

The **Call
Letter**

September, 2006
Vol. 32 — No. 9



Over **30** years in print!

The Northwest Vintage Radio Society

Post Office Box 82379
Portland, Oregon 97282-0379

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 \$25.00 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 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).

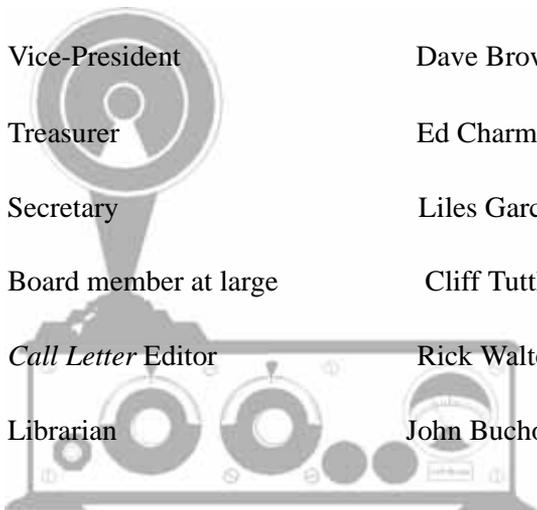
Other Society functions include guest speakers, auctions, radio show, and radio sales which are advertised in the *Call Letter* and are held in and around Portland.

With each issue of the *Call Letter*, we remember Jim Mason, a charter member of the society who remained active until his death in 1999. A generous bequest from Jim's estate ensures the vitality of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society, and continued publication of the *Call Letter*.



Society Officers for 2006:

President	George Kirkwood	(503) 648-4809 radigeo@hevanet.com
Vice-President	Dave Brown	(503) 585-4667 ironradio@qwest.net
Treasurer	Ed Charman	(503) 654-7387
Secretary	Liles Garcia	(503) 649-9288 landn2@verizon.net
Board member at large	Cliff Tuttle	(503) 666-7005 kiptuttle@aol.com
<i>Call Letter</i> Editor	Rick Walton	(503) 656-4104 rwalton@easystreet.com
Librarian	John Bucholtz	(360) 693-7135 BonJonBuck@webtv.net



September 2006

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On the cover: The September, 1929 cover from *Radio News*, “Radio’s Greatest Magazine.” This cover is copied from a beautiful 2003 wall calendar that Ron Hershey donated for this purpose a couple of years ago.

The next meeting is on September 9, 2006.

September Feature: Ugly tube radios!

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

Next Call Letter Deadline: September 30, 2006.

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 or services 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

This issue of the *Call Letter* is the first to be published totally “in-house” without the benefit of a commercial printer. This is a result of an offer at the last meeting by Blake Dietze of a printer to use for printing the *Call Letter*. As it happens, the printer used for this issue is not the one Blake offered, but is one that is on loan from my work. While there have been a couple of occasions in the past when I printed the cover or a special page, this issue marks the first time that I have printed the entire issue. By printing the newsletter on our own printer (even if it is borrowed), the club stands to save significantly over the cost of having the printing done commercially. Now about that *color* laser printer...

The bad news about doing our own printing is that it allows me to procrastinate until the very last minute in getting the *Call Letter* ready to print. That does have the advantage, though, of allowing members to send in articles up until my procrastination ceases!

This month's issue has all the usual items plus an entertaining as well as informative piece by Larry Tobkin about his attempts to cast knobs for his restoration projects. There are just a few entries in the Swap Shop (mine included), but they are worthy of note, especially Jerry Talbott's ad announcing that everything in his collection, and that is a lot, is for sale.

As has been my practice in the past, I've included the flyer for the upcoming Swap Meet (or, in more current terms, Antique Radio Sale). Now if you happen to glance at the calendar of events on the next page, you'll notice that our sale falls on the same date as the “Swap-Toberfest” in Rickreall. We need to discuss this at the upcoming meeting. While it is undoubtedly too late to change our date, perhaps there is something we can do to lessen the potential negative impact on participation in and attendance at our sale.

Roster Update

Dave Rinehart is a new member.

Dave Rinehart
16006 NE 1275th St.
Woodinville, WA 98072

If you have a change of address or phone number or e-mail or all of the above, please let us know. Contact the *Call Letter* editor.

NWVRS 2006 Calendar of Events

- September 9** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- September 17** Abernethy Grange event. NWVRS members invited.
- September 23** Spokane Hamfest. (ARRL Washington State Convention) University High School, Spokane, WA 99206. <http://www.kbara.org>. Info, contact Betsy Ashleman, N7WRQ, n7wrq@aol.com. (509)448-5821.
- October 14** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- October 14** North Kitsap Amateur Radio Club Hamfair. Bremerton, WA. Kitsap Fairgrounds. For information, contact Ron Sefton, N7EM, (360)779-5418, ronsefton@hotmail.com or Horace Ory, (360)779-2215. ory001@comcast.net. <http://www.nkarc.org/hamfest/index.html>.
- October 21** NWVRS Antique Radio Sale at Aurora VFW Hall, Aurora, Oregon.
- October 21** Swap-Toberfest, Polk County Fairgrounds, Rickreall, Oregon. (Ten miles west of Salem). For information, contact n7bud@arrl.net. <http://www.swaptoberfest.net/>
- October 28** Mount Baker Amateur Radio Club Flea Market, Lynden, WA. Always the last Saturday in October. For information, contact k7iey@netscape.net
- November 11** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30. Nomination of officers for 2007.
- December 9** NWVRS monthly meeting and annual Holiday Party 10 am. Election of officers for 2007.

NWVRS Meeting Minutes

Liles Garcia, NWVRS Secretary

President George Kirkwood called the August 12, 2006 meeting of the NorthWest Vintage Radio Society to order at 10:00 AM. George thanked Rick Walton for the picture and article about Ron Hershey that was in the August Call Letter. Members gave Rick a round of applause in appreciation of the picture and article. Liles Garcia read the minutes from the July meeting, and they were approved as printed in the Call Letter. Ed Charman gave the Treasurer's report, and it was approved as provided by Ed. Librarian John Bucholtz reported that our library is doing fine. There were 35 members at our meeting today.

Old Business

Swap Meet Signs--Bill Meloy, Sonny Clutter, and Robbie Robinson will make some signs for our Swap Meet. Members agreed that the signs should read "Antique Radio Show/Sale". George authorized Bill to buy more sign materials if needed.

New Business

Grange Event--The Abernethy Grange is having an event in September, and our Society is invited to participate. Sonny and Toni Hauser will coordinate our participation.

Increasing Membership--Bill Meloy suggested that we participate more in community functions to promote our Society's membership. Dick Bixler added that we should be doing more outreach. Members discussed various ideas to promote Society membership and increase attendance. Several members mentioned why they are in an antique radio organization. George appointed Dick Bixler to pursue some of the ideas that members discussed at our meeting. Dick asked Blake Dietze to assist him in this effort.

Leads and Needs

Dick Bixler needs two creme-colored knobs. Bob Campbell offered some service literature to be put on CD's. Rick Walton has a storage unit full of items that he no longer needs.

The program topic for our meeting today was "Radios That Have Large (over four inches), Multicolor, or Unusual Dials". Members showed and discussed the radios that they brought.

The program topic for our September meeting will be "Ugly Tube Radios".
The meeting was adjourned.

Radio Knobs

by Larry Tobkin

One of my biggest thrills with this hobby is bringing some old junker radio back to life. For me, restoring the electronics is not nearly as challenging as restoring the cabinets. The cabinet gives the radio its personality. I enjoy the looks of many different kinds of wood sets, from consoles to the smallest sets. Due to space limitations, I keep my eye open for interesting wood table-top radios that need some TLC. But one of the problems with collecting derelicts is, in many instances, that they are missing some, or all, of the knobs. This leads into my story about making knobs.

There is a little workshop in the basement of our home we call “the hole”. This is where I disappear for hours on end doing all kinds of different crazy things. I especially like projects where I can create and experiment. So one day, after one of our swap meets, I brought home a very beat up Zenith farm set with a very pretty dial. However, that is where the beauty ended. The cabinet had paper wood veneer that looked like it had ridden around in the back of a farmer’s pickup truck for 20 years. What was worse, it was missing two out of its four knobs. I looked for the knobs in Antique Radio Supply, but didn’t find an exact match. At this point I came up with a scheme for making the knobs myself. I hadn’t done an experiment like this before.

The first thing to do was cast one of the original knobs. I didn’t do a lot of research on this. As a matter of fact, I was winging it. I went to the local craft store with my wife so it would look like she was there for her girly crafts, and I was just being the supportive husband by going along. As I was too shy to ask for help, I wandered around until I found some plastic modeling clay in red, for ages 3 and up. I figured this would be safe for me, and it was relatively cheap, plus it never dries out. At least that’s what it said on the box. Then I went to a more manly store, Bi-Mart, where I found Everfix Epoxy Resin and Hardener in two 8 oz. cans. I would use this to make the new knob. Now I had collected almost everything needed for the project, but I needed something to insert in the knob to strengthen it and hold it on the shaft. I picked up some ½ inch inside diameter aluminum tubing for this. The knob shafts for this radio were split shafts with gear type edges and a split down the center.

I was now ready. So, it was time to disappear down to “the hole” where I could proceed with the experiment. I took out the clay and made a fairly big block about 4” square. Forming the block warmed up the clay. I slowly pushed the sample knob into the clay until the back of the knob was flush with the top surface of the clay. I gently pushed in on the

sides of my make-shift mold to insure a tight fit on the knob. However, I really had not considered how the knob would be removed from the mold. Luckily, there was a small flange molded into the hole where the shaft goes. After about a half hour, the clay cooled down (it is less sticky when it is cool) before I made an attempt to remove the original from the mold. This waiting period is something I forgot on subsequent tries. I very gently removed the original knob from the mold and inspected the mold for deformities. Looked good to me. So I took the top from an old aerosol can and proceeded to scientifically mix the resin and hardener. I poured in a little resin, then I poured in what looked like the same amount of hardener and stirred really well. I gently squeezed the lid to form a pouring spout, and slowly poured a thin stream of epoxy into the mold, filling it till it was almost overflowing.

The next day, or maybe two, I slipped back down to “the hole” where I tested the fresh knob by poking it with a pin to check for hardness. It was hard enough. So, I removed the knob from the mold and “voila,” it looked just like the original except for the color. It was transparent with a red hue, the color of the clay. This turned out to be the best reproduction I made using this method. Further attempts went down hill from here. I finished the knob off by drilling a hole in the center. I cut the tubing to the proper length and drilled two holes in the diameter of the tube where a brad was fit to catch the slot in the knob shaft. I then super glued the insert in the hole that was drilled in the new knob, and test fit it on the radio shaft. I was happy with everything except for the color.

Note to readers: If you are brave enough to attempt this at home, use a measuring device to get an exact mix of resin and hardener. I will explain why.

In the next part of the experiment I attempted to match the color of the original knob. Since the original knobs were cream colored, I got some oil based model paints in yellow and white to try to match the color. I mixed a small amount of paint until I was happy with the color. I then went through the casting ordeal, more times than I can remember, in an attempt to make a good cast. It seemed that every cast I attempted got deformed while pulling the original knob out. I have yet to come up with a solid solution for that problem. However, after the umpteenth attempt, I had a decent mold. I was too frustrated to attempt it again. I then mixed the epoxy using the same scientific method as before plus I added a very small amount of the mixed color. I mixed this until the epoxy was a consistent color. This knob came out of the mold somewhat soft. Not having read the directions on the epoxy cans, I made another casting. This time, I added more hardener to the mix. This was even softer. I then read the instructions on the can. There it said “adding excessive hardener will soften the cured product”. Maybe they put instructions on things for a purpose. The good news is that the color was good, and the red from the clay washed off nicely. I have already mentioned the bad news.

To spare the reader the aggravation of the rest of the mistakes I made in this “Grand Experiment”, I will suggest going to Tap Plastics. The knowledgeable people there will be more than happy to give you information regarding making castings and sell you a product for mold making. It is not cheap, but it is not nearly as frustrating as my method. Well, its back to the “hole” where the next experiment awaits, which is to discover how I can patch a hole in a bakelite case.

Photo Display

Photos by Rick Walton

Here are the sets that members displayed at the July meeting. The feature was “big dial” radios. Thus the close-up of the dials.



Uncertain maker
John Bucholtz



Airline 62-716
Rick Ryan



1935 Truetone
John Bucholtz



Wilcox-Gay
Jay Johnston



Silvertone 4586
Lloyd Harris



Silvertone 104-7172
Alan Shaddock

General Television
Sonny Clutter





Editor's note: This "In The Shack" article is from the February, 1997 Call Letter!

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 it's 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.

Voilà

...new and recent finds by NVRS members

Compiled by Jay Johnston

Sonny Clutter: Zenith Trans-Oceanic Clipper, model 7G605 with bomber grille

Harmon Kardon stereo power amplifier from the early '60s, model Citation II

Westinghouse "Peter Pan" coat pocket radio with sub-mini tubes, model H491P4

Liles Garcia: Hallicrafters S-77A receiver (modified for AC power).

Jay Johnston: Silvertone model 6120A; 6 tubes + magic eye. (Maybe) Ingraham cabinet with wrap-around grille.

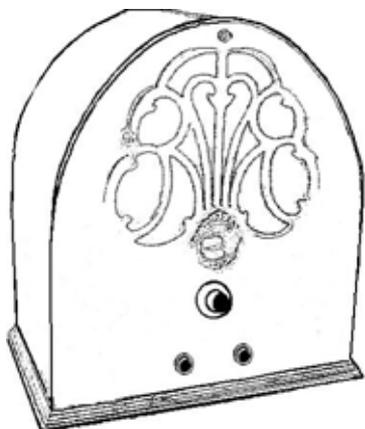
Spider web inductor from a Halowat TR-5.

Jeff Martin: Atwater Kent horn speaker without base or driver
A pair of Trimm vintage headphones with original box

Send word of your latest find to Jay Johnston, withat@msn.com, or by post at 1451 SW Market St., Portland, OR 97201-2555.

Radio Sale Announcement

ANTIQUÉ



RADIO

SALE

10 AM - 4 PM
Saturday, October 21

American Legion Hall
Corner 3rd & Main
Aurora, Oregon

For information contact:
Jerry Talbott (503)538-4041 or
Brian Toon (503)266-5527

www.nwvrs.org

Presented by



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

FOR SALE: My entire collection! Call Jerry Talbott at 503-538-4041. email (lords1st@easystreet.com)

FOR SALE: Radio/phono consoles including a Scott 800B, clock radios, Eico oscilloscopes, other stuff. Gotta empty that storage unit! Meet after the September meeting for a storage unit visit in Oregon City. Call Rick Walton, 503-656-4104, or e-mail rwalton@easystreet.com.

Radio Service

These members have indicated they are willing to perform radio repairs:

Roger Brown – (503) 693-6089

Blake Dietze – (360) 944-7172, wb6jhj@ix.netcom.com

Tony Ranft – (360) 944-8489 or ranft@saw.net – General repairs.

Dave Wise – (503) 293-7835, david_wise@phoenix.com

If you are willing to repair radios, give your name, phone and/or e-mail, and any comments to the *Call Letter* editor.

The Northwest Vintage Radio Society is not responsible in any disputes arising from services provided by members listed here. By common agreement of the board of directors, the buyer assumes all responsibility for the satisfaction of any transaction.

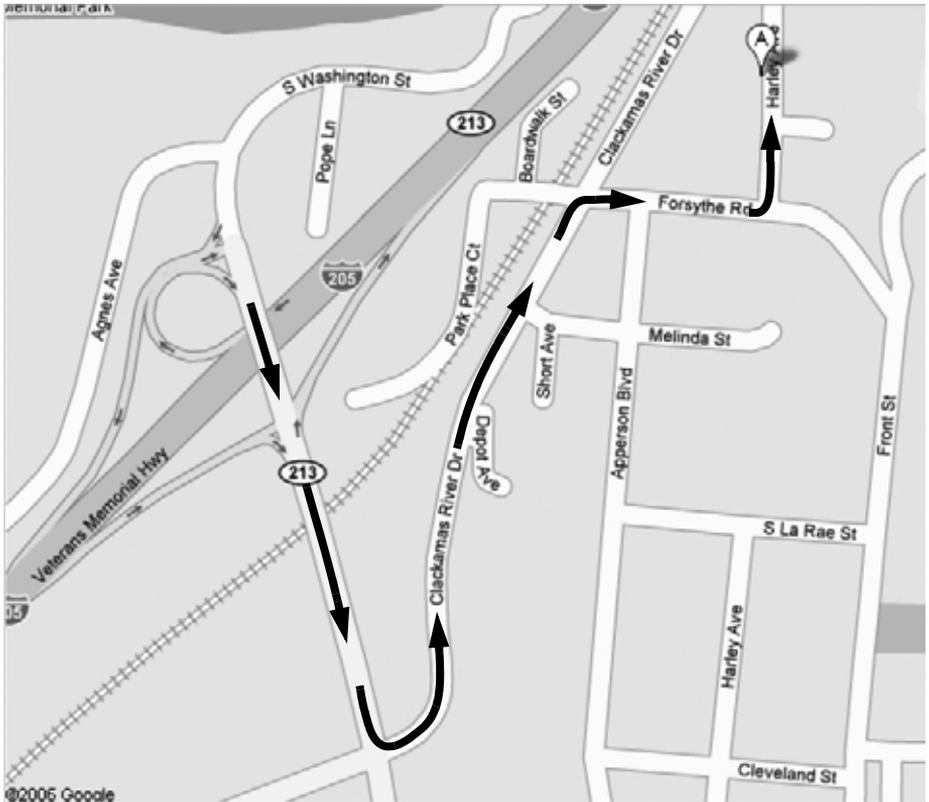
Leads and Needs

Questions about restoration of vintage radio? Visit radiolaguy's web site often for this information plus lots of other interesting displays, photo's, virtual museum plus lots of other information on vintage radio and television. Oh, yes, there are items for sale as well and NVRS members get a substantial discount on most of these items. Thank You, Sonny the Radiola Guy

Visit my vintage radio web site: <http://www.radiolaguy.com>

Meeting Location

Here is a map (thanks to Google Maps) to the Abernethy Grange Hall (the pointer marked “A”), where the Northwest Vintage Society meets the second Saturday of each month. Just follow the arrows on the map.



To get to the Abernethy Grange Hall:

1. Exit I-205 at SR-213 (Exit 10 to Molalla) and head south on 213.
2. At the first intersection (the traffic light), turn left onto Clackamas River Dr.
3. Turn right at Forsythe Rd.
4. Turn left onto Harley Ave. The Grange Hall is on the left about a block and a half.