

ARCHIVES

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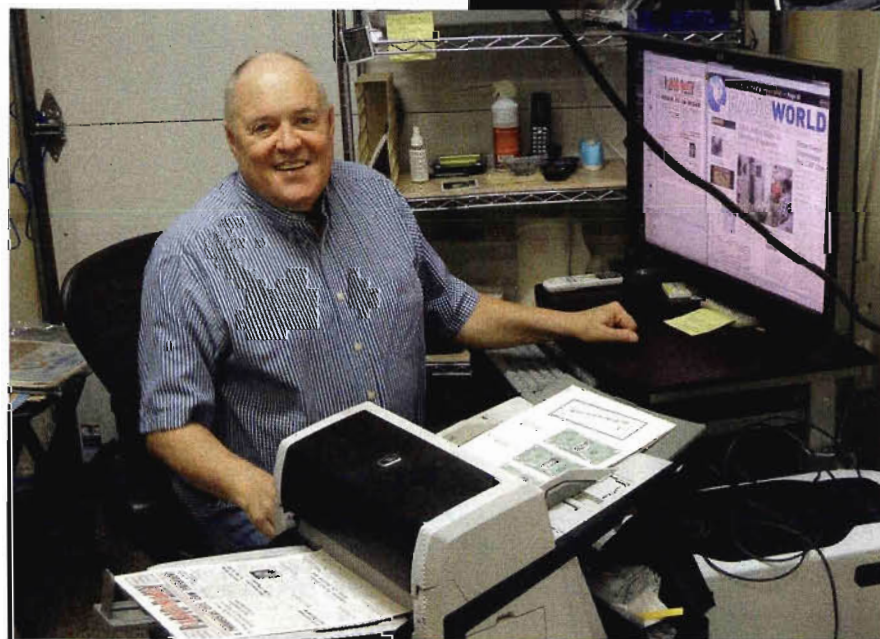
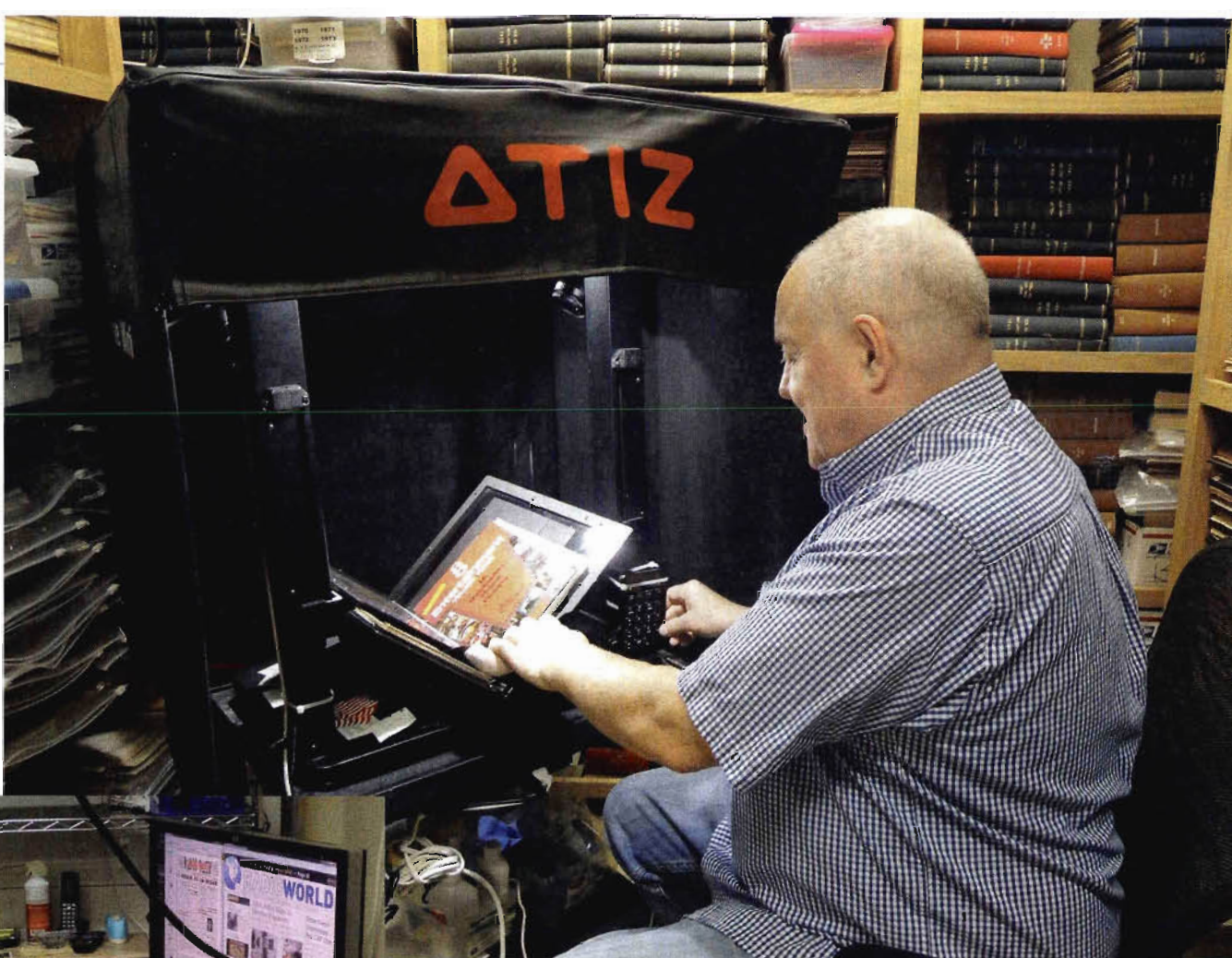
Gleason gained engineering experience and later built stations in South America. Eventually he got his “first ticket” from the FCC.

“When I was completing high school in Ecuador, I picked up a license for a full-time AM on 570. After I bought all the equipment, I found nobody there had experience with solid-state devices, and no one had ever seen a cart machine!”

“So while we were waiting for the studios to be built, I sped through several Cleveland Institute home study courses and, amazingly, was able to install the studios myself. From 1964-1970 I was chief engineer of what became a 12-station group.”

THE MAN LOVES RADIO

Gleason is simply fascinated by the technical side of radio.



Hard at work with all the tools he needs: a computer and a Fujitsu fl6670 scanner.

Ready to scan: Gleason uses the Atiz Bookscan Mini for archiving, which includes a ‘darkroom’ hood.

“There was one magazine called Radio Digest, which was published from 1922–1927 which had articles about stations of the day,” he said. “That magazine was beautifully illustrated and written. Sometimes when I’m scanning things, it takes me four times as long because I stop to read the pages.”

In addition to amassing radio arcana, Gleason had to teach himself Web development.

“All the scans on my site have been OCR’d (converted using Optical Character Recognition) so that everything of significance has a searchable index. So if you are interested in WSM(AM) between 1940–1950, you type that in and see every reference from that decade. This is something that even a library doesn’t have available.”

In order to store all the hard copies in his collection, Gleason built a climate-controlled extension onto his garage. Some especially rare publications are sealed in plastic bags.

Radio World asked Gleason to name the one item he could never get, the “holy grail” he would like to add to his collection.

“The first 50 issues of RCA Broadcast News,” he said. “They are such beautiful magazines graphically. I’ve found several people who have large collections from the late ‘40s to when it ended in 1984. I would sure like to have the pre-1947 issues.”

Other magazines he would love to add are the earliest issues of Broadcast Engineering and BM/E (Broadcast Management and Engineering).

NOW AND FOREVER

Gleason has given some thought to what will happen to his radio archives when he is no longer around to maintain it.

“I want to make sure there are custodians for the raw data,” he said. “And I am setting up an endowment to take care of keeping the server up in perpetuity. Also I need to find radio fans that care for and love what this represents.”

David Gleason wants to get the word out to anyone who has printed material that should be preserved.

“I’ll send them a shipping label, pre-paid,” he said. “I can even scan the items that people have and send them back.”

Your donation is not tax-deductible, but Gleason said that is not an issue.

“We don’t yet have a non-profit set up,” he said. “But the kind of documents I have on the site have limited appraisal value, other than that derived from the contributor when he makes scarce things available to others for the future.”

How about it, Radio World readers? Write to david@americanradiohistory.com.

Ken Deutsch is a bit of a radio relic himself. He can be reached at ken@kenddeutsch.com.

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