

The
**Call
Letter**

November, 2013
Vol. 39 – No. 11



NEXT MEETING: NOVEMBER 9TH @10AM

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 shows, 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 2013:

President	Sid Saul (503)869-5280	saulsidney@gmail.com
Vice-President	Mike McCrow (503)730-4639	tranny53@frontier.com
Treasurer	Ed Tompkins	edtmp@Q.com
Recording Secy	Charlie Kent (503)281-9335	radiogallerykent@qwestoffice.net
Corresponding Sec'y	Jim Harper (503)538-8738	JLHarperclan@aol.com
Board member at large	Mark Moore (503)286-5224	mark@pdxhistory.com
Call Letter Editor	Tony Hauser (503)438-0297	abhauser@aol.com
Librarian	Robert Robinson (503) 255-3585	srrobins@comcast.net

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On the cover: V-P Mike McCrow and his fine selection of radios for sale at last month’s Fall Sale and Swap Meet in Aurora, Oregon

Monthly Feature: Nomination of Officers for 2014. Swap Meet Acquisitions of 2013

Visit our web site at www.nwvrs.com
 and on Facebook: www.facebook.com/NWVRS

Next Call Letter deadline: December 2, 2013

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.

Sunny 1550 Ad

**...it's always
a Sunny Day at...**



NWVRS Calendar of Events

Most of the hamfest and ham swap meet information comes from: PNW Hamfair web page at www.n7cfo.com/amJradio/hf/hf.htm

The PSARA monthly meeting information comes from The Horn of Plenty.

- November 9** NWVRS monthly meeting 10am; tailgate swap 8:30. Nominations for 2014 Officers.
- November 17** PSARA monthly meeting. Annual Show & Contest.
- November 17** CVRS Antique Radio Swapmeet. Burnaby, BC.
<http://canadianvintageradio.com/contact/>
http://rac.eton.ca/events/detail.php?event_ID=1636
- December 8** PSARA monthly meeting (**SECOND SUNDAY!**) Award ribbons.
- December 14** NWVRS **Holiday Party** 10am; Election of 2014 Officers.
- January 11** NWVRS **Annual Meeting** 10am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- February 15** **Salem Hamfair & Computer/Electronics Swapmeet** Rickreall, OR at the Polk County Fairgrounds.
www.w7sra.com
- March 8** **Mike and Key Swapmeet** Puyallup, WA fairgrounds exhibition hall. <http://www.mikeandkey.org/flea.htm>
<http://www.mikeandkey.org/FLYER2014.pdf>

October Aurora Swap/Sale and Auction

by Charlie Kent, Recording Secretary and Auctioneer

The day started at 7:00 am with Swap/Sale Coordinator Brian Toon opening the doors of the Aurora American Legion Hall for our Swap/Sale and Auction. Keep in mind to arrive at 7:00 am in April if you'd like to reserve your same table(s) as its first come, first serve in reservations.

Overall it was a successful day for sales, but inquires resulted in learning most sales were \$100 or under. Several members mentioned their sales were to the public, with a few vendors selling out. In inquiring as to how folks learned of our event, replies included flyers that were left in the Aurora antique shops; the A-boards Brian had put out drew people that were already coming to Aurora for antiquing; our NWVRS website and Facebook; and Craig's list. We estimated the public to be 20-30 people judging by how many we polled. Of those people, no one said they heard of the event through The Oregonian or the radio spots. It seems to this reporter that public were present between 9:15 and 11:00 am, and fell off after that. By noon, almost all the public had gone. Ideas are encouraged on how we can keep the public there past noon.

The announcement was made at 11:30 am that the auction would begin in one hour. At 12:30 pm the final call was made for auction items to be brought forward, with the auction's start at 12:35 pm. All donated items were successfully auctioned first, followed by items auctioned on consignment. Many consigned items sold successfully netting the owners 90% of the sale price. Some of the items auctioned were an Emerson tombstone, an Airline deco Bakelite, other wood and battery sets, along with a multitude of test equipment and parts. Everyone seemed pleased with their purchases and day's acquisitions. The auction ended shortly before 2:00 pm, at which point remaining vendors packed up and headed out. (*cont. p.12*)

Restoring Magic Eye Tubes: Sadder But Wiser

By Ludwell Sibley

Reprinted with permission. From the June 2008 edition of Tube Collector.

Part I

There were a couple of hopeful-sounding articles in the collector press some years ago about reactivating "magic eye" tubes that have gone dim [1, 2, 3]. This is an appealing topic, since eye tubes tended not to be replaced when radios went in for repair - the set played just fine with a weak eye tube, thank you. Thus used tubes found today tend to lack their original vigor. The articles were quite positive about rejuvenation being possible.

The idea has been pressed that dimness results from weak emission in the part of the tube's cathode that drives the indicator section, as opposed to the control section. There would then be some chance of reactivating the cathode with the aid of a TV picture-tube rejuvenator. Such a rejuvenator uses a combination of high heater voltage and massive pulses of DC applied to the control grid of the picture tube. This electronic violence apparently reactivates the oxide coating on the cathode, through simple heating or a process of electrolysis. In a typical rejuvenator (Sencore CR168), the DC pulse comes from a 100uF capacitor charged to 470 volts and connected to the grid through a pushbutton. The user is to zap away until improvement occurs. There are three levels of assault: 6 volts on the tube heater, with the DC limited by a 10ohm resistor; 9.5 volts on heater, grid current still limited; and 11.5 volts, with no current limiting.

In a previous life as Tube Chaplain for the New Jersey Antique Radio Club, I decided to try this technique. Making up an adapter cable to connect eye tubes to the rejuvenator, I spent an evening testing and blasting a collection of 33 6E5 and 6U5 eye tubes: a couple of new

ones, the rest ranging from "not great" to "no glow visible." To measure any improvement, a cadmium-sulfide photocell in a light-tight cap measured the tube's glow - connecting the cell to an ohmmeter, "more light means fewer ohms." All tubes had previously tested "OK" for emission; indeed, no eye tube in memory has shown a weak emission measurement.

It was a flop. In a couple of cases a barely detectable improvement resulted from the 9.5-volt heater voltage, suggesting that emission might indeed be at fault. But the rest of the dim bulbs stayed dim. The Heathkit IT-17 and similar testers can be made to test the indicator part of the tube (switches B & D up; switches E & F down; test type 1, load setting 40). Emission still looked OK on the tester, even though setting the tester to show glow gave weak results. I even tried biasing the grid of the control section to -150 volts, to cut off that section and be sure all the charge from the rejuvenator went to the indicator cathode. No luck.

End of Part I. Part II in next month's Call Letter.

From The Editor

By Tony Hauser

Just wanted to add a quick note here to remind everyone that nominations for our 2014 Board of Directors will be made at this month's meeting. I have included the list of officers and officer responsibilities on the inside back cover for reference. Keep in mind that organizations like ours cannot function without volunteers donating their time and energy. So, if you haven't helped out the Society in the last few years, please consider running for a BOD position.

And don't forget to bring your favorite swap meet acquisition for the November display!

Remember, the dial stops here.

Tony

Aurora Swap Photos

by Staff Photographer Chris Butler



Aurora Swap Photos



The Aspiring Radiotrician

by President Sid Saul

The Variac, and how *not* to reform electrolytics

I have borrowed an almost forgotten moniker as one who specializes or *aspires in my case* to radio servicing.

As an introduction, the very first use of oxide coated cathodes were in telephone amplifiers. These were run unattended for many hours, requiring low heater power, longer life, and adequate amplification. This cathode technology really began to flourish later during the first world war in search of higher efficiencies, and especially true at the start of broadcasting. So what does this have to do with variacs and capacitor reforming? As we know, electrolytic capacitors do not like to sit around without use. Wouldn't you know that after five or ten years of non-use they can dry out the *very* instant I apply full line voltage. Open the windows please to let the smoke out!

We have all used our beloved variacs in order to gently coax our babies back to life. What is *not* so well known is that bringing up voltage too slowly in an attempt to reform the onboard electrolytics can be a bad thing. Several references over the years have *hinted* that operating tubes below rated filament voltage can harm tubes more than when operating above. This sounds implausible upon first light. After all there *are* ways to make a light bulb last longer, No jokes please. One is to never apply power. Another is to never turn the power off and to operate at *much* reduced voltages. Sadly the later technique does not apply to vacuum tubes especially those having cathodes of oxide coating as many do. Filament voltages are accepted with a variance of ten percent of rated unless stated otherwise in the tube manual even as low as five and three percent. Let's say the spec calls for 6.3 volts. Five percent in either direction would be just under 6 volts on the low, and 6.6 on the high end. So what happens when we have a cold, *less hot* cathode? In a nutshell, a cathode at rated temperature will emit enough

electrons to provide an adequate space charge or layer of electrons just above it. The vacuum in these old tubes was not drawn deep enough to evacuate every last air molecule. I understand the space shuttle operated at a deeper vacuum than most of the older tubes. NASA should start manufacturing radio tubes in outer space to generate cash. Air molecules are prone to be struck and ionized by electrons. This creates heavy positive ions that can move back toward the cathode. With the cathode running to spec, the ions run into the thicker electron *space charge* cloud and are neutralized before they impact the cathode. Impacts from heavy ions can actually do physical harm to the oxide coating. Sticking contaminates the cathode's surface, also a form of *cathode poisoning*. With the damage done, the effects on a strong tube may not be noticed right away, a weak tube may go flat immediately. This is a hard theory to accept as we are dealing with an invisible enemy. The best solution to reforming electrolytics is to disconnect one of its leads from the circuit *power off* and to use a cap checker to gradually increase voltage across it, while scrupulously monitoring leakage current via a magic eye or current meter. Max leakage current for caps can be found on the web. I can truly say that I will keep an open mind when operating radios below rated voltage from now on. So, until next time from the aspiring radiotrician.

Sid

Acknowledgment: Max Robinson, funwithtubes.net



Swap Shop

FOR SALE: Still in the process of selling off my collection. Items include Rola mini-console, 1929 Bosch lowboy with Bosch brochure from H&W store in Portland, Bendix catalin, A-K 67 battery set with matching F-7 speaker, Philco record-eater, tube and transistor portables, US and foreign table sets, 5 boxes of tubes, wood cathedral speakers, etc. Pics and descriptions emailed on request. Can bring items for interested parties to meetings. Tony Hauser, abhauser@aol.com, 503-438-0297.

FOR SALE: ***I need to finally sell my radio collection. I am using a walker now and have some difficulty getting around and I cannot lift anything of very much weight. I have about 100 radios from the 20's through plastics in the 50's. I have one Catalin in perfect condition, several cathedrals, battery sets, consoles, and chassis of different years including several containing globe tubes. I have a supply of radio knobs including some for Catalin and Zenith radios, some very nice speakers, and other miscellaneous items such as Abbotwares radios and tube checkers. Be sure to call before you come down to see me. Glen Bricker, 1425 Daugherty Ave, Apt. #4, Cottage Grove, OR. 541-942-3717.

FOR SALE: ***I have an old model 14 KTR Teletype (Western Union Telegraph Co Simplex Printer 2-B) that I am finally parting with. Do any of you know if there is a Portland Teletype group around anymore? I have found groups around the country, but these buggers are heavy, so shipping gets pretty spendy. Cliff Tuttle, 503-368-7956, tuttlekip@gmail.com

FOR SALE: ***KIEL "Golden Voice Table Radio", ca. 1930. Beautiful piece of period furniture containing an Atwater Kent 55C radio chassis. Tubes check OK, light up, but no sound. Asking \$400. Call Nick in Vancouver at 360-750-0286 or email, nick9818@gmail.com.

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: Many Tubes New and Used – 30-day money back Warranty.

For list visit www.antiquetubesupply.webs.com. I can ship OR bring to club meetings. Damon Vandehey, (503) 459-1777.

FOR SALE: Amplitrex professional tube testing at reasonable rates.

Curve tracing, plate current matching, noise testing and highly accurate Gm readings. Adds value to high-value tubes!

robertwstephens@frontier.com.

FOR SALE: Questions about restoration of vintage radio? Visit

Radiolaguy's web site often for this information plus lots of other interesting displays, photos, 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>

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.

“Aurora Swap/Sale and Auction” (cont. from p.4)

Special thanks goes to the volunteers who graciously stayed to take down tables and chairs and put things away. Brian Toon and his family, James Harper, Mike McCrow, and Sid Saul finished the event for another swap sale.



Sid photo-bombs as Brian explains “where all the profits went” to a stunned Treasurer Ed Tompkins.

Officer's Roles

The President

The President shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the membership and the Board of Directors. The President shall set the time and the place of Board of Directors' Meetings. The President has the power to appoint members of committees as appropriate to enhance the activities of the society.

The Vice President

The Vice President shall be responsible for planning and arranging technical and entertaining activities associated with the society's meetings. He serves as chairman of the program committee if such a committee is appointed. He acts as presiding officer at meetings if the President is unavailable.

The Recording Secretary

The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for recording the minutes of every business meeting.

The Corresponding Secretary

The Corresponding Secretary shall be responsible for all of the society's networking and correspondence tasks.

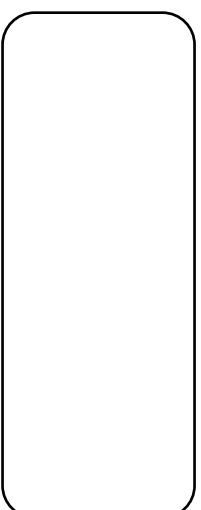
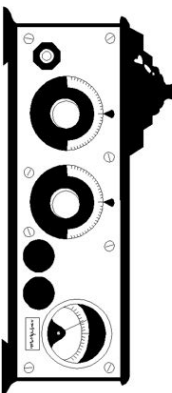
The Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be accountable for all funds received and disbursed by the society and shall report all monetary transactions and treasury balance at each regular meeting of the society. The Treasurer shall prepare a list of members in good standing for distribution at the next regular meeting following the annual meeting of the society.

The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall consist of the current elected officers of the society plus the immediate past president of the society. The Board of Directors shall direct the care and expenditure of the funds of the society. The Board shall determine a suitable time and place for regular society business meetings.

NW Vintage Radio Society
P.O. Box 82379
Portland, Oregon 97282-0379



FIRST CLASS MAIL