspect of the WLS Prairie Farmer years, specifically that which is now known as country music. Then it was more often referred to as hill-billy, Western, or barn dance music. Interestingly, in its next format under different ownership, WLS was also famous across much of our country for music, its very popular rock n' roll and Top Forty programming, in the fifties, sixties, and seventies.

Saturday nights on WLS were huge. Taking over from WENR at 6:30 p.m., Saturday night programming segments typically included the Keystone Barn Dance Party, followed by the National Barn Dance at 7:30 carried by NBC Blue nationwide. Winding down the evening with local programming again the Prairie Farmer program came on at 8:30 with many of the same performers and the same music as the earlier segment. Special nights, like New Year's Eve, had additional programming segments such as the Prairie Ramblers with Patsy Montana and Red Foley and the Hoosier Sod Busters, or the Hoosier Hot Shots, the Barn Dance Jamboree, Barn Dance Varieties, or

the Aladdin Hayloft Theatre.

The Barn Dance was held in the Eighth Street Theatre, and usually sold out at about 2000 tickets weekly. Admission was 50 or 75 cents.

Broadcasting a Saturday night barn dance was not limited to WLS, although it was one of the first. One of the early famous WSM Nashville Grand Ol' Opry emcees, George D. Hay already calling himself the "Solemn Ol Judge" at the age of 30, first started at WLS. Others Saturday night programs heard for decades beginning in the twenties and thirties include the Louisiana Hayride on KWKH, Shreveport, the Midwestern Hayride WLW, Cincinnati, the Saturday Night Jamboree, WWVA, Wheeling, and the one I grew up with, The Missouri Valley Barn Dance, WNAX, Yankton, SD.

Groups of WLS Barn Dance performers were booked for various venues almost every night of the year at high school auditoriums and other venues throughout a dozen states, and as far away as the Oklahoma State Fair in Tulsa. Typically 20 performances of WLS Minstrels were scheduled away from Chicago weekly.

Famous or moderately famous WLS performers or guests appearing on the Barn Dance included frequent visitor Gene Autry, regulars Pat Buttram, Red Foley (first of

continued on page 16

- 2014 Regional Vintage Radio -

Indiana Historical Radio Society

Summer Meet, August 23, Lawrence Park Community Center, Lawrence

Fall Meet, October 4, Riley Park Shelter, Greenfield

Details at indianahistoricalradio.org

Mid-South Antique Radio Club

MSARC Meet information contact: layvinrad@insightbb.com

Antique Radio Club of Illinois www.antique-radios.org

RadioFest—July 31—August 2 Willowbrook Holiday Inn

Michigan Antique Radio Club www.michiganantiqueradio.org

AWA-Antique Wireless Association www.antiquewireless.org

World Convention -August 12– 16, RIT Inn, Henrietta, NY

CARS—Cincinnati Antique Radio Society

Info at oltubes@roadrunner.com or Bob Sands 513-858-1755

Dayton Antique Radio Club (SPARK)

Contacts Ed App 937-865-0982 or Lou Dvorak 937-858-0795

Central Ohio Antique Radio Association—COARA

Check the new COARA website at

<http://coara.org> for event schedule.



Cincinnati radio (Crosley) on display at Radorama—June 2014



The IHRS Summer Swap Meet has been relocated to:
the Lawrence Park Community Center

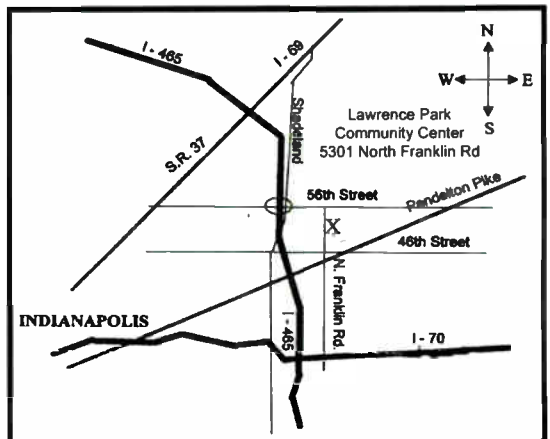
5301 N. Franklin Road, Lawrence, Indiana

The IHRS Summer Meet date has been changed to:

Saturday, August 23, 2014

8AM—12 Noon

The Lawrence Park Community Center is located just outside the North East segment of I465, Indianapolis. Exit I465 at 56th Street East or Pendleton Pike (US36) East. From 56th Street turn South on Franklin Road to the Community



Center – From Pendleton Pike turn North to the Community Center. Entrance fee—\$5 per family, IHRS members, \$10 per setup. Non-members \$15 per setup.

Old Equipment Contest IHRS Spring Meet 2014



Michael Feldt's award winning home build Melo-Heald 11 tube Superheterodyne receiver. The loop aerial is a Quali-Tone. On the right of the receiver is a rare Pathe "Westminster" illuminated loud speaker.



Ed Dupart's "Reflex Receivers" entry placed second in the Open category. Ed described the radios' "Reflex" circuits in his tech presentation on Friday evening,



Fred Prohl received 1st place for his "1920's Illustrated Radio Art." Fred presented a Powerpoint review of the art on Friday.



Bob Sands submitted this rare late teens wireless spark transmitter in the pre-1930's category.



Bob Pote had this one tube receiver in the 1920's radio category.



Bob Sands won a first place ribbon for this Arvin Transistor 62R49 entry in the Indiana made category.



Tom Williams entered this-RCA table receiver —placing first in the post 1930 contest category



Tom Williams entered this Sears table radio in the post 1920 category.



Tom Williams entered the above Zenith TO in the post 1920 category.



Glen Fitch displayed the above one tube receiver along with 1920's DIY booklets.



Ed Taylor placed this faux 1 tube (transistor) receiver in the open category.

a three generation set of music chartists, his son-in-law being Pat Boone, his granddaughter being Debbie Boone, good for a trifecta of number ones on three charts, county-pop-Christian), Arky the Arkansas Woodchopper, the Novelodeons, Jimmy Dean in his pre-sausage days, the Maple City Four, Patsy Montana (one listener wrote

that she had written down the date and time of over 700 hundred songs Patsy sang over WLS over the years), the Hometowners, the Sod Busters, the teen-age George Gobel (long before his Mean Old Alice days), the Prairie Ramblers, the beloved Lulu Belle & Scotty, the Hoosier Hotshots, Uncle Ezra, and Smiley Burnette.

Most, if not all, of the music on WLS was country. The NBC Symphony was on WENR, and popular music was left to other Chicago stations. Listeners' letters were almost unanimously in favor of old time music (country), and no other. Occasionally, someone would write in asking for a greater variety of music and would get resoundingly berated in subsequent letters, many in the vein of "Don't you have a way to change stations on your radio if you don't like WLS music?" One listener requested much less yodeling and again yodeling was supported

They lets find surveillance a less danger lateral when they are get around in wheel chairs to visit the other children in the hospital.

MANY less fortunate youngsters in Mid-Western hospitals are going to thank our listeners for their thoughtfulness at Christmas and during the months and years to come.

Why? Because our Christmas Neighborhood Club is planning that the children's words in numerous hospitals will each have at least one new wheel chair. And if you, or someone near and dear to you, has ever used a wheel chair when recovering from an illness or a serious fracture, you know what a blessing it is!

During the 1922-23 Yuletide season, it was our savings, through the generosity of listeners, to provide over 200 child-caring institutions with new radio receiving sets. If you could have visited any of the hospitals and orphanages when these sets were delivered—or had read the numerous letters of thanks—you would have realized the "wonder" that came through the carrying out of the "share with others" plan.

Following the first announcement of our "wheel chair" plan by Dr. John Holland on Morning Devotions and the Little Brown Church of the Air, the letters started to come in, with amounts varying from 25 cents to 25 dollars. Most contributions average one dollar, so you can all have "a little from many" to secure a conventional answer for the fund.

One Chicago lady telephoned to Dr. Holland and said



by George C. Biggar

Making Christmas Joy-Bells Ring

WLS Neighbors' Club to Help Hospitalized Youngsters

in later editions. Popular music and jazz was referred to as new music. One columnist described some jazz as reminding him of the noise that would be made if a truckload of empty milk cans ran into a freight car of hogs on the way to market.

Farm families far and near were not the only deeply appreciative listeners. Many letters came from aged or disabled shut-ins whose radios made a huge contribution to their quality of life. Each year the magazine listed hundreds of radios that WLS donated to orphanages, hospitals, senior citizen homes, veterans' homes, and schools. A picture was occasionally published showing groups of grateful orphans or others, some as far away as Nome, Alaska.

In addition to Saturday nights, WLS broadcast live country music every morning for several hours, interspersed with farm market news, other news, weather, and chit

chat. A studio organist and story teller, named Ralph Waldo Emerson after his ancestor essayist and philosopher was a popular daily performer. Weather for the ships on the Great Lakes was presented daily for a time, and its cancellation was objected to greatly.

Farm news was huge. Live-stock and grain prices were as interesting to many people as the Dow Jones average is to many of us today. Crop predictions, agricultural advice, and down home events in various areas were essential for the business of farming and a lot of fun for some as well. Gardening tips for farm and city dwellers were popular. Listeners sent in seeds and plants for identification, and sometimes samples of crops for the staff to identify or enjoy. A plant grown from seeds dropped by migratory birds was one enigma to be solved and identified by the highly-regarded WLS agricultural experts.

A major block of farm-related programming beside the early morning hours was another hugely popular noon time Dinner Bell Roundup, with more live country music and much more farm news, including the stockyards and grain exchange prices of that morning.

One annual highlight of the WLS agricultural emphasis for several years was the National Corn Husking Contest. The contest held

in Fountain County, Indiana in November 1935 had 110,000 attendees. Apparently it was great entertainment with no admission charge. The 18 best huskers from 9 states husked for 80 minutes without a break, up to 50 ears a minute. Due to a lot of practicing at his farm at home for many weeks, the 1935 winner set a world record of 36.9 bushels husked in his 80 minutes. The proceedings were broadcast on WLS, of course.

Matters of faith were an important aspect of broadcasting in those days when most country music programming on any station included a hymn toward the end of each hour. WLS had morning devotions daily, a Sunday School review program on Saturday morning, and several hours of Christian programming on Sunday morning. All of the devotional programming, including the Sunday morning block, was live and in studio. Remote broadcasts from local churches and national religious programming was not a part of WLS in those days. In addition to the religious music provided by the station organist and almost any of the other staff musicians, Dr. John W. Holland spoke daily, and was deeply appreciated by many listeners as a source of comfort and encouragement.

WLS carried several newscasts daily, 5 to 15 minutes in duration.

Stand By! (continued)

At that time, news on the hour or on the half-hour had not been initiated on any stations, and definitely all news all the time stations were still to be formatted. Stations had three or four shorter newscasts daily, but network stations carried some high profile commentators on the news nightly. WLS, being replaced by WENR most evenings, does not appear to have had a national commentator during the mid-thirties. Of course, its farm news was extended during the breakfast and lunchtime shows, likely not limited to 15 minutes when the markets or weather or farm-related events were newsworthy.

WLS newsman Herbert Morrison is still remembered for his recorded broadcast made while he watched the Hindenburg zeppelin burn and crash on May 6, 1937. His comments, which can still be heard on records and the Internet, start with a description of the awesome sight of the beautiful slow-moving air balloon approaching its New Jersey landing field. When it suddenly began to burn and came down, he became very excited naturally, and he uttered his famous phrase, "Oh, the humanity, the humanity." After breaking down, he turned away to compose himself, but soon turned back to finish the report. He had

Saturday Morning, August 8

- 5:00-6:30—See Daily Morning Schedule.**
- 6:30—Uncle Buster & the Big Yank Boys.**
(Reliance Mfg. Co.)
- 6:45—Red Foley & Art Wenzel, accordionist.**
- 7:00—Jolly Joe's Pet Pals Club.** (Little Crow Milling)
- 7:15—The Novelodeons.**
- 7:30—WLS News Report—Julian Bentley;**
Bookings.
- 7:45—Sunday School of the Air—Dr. Holland.**
- 8:00—Jolly Joe and His Junior Stars.**
- 8:30—Morning Homemakers' Program—Martha Crane; Helen Joyce; Otto's Novelodeons; Ralph Emerson.** (Feature Foods)
- 9:00—Musical Round-Up—Otto's Novelodeons; Rodeo Joe.** (Peruna)
- 9:15—Winnie, Lou & Sally; Hilltoppers.**
- 9:30—Smoky's Fire Stories.**
- 9:45—Arkie.**
- 10:00—Ralph Emerson.**
- 10:15—Program News—Harold Safford.**
- 10:20—Butter & Egg Markets; Dressed Veal.**
Live and Dressed Poultry Quotations.
- 10:25—WLS News Report—Julian Bentley.**
- 10:30—Rocky & Ted; John Brown.**
- 10:45—"Old Kitchen Kettle"—Mary Wright;**
The Hilltoppers; Fruit & Vegetable Report.
- 11:00—WLS Garden Club, conducted by John Baker.**
- 11:15—Closing Grain Market Summary—**
F. C. Blisson.
- 11:30—Weather Report; Fruit & Vegetable**
Markets; Bookings; Grain Market Summary.
- 11:40—WLS News Report—Julian Bentley.**
- 11:45—Poultry Service Time; Hometowners**
Quartet; Ralph Emerson.
- 12:00—Future Farmers Program, conducted**
by John Baker.
- 12:15—Prairie Farmer - WLS Home Talent**
Acts.
- 12:30—Weekly Livestock Market Review by**
Jim Clark of Chicago Producers' Commission
Association.
- 12:45—Homemakers' Program.** (See detailed
schedule.)
- 1:30—WLS Merry-Go-Round, with variety**
acts, including Ralph Emerson; Christine;
Eddie Allan; John Brown; Winnie, Lou &
Sally; Hilltoppers; Jack Holden; George
Goebel.
- 2:00—Sign Off for WENR.**

August 8, 1936 Program Schedule

flown to New Jersey from Chicago to report the landing, and his recording was sent back to WLS for broadcast the next day, the only eyewitness radio report, I believe, and certainly the first broadcast. Mr. Morrison received a Pulitzer for that event which he would have preferred to miss.

Although WLS did not carry the virtual wall-to-wall soap operas that WBBM and WMAQ did Monday through Friday, over 15 per day per station, they did have the popular Ma Perkins and Pepper Young's Family in the mornings. The magazine reported that Proctor and Gamble sponsored 73 programs weekly on the NBC Red and Blue networks alone.

As did most stations in those days, the station carried a great variety of special events and speakers on a large number of subjects, including health, gardening, government, education conventions, child raising issues, and business. College debate teams covered current political and economic issues.

Special events carried included opening ceremonies for the 1936 Olympics, frog jumping contests, Queen Mary's first voyage, and a sun eclipse tracked from several locations.

Due to an infantile paralysis concern in 1937, the beginning of school in September was delayed for several weeks. During those weeks, WLS and 5 other

Chicago stations broadcast class sessions. Chicago newspapers printed the class schedules.

The 1937 flood of much of the Ohio River valley was described as the then largest natural disaster to hit the United States. WLS listeners contributed more than \$100,000 for relief of citizens of Indiana and Ohio. During those years, 25 cents was a significant amount of money, and probably was about the average size of the flood contributions.

In 1934, WLS received 1,051,041 letters. One week they received over 67,000, partly due to a contest or premium offer. They did schedule occasional contests with prizes that are negligible by today's standards.

Occasionally, a doctor or hospital would call the station about a need for donations for blood for specific patients. One such call for the needs of a boy resulted in about 200 volunteers calling the hospital or station within an hour or two.

The station regretfully announced that it could not broadcast missing person reports as several hundred people disappeared monthly into a metropolis the size of Chicago. Hopefully most of the disappearances were temporary as newcomers hoping to make their fortune likely had some very hazardous employment and residence situations in their early days in the city.

Although WLS did not have

many live play-by-play sports broadcasts, *Stand By!* listed the events carried by other stations. Baseball wasn't mentioned; broadcasts of every game every year did not go back as far as less frequently occurring events did. Events carried by other Chicago stations included rowing (Yale-Harvard, the Poughkeepsie Regatta, Oxford-Cambridge), horse races, amateur boxing championships from Yankee Stadium, the Bears versus the College All-Americans, tennis (the Forest Hills National Championships, now the U. S. Open, and the international Wrightman Cup), the National Air Races, boxing, the national softball tournament, and the Indianapolis 500. Sportscasts were mainly on WGN, WMAQ, and WBBM, the same stations if not the

same call letters as today. WGN carried the Bears and all Blackhawk home games.

College football was prominent. Northwestern, Illinois, and Notre Dame games were well-covered, especially home games. Rose Bowl, Sugar Bowl, and Army-Navy games were carried by the networks.

As you might guess, 160 plus magazines of 16 to 20 pages contain enough information to make a summarization go on and on. I have gone on and on; there is more I haven't covered, but I will finish this with my expression of appreciation for your attention to this scan of an example of an extremely popular interactive media situation that occurred long before "interactive media" became created as a phrase.

*Andy Ooms oomspine@msn.com
February 2012, Redondo Beach, CA*

Congratulations to Don Yost for his election to the office of IHRS Treasurer! From this time forward send your membership renewal and address change to Don Yost, 3814 E 400 N, Windfall, IN 46076. See the inside back cover of the Bulletin for complete IHRS Officer contact information.

Many, many thanks to Herman and Shirley Gross for their years of taking care of the Indiana Historical Radio Society. Herman has held the title of Treasurer, Secretary, Vice President, and President with Shirley sharing the load with him. Integral to a successful IHRS gathering is a smooth operating registration desk—Shirley and Herman have provided that—frequently missing out on much of the fun a meet has to offer.

Again—THANKS Herman and Shirley! Now you can walk in the door and enjoy the day!

Delco R-1129 A Restoration Project

By: Jeremy Schotter

Brand: Delco by United Motors

Year Of Manufacture: 1938

Frequency Range: 550-1600KC

Tube lineup: 5Y3G Rectifier, 6F6G Output, 6Q7G 1st Audio/AVC/2nd Det, 6K7

I.F. Amp, 6L7G 1st. Det, 6C5G Oscillator, 6G5G Tuning Eye

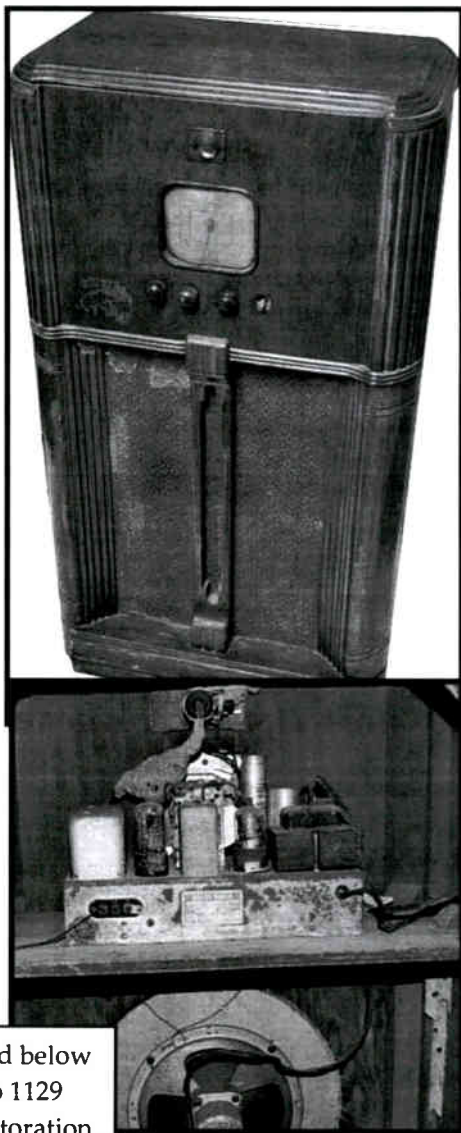
Schematic: Available at [Nostalgia Air](#). Riders 9-27

This radio was purchased at the 2008 Fall IHRS meet in Greenfield, Indiana. Like many of my acquisitions, the big question of "why?" comes to mind. Obviously this one was mostly complete, but riddled with water and insect damage. The price was right, but it would easily be a costly and time consuming project.

Upon disassembly, it was realized that the radio had been used as some sort of mud dauber metropolis. The top and bottom of the chassis were caked with hard-as-rock mud dauber nests.

Electronic restoration would begin with a very thorough cleaning of the chassis. Luckily, most of the old nests crumbled when tapped with a screwdriver. After the mud dauber nests were removed and vacuumed up, the chassis was washed with carburetor cleaner to remove the remaining mud and grease film. Apparently this was a well used radio in it's former life, as most of the components had been re-

Above and below
The Delco 1129
before restoration.





Mud Dobber cleanup—the first task on the Delco 1129 chassis.

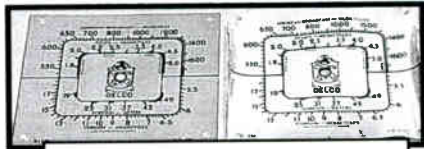
The power transformer, all of the tubes, the volume control, and most of the capacitors were replacements.

Once the filter capacitors had been changed, the set was powered up on a metered variac/isolation transformer. Everything looked good at this point, now it was time to replace the rest of the paper capacitors. Once all the capacitors were replaced, the radio was making sounds, but there was a lot of oscillation (squealing), and only a few strong stations could be received when the volume control was set to maximum. My first attempt to remedy the squealing was to check component lead and wire dressing. I also checked grounds

and shields. Everything seemed good.

Since the squealing changed with the position of the volume control potentiometer, it was checked for continuity and resistance. The volume pot was found to be open. A new one from my parts supply that closely matched the size and specs was installed. The radio was now working as it should. An alignment was performed to improve on performance.

The dial scale would have to be



After - Before
Dial replacement.

replaced. The original was warped and faded due to water damage. Radiodaze carries a reproduction for this model, which was a perfect copy. One of the original knobs was also missing. An original was purchased from David Frush.

The cabinet would need several repairs, not to mention a complete refinish job. The cabinet had been refinished sometime in the past, and badly done. Citri-strip was used to remove the old finish.

Once cleaned and dry, several joints and patches of veneer had to be reglued. Once the wood repairs were complete, Bartly's wood filler

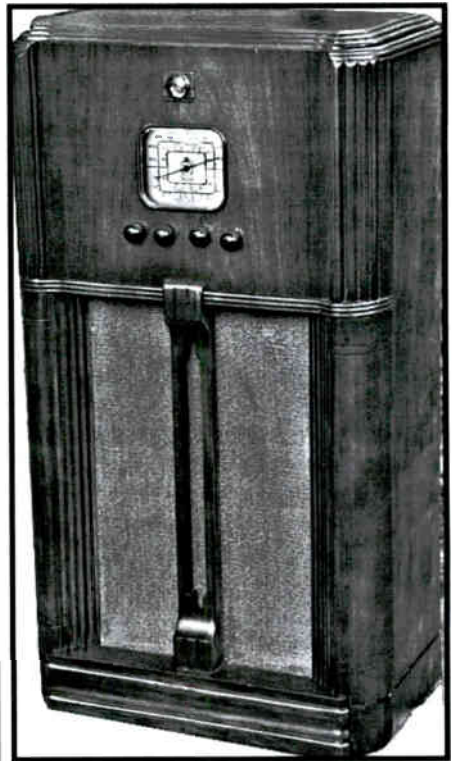
was applied. After drying overnight, the cabinet was sanded.

A new finish was built using Mohawk toning lacquers and Deft Gloss



Delco 1129 cabinet reglue.

sprayed using a Critter spray gun. A new dial cover was made by using a custom mold made from 1/4 inch plywood, some .020" clear plastic sheeting, and a heat gun. The origi-



The restored Delco 1129



Bartly's Wood Filler was used to prepare the cabinet surface for a new finish.

nal grill cloth was decent, but faded. The reverse side lacked some of the designs of the front, but it was clean and retained it's original color. So the grill cloth was lightly vacuumed, removed and reversed. *Jeremy*

THE ESQUIRE

No. R-1129—110 Volts—7 Tubes

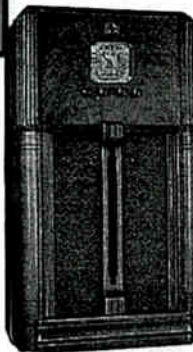
CABINET—Instrument panel beautifully matched heart Walnut. Selected mouldings and top nicely finished in Nutone Walnut. Size, 38" high, 21 1/4" wide, 11 3/4" deep.

BANDS—3, American, Foreign, Police-Amateur from 540 Kilocycles to 18 Megacycles.

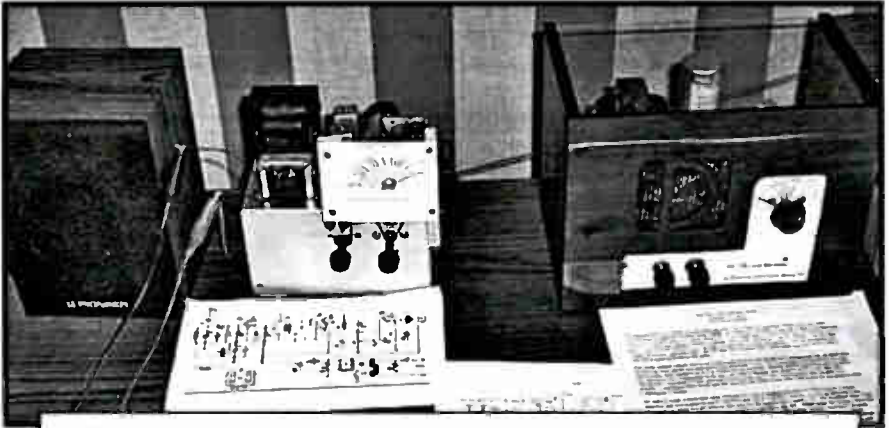
CHASSIS—7 glass octal base tubes. Tone selector. 8" electro-dynamic speaker. Three-gang tuning condenser. Automatic antenna selector. Dual line filters.

DIAL—4"x4 1/2" Sunbeam pillow shaped with positive band indication. Robot eye. Beautiful two-toned escutcheon plate.

No. R-1129. Each \$59.95



Results of the "DIY One Tube Receiver" Contest IHR Spring Meet 2014

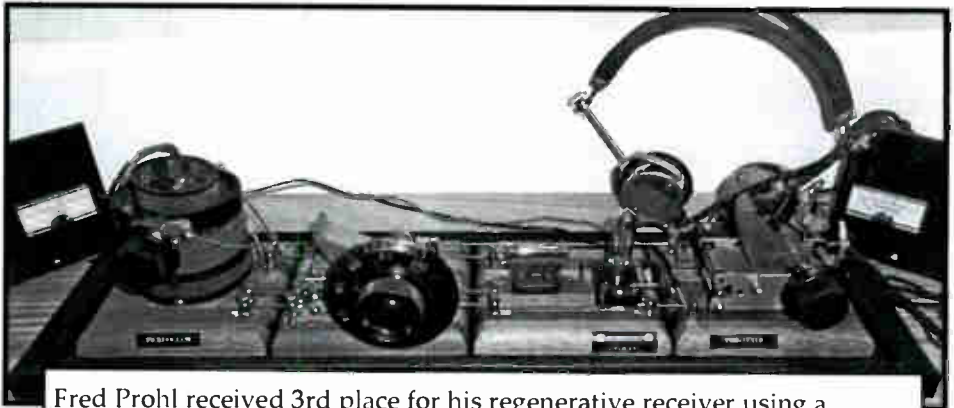
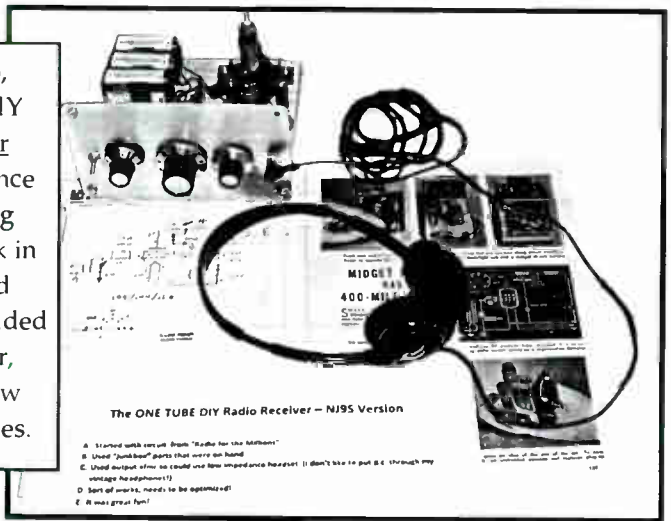


Ed Dupart swept first and second place with his two entries in the one tube receiver contest. The receiver on the left uses a 6AF11 tube in a regenerative circuit. On the right, Ed constructed a superhet around a 6AF11 tube. Congratulations Ed!



Bill Morris submitted two entries, both of the one tube receivers are rebuilds from vintage publications: Shortwave Craft's "Minidyne" and Popular Mechanics' "Pockette Radio".

Bruno Trimboli, NJ9S, used the One Tube DIY circuit from Radio For the Millions as reference for his project. Calling the receiver his “work in progress”, Bruno used junk box parts and added an output transformer, allowing the use of low impedance headphones.



Fred Prohl received 3rd place for his regenerative receiver using a WE215A and 1920's parts. Circuit reference was from Elements of Radio, Marcus, 1948. The receiver was constructed so one could “see the electrons flow” from antenna to headphones.

Bob Pote entered this nicely constructed one tube (triode) kit receiver for the contest. The kit is available at arcsandsparks.com (PV Scientific Instruments)

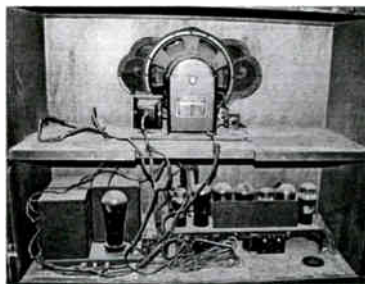




Submit your "FREE TO CURRENT MEMBER" RadioAd by the 15th of February, May, August, or November in time for the Bulletin issue that follows.

Wanted: Audio frequency transformer. Federal #226, for Federal model DX58 radio. Contact Richard Ender, E-mail rmend@provide.net or phone 734-439-2545. 03/14

For Sale: AK Breadboard, a lead from IHRS member George Clemans. Appears to be a Model 10. Missing rheostat and has chip in cover plate. For further details and contact information: clemans@bgsu.edu or (419) 352-7198 07/14



For Sale: A circa 1928 RCA Radiola 60 and Magnavix Dynamic 80 speaker in a custom cabinet.. The cabinet appears to be built by a furniture store or other assembler and is in generally restorable condition. The speaker needs re-coning (surround is dried out). A unique high-boy console set. \$150.00 For further information contact John Foell at John_D_Foell@raytheon.com or call 260-627-0127. 03/14

For Sale: REPRODUCTION RADIO BATTERIES: I've developed replica battery solutions for most tube and transistor radios--batteries that have not been available for nearly thirty years. They look, they feel and they work--just like the originals! Plus, they are a reusable resource. Inside are holders for AA, C, D and 9-volt batteries. When the batteries wear out, simply remove them and install new ones. Contact Bill Morris at batterymaker@gmail.com or at 317-895-1334. 03/14

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Activities, business,
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Sites and dates of meets

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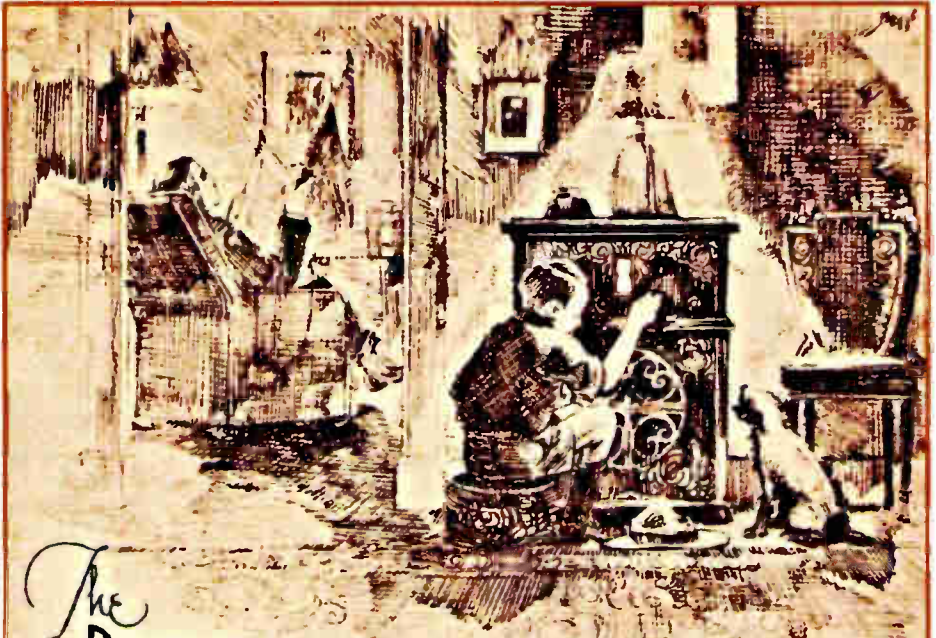
News articles, radio ads, photos
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Bulletin Deadlines: News, Articles & Radio Ads, 2/15, 5/15, 8/15, 11/15
IHRS Web site address: www.indianahistoricalradio.org

The INDIANA HISTORICAL RADIO SOCIETY is a non-profit organization founded in 1971. Annual membership dues of \$15.00 includes the quarterly IHRS "BULLETIN." Radio-Ads are free to all members. Please include an S.A.S.E. when requesting information. Send applications for membership and renewals to Herman Gross, our treasurer as noted above.

The BULLETIN
A publication of the Indiana Historical Radio Society
Forty-three years of documenting early radio.



The RADIO

Since Pa put in the radio we have a lot of fun.
We hustle to my room upstairs as soon as supper's done
And Pa he tinkers with the discs to get it loud and clear,
Then says: "Wait just a minute now, there's nothing yet to hear.
Oh, now it's coming! Silence there! Now don't you move a thing.
Say Ma, this is a marvelous age – a lady's going to sing!"

Then Pa takes up the thing awhile and says: "Oh, that's just great!
A man is telling stories now. You kids will have to wait.
It's wonderful to think his voice is floating in the air
And people sitting in their homes can hear it everywhere -
All right, all right! It's your turn now. Perhaps this man will teach
You youngsters how you should behave. A parson's going to preach."

Pa put that radio in for me – at least he told me so.
But if it's really mine or not, is something I don't know.
'Coz Pa he wants it all himself, to hear the funny things,
An' Ma must hear the concerts through when some great artist sings.
But when the parson starts to talk on Selfishness an' Sin
Pa says: "Now has come the time for you to listen in."

EDGAR A. GUEST