

The

Call Letter

of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society

Vol. 24

January 1998

No. 1

Happy New Year
1998
New Year Happy

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	Dave Rutland	(541) 929-4498
Vice President	George Kirkwood	(503) 648-4809
Treasurer	Ed Charman	(503) 654-7387
Secretary	Liles Garcia	(503) 649-9288
Board member at large	Jerry Talbott	(503) 649-6717
<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

January 1998 Contents

From the Editor.....	2
1998 NWVRS Calendar of Events.....	2
Meeting Minutes.....	3
In The Shack.....	4
Swap Shop.....	7
The <i>CALL LETTER</i>	
Editor, Rick Walton, (503) 284-5648, rwalton@teleport.com	

**Call Letter Deadline
20th of the month
prior to publication.**

The next NWVRS meeting will be January 10 at the Buena Vista Clubhouse in Oregon City. Monthly feature: homemade crystal or tube sets.
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Visit the NWVRS web site at:
<http://www.artdeco.com/nvrs>

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

A new year begins and already I feel behind. Not a good sign! The busy-ness of the holidays has left me totally disorganized. Consequently, this month's *Call Letter* is skinnier than usual.

Earlier this month I received phone calls from two members about an address change and about non-receipt of the *Call Letter*. Much to my dismay, I've lost the information given to me. I apologize and ask that you contact me again. I promise I'll be more careful with the information you give me.

I also received a call from a member of the PSARA asking about using Dick Karman's excellent Passing Parade article from last month. I referred him to Dick. His call reminded me of the close ties we've had in the past with the Puget Sound club. In coming months, I hope to share articles with them

Perhaps those of you who subscribe to Antique Radio Classified saw the article about club newsletters in which the author felt that newsletters like ours should probably not try to carry technical or other hobby-related articles. I've not responded to his call for opinions – yet. Needless to say, I disagree with his premise. You need only read the contributions each month of NWVRS members Mike Parker and Dick Karman, or articles from other clubs reprinted in the pages of the *Call Letter*, to realize that our club newsletter performs a service to our membership beyond just being a vehicle for the minutes and upcoming events.

Speaking of Mike Parker, don't miss IN THE SHACK in this issue.

1998 NWVRS Calendar of Events

Not yet available.

Meeting Minutes

Dan Howard, Secretary

December 12, 1997

The December 12, 1997 meeting was called to order by President Jerry Talbott at 10:00 AM with 26 members and guests in attendance. The November minutes were approved. The treasurer's report was given.

Good and Welfare

None

Old Business

By unanimous proclamation, Dave Rutland was elected president, George Kirkwood was elected vice president, Liles Garcia was elected secretary, and Ed Charman was re-elected to the Treasurer's post.

New Business

Jerry Talbott volunteered to coordinate the society display in February at Haley's flea market. Speed Feldschau has already put our name in for a number of sales and display tables. Contact either gentleman for information on participating.

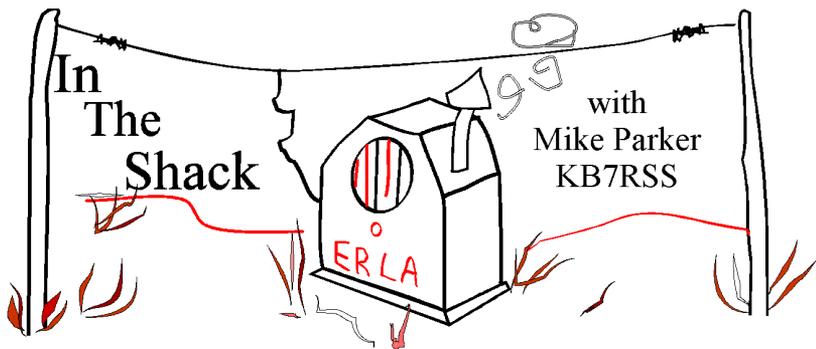
Members brought their favorite sets to display at the meeting.

Four charter members were in attendance: Jim Mason, Art Redman, Al Shadduck, and Pete Young.

Next month members are invited to bring homemade crystal or tube radios.

Leads and needs were given.

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 and was followed by a Christmas Party.



In The Shack

AIR CELL OZARKA

At the Dec. 1997 Christmas party and club meeting, Speed Feldschau had a 1928 OZARKA Model 89 Battery Set on display. A merry time was had by all at this event and some excellent radios were on display as usual, as at any of our meetings. But this particular OZARKA radio and the metal and "plaster cast" horn speaker with ornate stand that accompanied it was quite a sensation and both, seldom seen items. An inspection of the apparatus, especially inside the cabinet, told quite a story about what kind of modifications were made to keep a radio operating on batteries in let's say, the early 30's.

OZARKA was one of the more prolific "Sales Backed" radio companies during the 20's and early 30's. You ordered your OZARKA from a local door to door sales demonstrator, not in a store on a showroom floor. The OZARKA company and it's sales "drummers" were both fiercely territorial about their service areas and tended to cover many rural areas, thereby demonstrating their battery sets to many farmers who lived beyond the power lines. OZARKA was founded in 1922 by one J. Matheson Bell, of Chicago, a former merchandising manager for Montgomery Ward. Bell started the "Ozarka Plan", a sales and service program conducted by mail order to the local "factory representative" who was expected to buy the sets individually and sell them by home demonstration. The buyer also could rely on this person, always a local individual of good community standing, to service the set exclusively. The OZARKA Company kept track of its representatives and prospective customers by county names to identify the territories served. Bell claimed that he could teach the plan best to a man who previously knew nothing about

radio and therefore had nothing to "unlearn"! The plan worked very well and by 1927 OZARKA had over 4400 local representatives. The company was somewhat innovative and made a good product. They offered a portable as early as May 1924 and had a self-contained horn speaker radio in early 1925. The company actually gained in business every year, up into and including the first couple of Depression years (VIKING), but mysteriously folded in 1932.

At the meeting, looking into Speed's OZARKA 89, I noticed two interesting things. First of all, I asked him if he found it locally and he said yes. The set just looked like it had been out on a farm since 1932 and then maybe, put in storage for many years untouched. Second of all, everything that had been done to the set inside looked like it was done many years ago. This included a modification that I would like to mention. Originally the set was designed for battery operation on the usual 5-volt filament system using type 201-A tubes. However, this radio contained all type 30 triodes with a type 31 power amplifier triode for the final audio stage. These 2-volt tubes were introduced around 1930, for battery sets using the new "Air Cell" battery rated at 2.5 volts. Judging from the amount of "crud" on the type 30's in Speed's set, this conversion was probably done back in this period of time. It was a very logical conversion. After all, the radio just needed 4 prong triodes – it cared not what the filament voltage needed to be. The Air Cell battery was extremely trouble free compared to dry cells, which were always running down, or to a bulky, messy 6-volt battery. It could be called a very typical conversion of the time and I suspect this was done to many older battery sets still in use in the 1930's.

What is an "Air Cell"? This revolutionary design was a product of considerable research to get a trouble free, constant voltage, filament battery. The battery used oxygen in the surrounding air as a depolarizer instead of the manganese oxide paste used to depolarize ordinary dry cells. A newly developed porous carbon plate extracted oxygen from the atmosphere and combined the new oxygen with hydrogen on a zinc electrode to form water inside the cell. This water then combined with a sodium hydroxide or caustic soda electrolyte that was pre-installed in the battery. The Air Cell was kept tightly sealed until put into use, providing a very fresh battery when opened. The internal resistance was kept to a minimum by this process and the battery, rated at 2.5 volts new, would never fall below 2 volts, the rating of the type 30 tube, until just before discharge. The cell would then suffocate by losing it's ability to suck in oxygen. After that, you

tossed it. The Air Cell was said to provide 0.25 amperes for 2400 hours and supply an almost constant voltage until it expired. The cost was claimed to be half that of equivalent dry cells for a given radio set. The constant voltage feature was designed to take out the "guesswork" and wrong voltage problems associated with filament rheostats. New battery radios were built, just for Air Cells. Eveready used the name Air Cell, others used "1 Year A Battery".

Today, the real challenge would be to find an Air Cell that had never been used, break open the seals and see how well it worked! Speed decided at the meeting that he was going to keep the OZARKA after all. If you find a new Air Cell...give Speed a call...give ME a call! You must be in a time warp!

QSO you next time.... IN THE SHACK

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

1. Book, RADIO MANUFACTURERS OF THE 1920'S, Vol. 2, Alan Douglas, 1989, Vestal Press, Vestal, NY: Ozarka Information.

2. Book, RADIO PHYSICS COURSE, 2nd Edition, Alfred A. Ghirardi, 1933, Radio & Technical Publishing Co., New York, NY: Air Cell Battery Information.

Swap Shop

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.

RESTORATION/REPAIR SERVICES OFFERED

Quality repairs and restoration services now offered on vintage Radio, TV, Hi-Fi, & other pre-60's electronic equipment. Some small parts fabrication and location services of vintage items also offered.
Phone: Sonny Clutter, (360) 834-5741

WANTED: Parts for a Federal Model 61. Also need knobs for early WSA, RCA navy receivers. Have Federal items to trade. Please call 775-6697, Dick Howard.

WANTED: *I would like to talk with people who worked in Military Communications. Dan Howard.

WANTED: Antenna insulators and lightning arresters. 761-7799, Dan Howard.

WANTED: *Wanted: Dial glass or complete chassis and escutcheon for a Grunow 1081 Floor model radio. The dial glass is about 3 inches in diameter. Several models took the same lens, if you think you may have, let me know. Thanks in Advance. Wayne Brown 503-282-6463 or wayneb@involved.com

WANTED: A good flyback for RCA 8-inch portable TV, model 8-PT-7030. RCA Victor part number 102045. In Sams 336-14. See you at the January meeting. Glen Bricker, 1-541-942-3717.

FOR SALE: Fair supply of good used tubes from 20's and 30's such as 01A's, and 2-number tubes such as 24A, 26, 27, 41, 42, 45, 47, 75, 78, 80, and more! Also have new and used 211's and a pair of new 7591's. Glen Bricker, 1-541-942-3717.

FOR SALE: *RELOCATING OUT OF STATE : Must sell radios, parts, books, etc., Many table and floor model radios - wide variety to include Zenith, Sparton, Philco, Grunow. Misc TV's including Philco Predictas. If interested, call to arrange viewing time. Phone: Scott MacGregor (503) 661-1294, e-mail: sjmacgregor@juno.com

FOR SALE: *Vintage T-V's. Have 5 sets to sell, \$10-\$35 each. Call me for details. Jerry Talbott (503-649-6717 home) (503-627-4451 work).

Leads:

FOR SALE: *The items for sale are in SW Washington. The lady's name is Gloria Cummings and her phone # is 360-892-2203, or contact Tony Hauser, (503) 629-4836. Highlights are:

- Single & multi-unit "can" capacitors
- Resistors, diodes, and crystals
- Lamps and Speakers
- Phono cartridges, needles, coils, and transformers
- Vibrators
- Photofact and other folders
- Simpson 555 tube checker
- Hickock AC51 tube checker
- Jackson TVG2 sweep marker generator
- SECO F84 flyback tester
- EICO 400 scope
- Jackson 106 oscillator
- Simpson 485 field strength meter
- Tube caddies, parts cabinets, and tube stock shelves