

The
Call Letter

of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society

Vol. 23

February 1997

No. 2

The Cover Image Is Not Available

In print since 1974

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 \$15.00 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 members the *Call Letter* has continued to be a publication that both informs members of the society’s business and that has supported 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 Buena Vista Club House at 16th & Jackson Streets in Oregon City, Oregon. They convene at or about 10 AM for the purpose of displaying radios, conducting Society business, and exchanging information. Guests are welcome at all Society meetings and functions (except board meetings).

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

Society Officers:

President	Jerry Talbott	(503) 649-6717
Vice President	Tony Hauser	(503) 629-4836
Treasurer	Ed Charman	(503) 654-7387
Secretary	Dan Howard	(503) 761-7799
Board member at large	Greg Bonn	(503) 642-5097
<i>Call Letter</i> Editor	Rick Walton	(503) 284-5648

The Society’s address is:
The Northwest Vintage Radio Society
Post Office Box 82379
Portland, Oregon 97282-0379

February 1997

Table of Contents

Meeting Minutes.....	2
From the (New) Editor	3
Wanderin' the Web.....	4
In the Shack	5
Atmospherica.....	8
Twenty Years Ago	9
Swap Shop.....	10

The *CALL LETTER*

Editor, Rick Walton, (503) 284-5648, rwalton@mtsi.com

Call Letter Deadline

20th of the month

prior to publication.

The next meeting of the NWVRS is on February 8,
at the Buena Vista Clubhouse, 16th and Jackson
streets in Oregon City.

See you there!

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.

Meeting Minutes

By Secretary Dan Howard

The January 11th meeting of the NW Vintage Radio Society was called to order by President Jerry Talbot at 10:00 am with 40 members in attendance. The minutes from the last meeting were approved. The treasurer's report was reviewed and approved.

Old Business

David Rutland is still taking orders for imprinted materials. The society will be sharing space at the May swap meet with The Portland Amateur Radio Club and The Triode Society. The Sounds of Nostalgia show will in fact be on February 9th instead of in March as earlier reported.

The club banner was found and brought to the meeting. Galen Feight will keep it until the display in Salem. Brian Toon will be storing the "Swap Meet" signs on behalf of the society.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to charge \$2.00 for admission at the May swap meet.

Business was temporarily suspended while members viewed the "tiniest tube radio" display.

After reconvening the meeting, Jerry mentioned that the society is soliciting a bid to provide a number of new titles for the library. A decision to purchase will be brought before the membership once the bid is received.

New Business

Jerry provided building keys to the Treasurer, the Vice President, and to Rudy Zvarich, who volunteered to make coffee. The club discussed various alternatives for storing the coffee maker and other materials at the building.

Jerry suggested that the club might be better off to sell the television and VCR which were purchased recently. A motion was

made, seconded, and approved to do so. Bids were taken and both items were sold to members in attendance.

A motion was made and seconded to purchase three “nostalgia” video tapes for the library. The motion did not pass.

Vice President Tony Hauser presented a tentative meeting calendar for 1997. The membership elected to move the Fall swap meet to November 1st (pending building availability).

Good and Welfare and Leads and Needs were given.

The January meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am.

From the (New) Editor

by Call Letter Editor, Rick Walton

It feels a bit strange seeing my name next to that byline, but for better or for worse, there it is and now this venerable publication is my responsibility.

I’m easing into this job with the greatly appreciated help of Dick Karman. He is graciously and generously helping me to take the ropes and get the Call Letter to you before the monthly meeting. I sincerely thank Dick for agreeing to publish last month’s issue when it became apparent that I wasn’t yet up to the task. And I thank him for providing the cover for this issue.

I look forward to getting to know many of you better and continuing the tradition of service that has existed for the 20+ years that the *Call Letter* has been serving the members of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society.



Wandering on the Web

by Dick Karman

This month beautiful pictures caught my eye. Take a look at the over 80 radios that are in The Classic Radio Gallery by Merrill L. Mabbs. The photographs of vintage radios are in full color and very nice detail. <http://cpu.net/classicradio/>

The Crosley radio on the cover this month is found at <http://cpu.net/classicradio/radios/crosley10-135.gif>

John Jenkins Vintage Radio site has the Frames design and produces a very pleasing effect. (it is a CompuServe site and as such is pretty slow during peak hours.) http://ourworld.compuServe.com/homepages/johnj_Radios/

Last of the picture shows is Lin Robertson's Old-Time Radio Page "Your Gold-Plated, Vacuum-Tubed, Mahogany-Veneered Communications Shrine On The Web!"

This site uses "True Speech" for its sound bites so many folks won't have the patience to wait for the sounds to load, but the photos, the way they are laid out, and links to other sites are very nice. <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/1630/otr.html>



A Mystery Radio

Did you ever come across a radio that you know nothing about? Well, sometime in your radio collecting ventures, I can almost guarantee you that it will happen!

It happened to me a few years ago when I was prowling through one of my favorite junk shops, on the Oregon Coast. I spotted a wooden table radio from the mid 1930's stuffed in a shelf among a bunch of typical junk store "flotsam and jetsam". I could see a very Zenith looking black airplane dial looking at me through the junk.

As I dug it out with much anticipation, I got a better look at a neat little table set with a black dial, a round speaker grille to the left of the dial and three knobs set in a triangular pattern. I liked the looks of the set; the speedy looking machine age type wood cut in the speaker grille and the rectangular shaped "lay down" cabinet. A lay down cabinet?.....Well?...Yes!

In the mid 1930's a lay down cabinet referred to a cabinet with a curved top edge on the front, or a waterfall effect, giving it a smooth appearance instead of a plain square box.

I could see no name on the front of the cabinet, nor on the dial. The cabinet had been painted several times, about 10 times perhaps! So there was no chance of a name on the front. I looked in back, no tag or decal inside the back, nothing on the chassis but F-5 in bold letters on the back of the chassis, and an original decal from whoever sold it new, or repaired it sometime. The decal said, "Wagner's Radio and Appliance Co., Sales, Service, Records, GARfield 6161, 3520 N.E. 42nd Ave..." Nice, but no brand name!

The chassis looked well made and was a 5 tube set using a 6A7, 6D6, 75, 42 and an 80, all tall ST type tubes. I pulled the tubes, looking for clues, now getting rather frustrated. On the back of the tuning condenser I found "Reliance Die and Stamping Co. Chicago, Illinois".....still no brand. The back of the speaker had a date stamped on it: 11-36. Well, that was neat but no brand there. Hoping for a last chance, I looked on the underside of the cabinet....NADA!

Oh well, I decided I liked the radio and the price was right. It had a neat looking black dial with the top portion a BC band with numbers from 550 to 170. The bottom portion was a short wave band with numbers from 200 to 700, (2mc. to 7 mc.)...OK, OK...MHZ.! With 3 knobs in a triangular pattern, the left knob was a band selector, middle knob a tuner, placed between the speaker and dial and the right knob was on-off/volume.

But, It wasn't a Zenith, although a fair imitation of one. I bought the little jewel and took it back to the motel, set it on the table by the window. With the mighty Pacific Ocean in the background, looming like a large mirror for exotic short wave DX, I hooked a length of wire to the antenna lead, plugged it in and flicked the switch. With a faint hum of the mighty transformer, it soon came to life. My wife immediately liked the way the dial looked at night, and decided I should have it after all. The top half lights up red and the bottom half lights up a bright green. "Wow!" she exclaimed, "You don't have one like that, do you Mikie. What kind is it"? I just looked at her and said, "Don't ask"!

The little hummer performed quite well through the night, pulling in a good amount of short wave and broadcast DX. When we got back home, I took it up "IN THE SHACK" and put it aside for a while vowing to find out the brand if it took years. I took it to the next NWVRS meeting hoping for some clues, but got none. Still, a mystery radio!

Several years later, while we were on vacation in Sequim, WA., we were cruising through yet another junk store that had no old radios for sale. I spotted a rest room in the back and asked if I could use it. With permission, I went there and on the way out I looked at the usual "No Admittance" room. Looking through the door, high on a pile of furniture, etc. in the corner was this very same radio!

I could tell that it had its original finish and at the bottom of the front of the cabinet was a small, oval shaped metal name tag. Of course, it was too far away to read the tag.

Barely able to contain myself, I asked the lady if I could go in and look at the radio. "I'm sorry" she said, "I can't let you do that. I just work here and the owner won't be in until tomorrow, but come back then. I'm sure he will let you in."

After a rather sleepless night, tossing and turning in anticipation, the next morning we beat it back to the shop. The owner was indeed there and after I asked to see the set and explained why, he let me have a look. After wading through piles of junk, at last I got close enough to take a look. The radio was in excellent original condition and with my heart pounding, here was the moment I had been waiting for.

Inscribed on the small oval tag was the name.....ADMIRAL! I asked the owner if he would sell it but it turned out that he would not because it was his personal radio. He had brought it out here from Iowa years ago and it had belonged to his aunt Minnie, etc. etc. and it was clearly not for sale. Astounded by the events of the day, I left with the thought, "wait long enough and the mystery will unfold!"

Ironically, later on I was prowling through the Goodwill one day and there was the same radio, in a crude wooden cabinet. I bought it for \$8. Even later, I was at a yard sale and for a mere \$3, I bought a complete set with original finish and the name tag.

At last, I had found a complete set. The little Admiral radio just needed refinishing but worked great. Inside the cabinet was a paper label, just hanging by a corner! It said Admiral Model 980-5X

I guess the moral to this story is; Have patience, if you wait long enough, you will find a clue to your Mystery Radio.....Or, you may not!

See you next time.....IN THE SHACK.



“Caveat Emptor”

*He said, “How d’ya do”, normal enough
And, “I’m sure pleased to meetcher”,
But I found out this character was
A strange and conniving creature.*

*He had some old radios put away
In a careful, and tidy fashion;
He loved each one in a different way,
With a deep paternal passion.*

*I knew I was in trouble here, sure,
If I expected a bargain here;
I wondered if he’d someone to leave them to,
When he shucked this mortal sphere.*

*He reluctantly sold a METEOR,
For an astronomic sum,
And I left the weeping old codger,
Ashamed of the cad I’d become.*

*But I’m now all over my grief,
Since I learned the truth from a friend,
That SHYSTER had bought all those radios,
At a FLEA MARKET over in Bend!!*

This “*Atmospheric*” by Tommy James, legendary poet of the NWVRS, was published in the February, 1977 issue of *The Call Letter*.

Twenty Years Ago . . .

From *The Call Letter* of February, 1977.

An Imaginary Look Into the Future!

Portland (UP) Northwest Vintage Radio Society, founded a scant ten years ago and dedicated to the restoration and preservation of antique radio has just opened their new museum, covering two acres at the corner of Bennet & Hammersly in downtown Philcoville. Over 1000 radios and many associated exhibits are on view to the public on a donation basis, and of special interest is the new DE FOREST HALL containing rare specimens of De Forests early experiments in wireless. The members of the NWVRS had this dream years ago and thru their diligent efforts have caused this to become a reality. As well as the display area they have a large meeting, a workshop for refinishing & restoring antique radio cabinets, a fully equipped electronic workshop, a very large library full of books dealing with every phase of radio, a cafeteria which serves a special "AK Burger" which they claim is unique since it is cooked over a smoking radio! They claim an enrollment of over 10,000 members all over the U.S. & overseas. Other activities carried on by the club are seminars of all sorts dealing with every aspect of antique radio, work with the local school systems, shows put on in different cities in the land to bring the magic of early day radio before the public and helping in many ways to further the interest in antique radio. A future plan is to donate to our Smithsonian Institution a group of surplus old sets with which they can establish a national museum room of antique radio for all United States citizens to enjoy. We congratulate this group for their very worthy efforts in providing a needed and most interesting museum for the perpetuation of one of America's bits of nostalgia, Antique Radio.

SOUND LIKE A "FAR-FETCHED DREAM, FELLAS?? Think about it a while and feel the pride well up in you in having this become a reality we can do it a step at a time by drawing up plans NOW and working like hell for the NORTHWEST VINTAGE RADIO SOCIETY and not just our own little world of collecting!

This is just an idea but maybe it could work like this on a timetable sort of plan

- 1st Incorporation - 1 year
- 2nd Land purchase, paid by club activities - 2 years to accomplish
- 3rd Foundtion laid, by monies made thru club ventures - 2 yrs.
- 4th Building put up in same manner, small at first but designed in such a manner as to be able to add to later - 3 yrs.
- 5th Installing permanent displays most of which is available right now (Editor would donate All my collection to a worth cause like this)
- 6th On to even bigger & better things!

Remember how many things were just a “dream” before they were a reality, including our own little club which started only as an idea in the back of Sandy Bilbie’s mind ... as a matter of fact . . . most of us back in the “founding days” of the NWVRS laughed at her saying that we file that it could not be done! (We started with 5 interested parties and a month later had 35 CHARTER MEMBERS!! Yes, fellas this could become a reality . . . give it some thought and we’ll talk about it at one of our meetingsEditor & Pres., Bob Bilbie

Swap Shop

FOR SALE: Zenith 15-U-270 completely restored \$895. Michael Kerns, Culp Creek, Oregon (541) 946-1045.

FOR SALE: Thousands of tubes, hundreds of radio parts, panels, meters, surplus, etc. R5-D3 electronic surplus, Bob Lee, 6111 SE 82nd Ave., Portland, OR, (503) 774-6560.

FOR SALE: Zenith Radio/Phono Combo, vintage 1946 or so, AM/FM/SW - recently worked; chassis is stamped with number 11-C-21. Ed Schiller (503) 244-9664 - Make offer.

FOR SALE: Vintage Ham Radio Equipment, several sets, includes a Drake TR- 3 transceiver. For full list send a SASE. Also for sale a 1939 Philco Console model 39-40 price \$50. Bud Larson, W7LNG, 1325 Ridge Way, Medford, OR 97504. (541) 773-5214.

FOR SALE: DeForest Audion DV2 with original spec sheet dated November 1924 _nearly new; Variable Capacitors, 2 Gilfillan (chrome plated) and one Cardwell in excellent shape. Serious offered considered, Richard Romanek, 88946 Lisoski Lane, Veneta, Oregon 97487, (541) 935-4186.

FOR SALE: Books, about 20 titles of *The Radio Boys*. Call if interested, otherwise these books will be for sale at Rickreall. Dan Howard, (503)761-7799.

FOR SALE or Trade: Early Atwater Kent Breadboard with Variometers, Radiola R5, Paragon RA-10 with DA2 amp, Packard Cathedral, 1927 Tube tester, Edison Triumph reproducer with Sygnet Horn, Victor with wooden horn, More Radios and Test Equipment Galore. Contact Chuck Seidel, Box 1385, Merlin, OR 97532, (541) 474-2596.

FOR SALE or Trade: Over 400 78's (records) in excellent condition. \$1 each or will trade for radios. Records are of Glenn Miller, Tommy & Jimmy Dorsey, Sammy Kaye, Tex Beneke, Eddy Howard, etc. Also Bing Crosby, Margaret Whiting, Dinah Shore, etc. Contact Howard Burgoyne, West Linn, OR, (503) 650-3828.

FOR SALE or Trade: Knight console, sliding doors (circa 1930 or '32), working condition - \$60 or will swap for table radio or tapes.
Philco - console r/p, model #52-1730. No r/p. \$25.
Magnavox - console r/p. Model 81-49 -late 40's. Works. \$25.
General Electric - console r/p, 1941, model LC-619. Good condition, needs speaker - \$40.
Flashing neon Export (beer) light. New in box, about 2 feet high - value \$200. Will swap for ? --
Contact Howard Burgoyne, West Linn, OR, (503) 650-3828.

FREE to a good home: Twelve-year collection of the *Call Letter*, April '85 to December '96. Contact Dan Howard, (503)761-7799.

WANTED: Vintage amateur radio receivers, AM transmitters, and other related amateur gear (circa: 1936 to 1960). ARRL Handbooks from 1935 to 1954. Ken Seymour (KA7OSM); 9115 S.W. 176th Avenue, Beaverton, OR 97007; 503-306- 7439 days/eve. Email: ken.seymour@attws.com

WANTED: WD12 Peanut tubes working or duds OK. (Navy Base - 4 flat contacts like panel lights) Call Bruce Russell collect at home (604) 299-1116, or Work (604) 298-1038 (or packet VE7HII @ VE7ROB).

Leads:

FOR SALE: **Magnificent Magnavox** (1951?), console, AM/FM, Stereo Phono. All tube with “magic eye” tuning indicator. Single owner, purchased at Joseph & Lucas Music in Portland. Located in SE Portland. Needs a home. Make an offer to Tracy Spencer, 231-1317.

FOR SALE: Philco Model 70 Grandfather Clock Radio in excellent condition, working clock and all: \$550.00 (negotiable) Call Phyllis Butcher at (503) 556- 2430 in Ranier, OR.

FOR SALE: General Electric Model L-150 superhet, 115 volts AC or DC (lights up) make offer. Call Don Ellis in White Salmon, WA (509) 493-3137.

FOR SALE: TUBES Pickard Audion, clear glass, 2 external wires from top, one from the bottom, brass base; UV 202 Radiotron, brass base, 4 pin, may be broken; DeForest double Spherical Audion, white ceramic base, red and green color-coded leads; Pickard Golden Audion, Candelabra brass base, only serious offers considered. Eric Page, 797 Waverly Ave, Holtsville, NY 11742-1107.

FOR SALE: Zenith Royal Transoceanic with Chassis #500MDR70, excellent working condition AC or DC, \$500. Steve Stewart, 2836 Metolius Dr., Eugene, OR 97408. (541) 345-0329.

FOR SALE: Collection – 45 radio Receivers including AK, Brunswick, Kennedy, Grebe, Freed Eisenmann, western electric; 17 table model speakers, ad parts. Selling as a package, \$10,000, James Zordich, (503) 663-0115, Boring, OR.