



New Jersey Antique Radio Club News

Volume 1

Winter 1993-1994

Number 4

NEW FOR 1994: NJARC'S EXPANDED WORKSHOP PROGRAM

Acknowledging the limitations of time and the diverse interests of the membership, program director Tom Provost has proposed that NJARC institute workshops to fill the need for heavy duty technical information sessions, while leaving the meetings free for lighter fare: brief presentations, regular club business, a little "horse trading".

Although details of the workshops are still being worked out, the basic plan calls for members or outside experts skilled in particular areas of restoration technology to conduct in-depth demonstrations for the benefit of the membership. These meetings will take place on an evening or weekend separate from the regular club meeting, probably a Saturday. Lecture-type presentations might be conducted at our regular location, or elsewhere as convenient,

while potentially messy or dangerous workshop topics such as cabinet stripping are best relegated to an operating workshop. Club Vice President Mike Hammer has offered the use of the garage bays at his automobile dealership. Thanks, Mike!

Mark Mittelman has volunteered to continue the presentation he made earlier in the year about restoration of battery sets, with actual demonstrations of the entire process. Judging by the results of Mark's work, we might benefit handsomely from his instruction.

Members with specific areas of technical expertise are encouraged to contact Tom Provost at 609.259-7634 to coordinate the development of a workshop.

We'll be announcing the workshop schedule at the club meetings as soon as it's developed. Look for details on upcoming NJARC Workshops in the next issue.



Ruth and Jim Whartenby proudly display the cake Ruth made in the shape of a radio to commemorate their first year with the club.

In this issue:

- Club News
- Buy/Sell Ads
- Meeting Reviews
- MAARC's Radio Activity
- Restoring an NJ Radio
- Swapmeet News

The New Jersey Antique Radio Club News is published quarterly, on a volunteer bases, by and for members of the New Jersey Antique Radio Club. The New Jersey Antique Radio Club News is distributed by mail to club members. NJARC can not be responsible for transactions between buyers and sellers advertising in the newsletter.

Dues and address changes: Kathleen Flanagan, Secretary, 92 Joysan Terrace, Freehold, NJ 07728 ☎(908) 462-6638. Make check payable to NJARC. Dues: \$10.00 per year (includes NJARC News). A one dollar donation is collected at each meeting to help offset the cost of the meeting space rental.

Newsletter Articles, Classified Ads: David Sica, Newsletter Editor, 1459 St. Georges Avenue, Rahway, NJ 07065 ☎(908) 382-0618.

Swapmeet: John Ruccolo, 335 Butcher Road, Hightstown, NJ 08520. (609) 426-4568.

Official Business: Tony Flanagan, President, 92 Joysan Terrace, Freehold, NJ 07728. ☎(908) 462-6638

Officers

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Vice President: Michael Hammer (908) 255-7865

Secretary/Treasurer: Kathleen Flanagan (908) 462-6638

Technical Coordinator: Thomas Provost (609) 259-7634

Sergeant-at-Arms/Steward: Don Cruise (908) 542-2848

Newsletter Editor: David Sica (908) 382-0618

Trustees: Mark Mittleman, Ludwell Sibley

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- Monthly Meetings
- Technical Seminars
- Swap Meets
 - NJARC News
 - Free Buy/Sell Classified Ads
 - Tube Program
 - Tube Testing
 - Informal Networking with local collectors.

Monthly Meetings. Collectors in the New Jersey area finally have an opportunity to get together with other collectors on a regular basis to keep abreast on what's happening in the field.

Technical Seminars. Featured presentations at the monthly meetings focus on various issues related to collecting antique radios. At our past meetings, we've covered topics from Vintage Equipment operating demonstrations to antenna design and construction.

Swap Meets. Held 3 times annually, the NJARC Swap Meets have quickly become the most eagerly awaited events of the year. Vendors from near and far gather to offer a rich and varied assortment of radios and related items for sale.

NJARC News. New Jersey's only newsletter devoted to the antique radio collector serves to keep members informed about club events, providing notice of upcoming events, reviews of past events and other club-related information. The newsletter also serves as a forum for member interaction and offers free classified ads to members and non-members alike for the purposes of buying, selling or trading radio-related items.

Tube Program. The club offers tested, cleaned and boxed tubes to members at bargain rates. Tubes are available at each meeting, and all proceeds benefit NJARC.

Tube Testing. Members can bring tubes to any meeting for free testing on a high quality tube tester.

Networking. For too long, New Jersey collectors operated in isolation, or in small, informal networks of a few collectors. Collectors have an opportunity to get together with those of like interests to share tips, techniques and "war stories" and socializing. NJARC offers the opportunity for collectors from all over the area to share their expertise and their experiences.

Calendar of Events

January

14 Regular monthly meeting
~~20 Fall '93 Swapmeet~~

February

11 Regular monthly meeting
 26 Winter Swapmeet

March

11 Regular monthly meeting

April

08 Regular monthly meeting

May

13 Regular monthly meeting
 14 Spring Swapmeet

FROM THE BOARD ROOM

Club Historian

Marv Beeferman has been appointed club historian by President Tony Flanagan.

Publicity and Advertising

Ernie Hartman and Marv Beeferman continue to toil on keeping the club's good name out in the public consciousness. We've attracted several new members who came to the club through our advertising and publicity efforts. It's primarily through Marv and Ernie's work that the club's name is promoted in many newspapers around the state. Thanks for your continuing efforts, guys!

Newsletter Advisory Committee

Ludwell Sibley, Marv Beeferman and John Ruccolo have volunteered to serve as part of our new Newsletter Advisory Committee along with Editor Dave Sica.

The initial goal of the advisory committee was to examine the issue of paid display advertising in the newsletter. Until now, NJARC News has had no formal policy regarding paid advertising. Since members have expressed interest in advertising in the club newsletter, the issue needed to be determined. The committee has recommend advertising rates to the board, along with other pertinent aspects regarding advertising in our newsletter.

The committee has also begun establishing a "network" with other club newsletters, to institute a sharing information for the mutual benefit of all concerned. Future work of the committee will include ongoing examination of the newsletter with an eye to maximizing its benefits to our membership.

Newsletter Advertising Policies

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Free classified advertisements are accepted for publication in NJARC News. Classified ads for antique radios and related items are accepted from club members and non-members. Ads will be published at the discretion of the editor. Ads are normally run in two consecutive issues, as space allows. When submitting ads, please indicate if your ad is for one or two insertions.

DISPLAY ADVERTISING

Paid display advertising is being accepted for publication beginning with the Spring 1994 issue. The following display advertising rates have been established:

Full Page:	4-1/2" x 7-1/2"	\$50
Half Page:	4-1/2" x 3-3/4"	\$30
Quarter Page:	4-1/2" x 1-7/8"	\$20
Business Card:	2-1/4" x 1-1/4"	\$05

Ads should be submitted "camera ready" in the above sizes.

Camera-ready art in other sizes is accepted, subject to an additional charge for re-sizing. If you prefer, we can design and typeset your ad for a small, one-time charge.

Tube Program Update

Ludwell Sibley, NJARC's *Tube Chaplain* obtained a sizable supply of the older, big-pin tubes for the club tube program at AWA's conference auction. Lud made the winning bid on the lot after calculating that a profit could be generated for the club treasury while replenishing supplies of increasingly scarce early tube types. Thanks for some quick thinking, and for tending the flock so thoughtfully!

THE PRESIDENT'S BROADCAST

by Tony Flanagan

Dear Members:

This club was started in July of 1992 with 15 charter members. Since that time, our membership has risen to over a hundred members. Our treasury is healthy; we have non-profit status in New Jersey; we've instituted very successful quarterly flea market/swap meets and a fine-looking quarterly newsletter.

All of the above couldn't have been done with only those first 15 members. Even though



our ranks now total 115 members at this writing, we need to continue to increase our membership in order to survive and thrive. How can we do this?

Think and Talk NJARC. Take advantage of our new club business cards, and take them with you and use them. I still (and this puzzles me) meet people who haven't heard about "the club". Do what I do: **Tell 'em!!!** Tell everybody. You never know what good might come of it. Bring a friend

continued on page 15.

KOLSTER'S K23 RESTORING ANOTHER NEW JERSEY MADE RADIO

Bob Haworth, W2PUA
112 Tilford Rd., Somerdale, NJ 08083

The author is indebted to Alan Douglas and his book Radio Manufacturers of the 1920s, Vol. II, for the historical background of this article.

Many readers have heard of Kolster radios - after all, when they went out of business in November 1929 they had just been working their way through a glut of 128,000 unsold sets and had managed to dispose of half the inventory when the bankruptcy notices were posted. That placed a large number of 6-, 7-, and 8-tube sets on the market at bargain prices. I wouldn't be surprised if the attics of many North Jersey citizens contained one or even two of these beauties.

The history of the Kolster is unique. It started with the Federal Telegraph Co. of California and its board chairman, Rudolph Spreckels. The year was 1924 and Spreckels, possessing good business foresight, was convinced that the radio industry was the next great enterprise to turn a profit, a reward second only to the profits made in railroading or oil.

To start with, the company would require a place to manufacture or, better still, someone to manufacture for them. They would provide the design data and the maker would build and test the sets. But - first things first - they would need a well known and respected designer to provide the circuitry. Thus it was that Frederick A. Kolster joined the company.

Kolster had the credentials - he was former chief of the Radio Section of the Bureau of Standards and had been responsible for many Navy shipboard designs of wavemeters, the Kolster "decremeter" of spark gaps, and direction-finding receivers. He was well recognized by the "trade" of the day. He set to work and over the next few years produced 6-, 7-, and 8-tube battery-operated TRF designs using a Kolster-designed variable capacitor with a dial-drum assembly for single-knob tuning (in a day when 2, 3 and 4 dials were commonplace). The photos show this four-gang unit as present on the K23. It is similar in many respects to the HRO-type tuning system except that no gearing is employed; a cable drives the frequency-scale dial.

Now the company had stature and designs; all they lacked was a name and a manufacturer to provide the units. The name came easily since they could not use "Federal" or similar names as these were already registered. They settled on "Kolster" - that name and the radios they manufactured would guarantee success.

The manufacturer selected for the radios was the Brandes Products Co. of Newark, New Jersey, the company that made the well known Brandes headphones.

This arrangement did not work well. Perhaps Brandes underbid the contract or decision delays created manufacturing lapses, since it would be very difficult to have main offices in California and a production plant in New Jersey in 1925.

At any rate, the first few production runs were a total disaster and by 1926 Federal absorbed Brandes. This, at least, created a unified chain of man-

agement to provide smoother decision making.

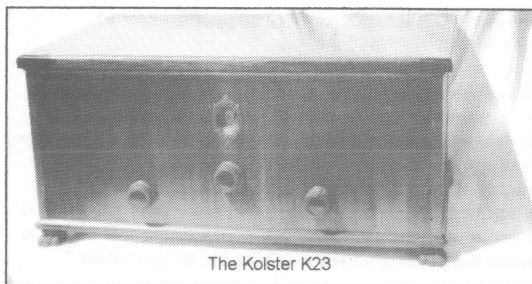
At this time, Kolster redesigned the six-tube model and by 1927 production was again humming. The only problem was that apparently Federal had neglected to provide a solid distributor network and sales force for its products, and therefore sales faltered. Also, by late 1927 or early 1928 the urban areas of the country were becoming widely electrified and people who were buying radios did not want to care for batteries - they were demanding "electric" sets.

Kolster, seeing the sales of battery sets decline, redesigned for electric. In October 1927 the company offered its first AC-operated set. From that date the production numbers rose steadily but during 1928-29 the distributorship problems were creating huge inventories of unsold sets, reaching 128,000 at one point. From that point it was all downhill; bankruptcy was declared in November 1929, ending the Kolster name in radio.

*"Historic Radio
in New Jersey"*



**An NJARC
Exclusive!**



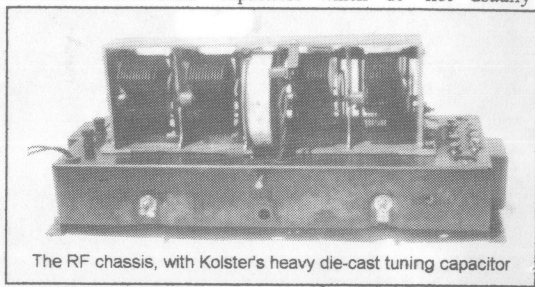
The Kolster K23

The photos show the author's K23. This radio is labeled as "Manufactured by Brandes Products Corp. for Kolster Radio Corp., Newark, N. J." and defines the radio as a series K23000.

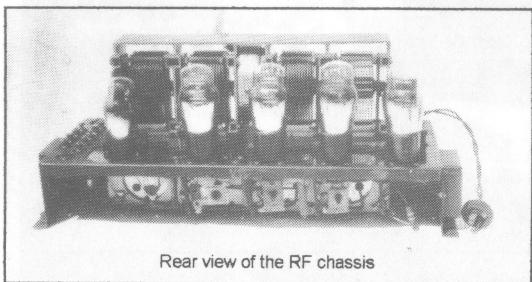
The radio is of the "heavyweight" class, weighing in at 47 pounds, and has the heavy cast-brass claw feet that appear to be a trademark of Kolster table models. The casework consists of a heavy

tions, while the assemblies are riveted to the chassis framing for rigidity. In all, a well designed tuning system for 1928.

Restoration of the radio was relatively simple: a few bypass capacitors on the RF chassis, together with a few wirewound resistors. No capacitors or parts were required on the power-supply chassis. Apparently they used paper oil-filled capacitors which do not usually



The RF chassis, with Kolster's heavy die-cast tuning capacitor



Rear view of the RF chassis

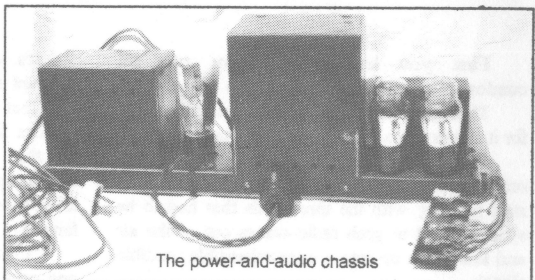
degrade with time. When the set was activated for the first time after this work, it was found to be very sensitive and selective (as you might guess with all those stages of tuned RF), but even with no antenna connected, I could not reduce the audio level low enough to keep my neighbors and eardrums happy.

Having encountered this problem on other TRF sets when subjected to today's high-power trans-

(3/4") top and base pieces while the four sides are made of 1/4" walnut-faced plywood. A metal frame assembly rigidly holds the sides and secures this assembly to the base. The top hinges to the upper surface of the frame.

The radio uses an untuned RF (antenna) stage (26), three tuned RF stages (26s), detector (27), first audio (26) and final audio (71A). An 80 is the rectifier. The K23 was made before the introduction of the dynamic or low-impedance speaker, hence it requires a high-Z speaker like the RCA 100A. The speaker is AC-coupled to the plate of the audio amplifier where a choke to B+ provides the developed load for audio.

Aside from the Kolster single-knob tuning, the other unique feature of the set is that RF coils (except antenna) are contained in drawn aluminum cans placed under the chassis. These are complete with a header and terminals for connec-



The power-and-audio chassis

mitter fields, I found that shielding the RF chassis of the set would be a necessity. Some light-gauge metal air-conditioning duct was formed to shield completely around the chassis, leaving only both ends open to enable antenna and power cable connections to be made.

The shielding cured the problem and the radio is again providing programming as it did 65 years ago . . . proving that basic radio components can always provide pleasure as time marches on.

MEMBER PROFILE

by Larry Savadove

"Sounds Like Old Times: Riding the Airwaves With Radio's Active Antiques"

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Editor's note: This article kicks off our series of member profiles, providing a look at NJARC collectors, their insights, collections and philosophies. Experienced collectors may note several errors in content and terminology in this reprinted newspaper story. We have reprinted the story exactly as it originally appeared. There are two reasons for this. First, it is a well-researched, well-written story about our hobby which appeared in a general circulation newspaper, and the writer deserves our sincere thanks for his effort in providing publicity for our club. In addition, any errors which crept into the story can serve to guide us regarding the perceptions of those new to antique radio collecting. Hopefully this will help us to help them to become knowledgeable more easily than those of us who may have had to "go it alone."



Photos: Tim Moersh

First you had to sit down and get comfortable, because it would take a while.

Then you switched the thing on and waited for it to warm up, which it actually had to do.

When its innards were glowing - a soft orange, not unlike that of a cozy fire - you could start fiddling with the three dials that had to be synchronized to grab radio waves out of the air and line them up into a comprehensible, audible signal.

"That was the tough part," says Marvin Beeferman, twirling the knobs on his Atwater Kent Breadboard. "It took a special talent. Usually one person in the family was good at it and got the job."

He sits amid a few of the items from his collection of antique radios, grinning at the array of Zenith tombstones, Philco cathedrals and Magnavox superhetrodynes piled on the dining table, chairs and floor of his Forked River home.

It's one of those pleasant houses on a pleasant street in a pleasant neighborhood, the kind that can hide deep secrets behind a facade of modern life. Except for the vintage Volkswagen in the driveway, its original color long transmogrified into something between rust and dried blood, there's not a hint that inside lives a fanatic.

"I wasn't always a radio nut, but I saw an old one once at a garage sale and got kind of intrigued. I like electronics and I like nostalgic stuff."

Intrigue quickly turned to obsession. "I couldn't stop." That was 15 years and more than 100 radios ago.

Inside, the house looks prosaic enough - a too-neat living room you know nobody ever does much living in, a standard kitchen - all the normal stuff.

MEMBER PROFILE (continued from previous page)

And then you step into the basement and slip out of the stream of time, back to when words from the other side of the continent came scratchily out of a paper cone but commanded the rapt attention of pronouncements from Gabriel, back to when the whole family huddled around that warm glow the way we huddle around the chill blue fire of television today, back to when our ears did the seeing.

Radios and speakers and amplifiers and other equipment line shelf after shelf in rows and ranks fading back into the dim corners of the basement. Massive floor models - substantial pieces of furniture - support stacks of table models.

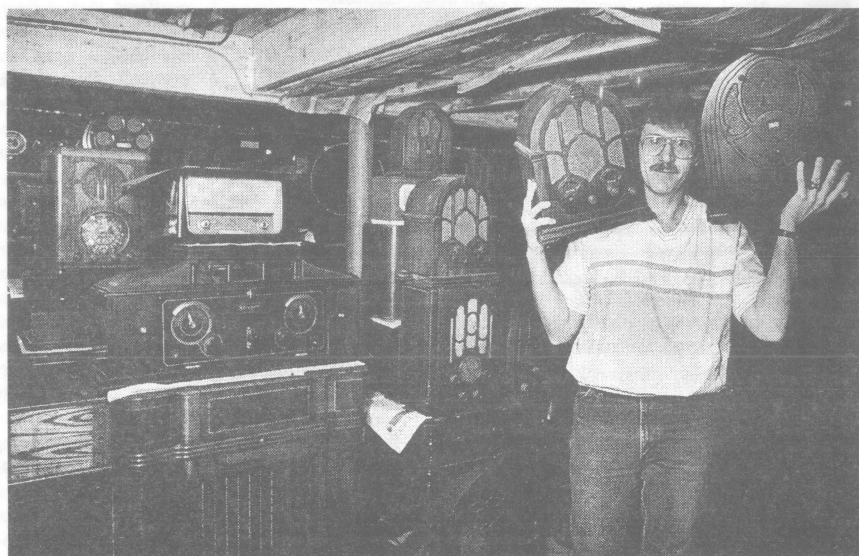
"Some of them are really ugly," says Beeferman, holding up a Detrola made of pressed paper that looked as if it had been through a trash

heard through a speaker. If you were off on any one of them, the thing squealed. The Neutrodyne circuit neutralized the squeal, if you got it right. Tuning in was an art."

One capacitor was enough to get you the station, it seems, like the old crystal sets, but the signal was too weak to be heard through speakers and could only be heard with earphones.

"Each capacitor added strength," says Beeferman. "The more stages, the louder the signal. They were known as TRF systems, for 'Tuned Radio Frequency'."

"Later, they attached the three capacitors to one dial." It was known as ganged tuning (pronounced "gyned"). The ad for a Westingale promised, "you tune in with only one hand... simplicity in radio." Eventually amplifiers were hooked into the circuit to boost the signal.



compactor. "Or this one, kind of fiberboard" in leaves forever brown and flowers forever faded. "or this," resembling a miniature keg of beer. "Or this," seemingly a row of book backs that open to reveal another radio.

Some of them are wonders of early technology, like the Bread Board, its tubes and dials open to the air, and to the eye, or the poor man's Bread Board where the workings are enclosed in glass so that you could appreciate the wonder of it all.

"They used something called a Neutrodyne circuit," he says. "With the three-dialers you had to tune in three separate capacitors all to the same frequency to get a signal strong enough to be

Long Antenna, Good Ground And Power Out of the Air

The simpler crystal sets needed no outside source of power. "The lead crystal worked off the electrons of the broadcast beam," explains Beeferman. "The radio waves themselves generated the small amount of power needed. You just had to have a long antenna and a good ground, like a radiator." The next advance was the superhetrodyne which is essentially what is still used today, much miniaturized but basically the same.

(continued on page 13.)

by Dave Sica

8.

SUMMER AND AUTUMN RADIO SHOWS

by Kathleen Flanagan

On Saturday, **July 24, 1993**, NJARC held its Summer Radio Show. Successful in terms of numbers (we had approximately 60 vendors), the event was financially successful too: our profit to the club treasury was over \$700.

Once again, we owe our success to the dedicated club members who volunteered their time to staff the event. Our sincere thanks to **Ludwell Sibley, Marv Beeferman, Jim Whartenby and Ruth Whartenby**. Writing this in January, it's getting hard to remember how just how hot it was last summer, but these folks baked in the sun to make this event run, and we appreciate it!

On Saturday, **October 26, 1993**, NJARC held our fall show. It was a cold and windy day, but the brisk weather did not affect attendance or the enthusiasm of the crowd. Our profit from this show was nearly \$600.

We had the pleasure of having our New Hampshire members **Marty & Sue Bunis** attend, and of course everyone bought an autographed copy of their new book. We also had a vendor from the Pennsylvania club drive in with radios for sale in a former "bookmobile." That's one good way to beat paying for multiple tables!

I want to thank the following people for helping Tony and me: first and foremost, **Marv Beeferman**. Marv has diligently worked the March, July and October shows. Also, **Onalee Fisher, Jim Fisher, Earl Reynolds, Jim Whartenby and Ruth Whartenby** for their consistent and enthusiastic support. Thanks again guys, we couldn't do these shows without you!

FEBRUARY NJARC SWAPMEET

We will hold the Winter 1994 NJARC swapmeet at the Hightstown Country Club. Unlike most of our recent meets, this will be an **indoor** event (thank goodness)! Chairpersons Jim and Ruth Whartenby and their swapmeet committee expect to have a full hall of vendors, offering everything from early sets and deco bakelite radios, to televisions, parts and "junkie." Food will be available, indoors. A \$2.00 admission will be charged to the event. Tables, as usual, will rent for \$10.00 each for members, \$12.00 each for non-members. For additional information, contact Jim or Ruth at 908.271-7701.

MAARC's June Radio Activity

by Tony Flanagan

On December 18, Tony Flanagan, Kathleen Flanagan, Ludwell Sibley and Marv Beeferman attended a MAARC (Mid-Atlantic Antique Radio Club) meeting at the Church of the Latter Day Saints in Laurel, MD.

There were 108 MAARC members in attendance, including Ludwell and myself. The NJARC contingent was warmly received. I addressed the group and put a plug in for our February 26 and May 14 meets.

After the general meeting, our contingent met with their president, Lloyd Kendall to discuss their upcoming "Extravaganza." The MAARC *Radio Activity* is schedule for June 17 & 18, 1994. The meet will be held in New Carrollton, MD.

MAARC's goal is to have this meet evolve into one of the largest, most successful, well attended, internationally respected and prestigious meet on the East Coast, if not the entire country.

They want to enlist the support of other clubs (that's us, gang!) to support and promote this activity. They've asked NJARC and other clubs to publicize this event, and that's what we're doing. We've set up a cooperative venture, where MAARC and NJARC's publicize each other's events, for our mutual benefit. Other organizations that have expressed interest or pledged support include The Antique Wireless Association (AWA), the Antique Radio Club of America (ARCA), the Pittsburgh Antique Radio Society (PARS), and clubs in North Carolina, Georgia, Ohio and Kentucky. The event will be organized roughly as follows:

- An all-day flea market on Friday and Saturday.
- An all-day seminar on cabinet repair/restoration/refinishing, and at least one other topic
- An "old equipment" contest
- A banquet
- Tours of areas of local interest
- An equipment auction
- Spouse Programs
- A special presentation on E.H. Scott, the maker of what some consider the finest custom radios ever made.
- A presentation on Zenith Transoceanics by Dr. Harold Cones who has had the opportunity to "prowl around" in Zenith's attics and basements, uncovering some unique information.

As you can see, with the wide geographic support and the variety of events planned, this could definitely turn out be **some** extravaganza!

TRANQUILITY JOINT NJARC / AWA SWAPMEET

Last spring, Marv Beeferman, Ludwell Sibley and Tony Flanagan met with John "Hammy" Richart of AWA to discuss NJARC's involvement in upcoming Tranquility swapmeets.

This long-time local AWA event is well respected as one of the best of its kind. As the event continues to grow, the effort to produce it also grows. Under the proposed arrangement negotiated by the AWA and NJARC representatives, the two organizations will co-sponsor the Tranquility meet, sharing in both the responsibilities and the revenue.

NJARC's Beeferman and AWA's Richart will co-chair the next event, scheduled for the Spring of 1994 (tentatively scheduled for May 14). Some other proposed changes in the event include raising the vendor fees slightly to be more in line with other NJARC meets; improving the availability of food by making breakfast available to the attendees, and improving advertising and publicity to draw vendors and attendees from lower New York State, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut as well as increasing the attendance of New Jersey based collectors.

Proposed vendor fees are \$8.00 per table pre-registration, \$10.00 on-site registration. This event is currently one of the biggest and the best local swapmeets. With the augmentation of NJARC's flair for publicity and our hardy work crews, Tranquility has the opportunity to become one of the best meets in the nation. We're looking forward to it!

AWA CONFERENCE REPORT

NJARC was well represented at the annual AWA conference in Rochester, New York. Last September, nearly a dozen NJARC members converged on the conference and eagerly participated in the conference's associated granddaddy of all antique radio swapmeets.

This year's conference was perhaps a bit smaller than in recent years, but the flea market was sold out, and members reported heavy buying activity. The auction set an all time record, with a total of approximately \$67,000 worth of goods changing hands.

MORE ON "LOOP ANTENNAS"

In the previous issue of *New Jersey Antique Radio Club News*, our feature story, "Loop Antennas: Applications and Construction" presented a wealth of information on the subject of antenna design and construction. Interested readers are invited to pursue further research on the subject. Two of the best resources on the subject, which provided the majority of information in the article are *The Low and Medium Frequency Radio Scrapbook* and the the *ARRL Antenna Book*.

ARRL publications can be ordered from the American Radio Relay League, 225 Main Street, Newington, CT 06111. ARRL publications are legendary in their value as technical resources to the amateur radio enthusiast. In many respects, they are equally useful to the vintage radio restorer and operator.

The Low and Medium Frequency Radio Scrapbook is a comprehensive source of information targeted toward the experimenter, with a distinctive "hands-on, make-it-from-scratch-using-everyday-materials" flavor. The *Scrapbook* publishes articles and information (logically enough) on low and medium frequency radio monitoring, most of the information can be applied to other areas of interest to the vintage radio hobbyist. The current edition can be purchased from the author: Ken Cornell, 225 Baltimore Avenue, Point Pleasant Beach, NJ 08742. Cost: \$17.50 postpaid.

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

(as of December, 1993)

Jim Amici
Michael Baechle
Pat Bailey
Donald J. Ball
Lucas Bazin
Marvin Beeferman
Ralph Bonamo
George Bonanno
Guy Borrelli
Peter Boser
Charles A. Breen, Sr.
Richard Brill
Mary & Sue Bunis
Joseph Burke
Joe Butterfield
Brian Centofante
Ray Chase
Bob Chemelli
Robert J. Chis

(Continued on page 13.)

MEETING REVIEW

Friday, December 10, 1993: Phil Vourtsis "RCA 45 RPM Phonographs"

Club member Phil Vourtsis has been "collecting" 45 RPM phonographs for 44 years... at only 45 years of age, that's got to be some kind of a record! Phil remembers an RCA 45 player from his childhood that his dad bought when Phil was one year old. He still has the 45 player he got as a present from his parents in 1958 as a 10 year old. His collecting began in earnest in 1969 and today his collection numbers some 25 examples of RCA's invention.

That "high end" wood cased set, along with other plastic, metal and bakelite examples of RCA's ubiquitous 45 RPM players were on display at December's meeting as Phil explained the history and the variety of these record players.

Vourtsis related

how as the record industry evolved in the 1940's, there were competing formats vying to replace the old 78's. Not unlike the more recent "VHS versus Betamax" duel, RCA's new "45" (for the speed it turned in *revolutions per minute*, or *rpm*) went head to head with CBS's long playing (LP) 33-1/3 rpm record. The result of the competition between these two powerful forces in the industry resulted in confusion in the minds of many that kept them from buying. Faced with this reality, RCA and CBS decided to cooperate and market both systems as complementary: The LP became the preferred format for symphonies, operas and collections of songs, while the 45 was the format of choice for "singles" of pop music and found instant acceptance as the 78's successor in juke boxes. Through 1951, many receivers were fitted with 2 changers to accommodate both speeds.

Vourtsis demonstrated several units, highlighting the evolution of RCA's changer mechanism. The first unit, the RP-168, was an early example, featuring a simple mechanism, with no auto-stop capability. The changer had a capacity of 8 to 10 records. "Under the hood," he displayed the initial "star wheel" mechanism, controlling the reject cycle. An interesting note about these changers was that the much touted fast cycle time (under a second and a half to change records) was actually an artifact of the changer

mechanism being driven by the turntable. At 45 rpm, the turntable completed a revolution in under a second-and-a-half, and anything tied to this cycle followed accordingly. This resulted in a fairly abrupt and noisy (but workable) reject cycle. The original design also suffered from a tendency to have records jam up on the changer shelf as the mechanism went through its cycle if the position or thickness of the record wasn't perfect. Later designs incorporated an air piston

attached to the tone arm to allow a gentler drop. A new shelf design increased the capacity to 14 records.

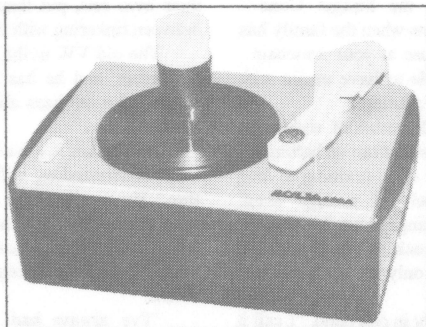
The RP-190, demonstrated next, illustrated RCA's curious design change from metal components on a plastic base to plastic components on a metal base. Go

figure! Phil demonstrated the yet again improved reject cycle incorporated in the RP-190.

These changers all seem to suffer from certain common problems: deterioration of the rubber parts and problems with cartridges. The idler, cam and bushings are prone to deterioration, and replacement parts are difficult to obtain. Certain cartridges are prone to tracking problems (remember the old "penny on the tone arm" trick?), and virtually all crystal cartridges from this era are inoperative, even most "new old stock" (N.O.S.) replacements. Phil admits to using modern cartridges in several of his changers to keep them operating.

As part of his ongoing research, Phil charged the audience to be on the lookout for an RP-193 model, manufactured in 1950. This gear-driven model is known to have been marketed, but he has never actually seen one to date.

Phil stated that he does all the mechanical and electrical work himself, and continues to add to his collection at an ever-increasing rate, doubling its size in the last year alone. After the presentation, the club was treated to some "period music": a copy of "The Purple People Eater" seemed quite at home spinning on a 50's vintage 45 player.



MEMBER PROFILE (Continued from page 7.)

In this era of stick-it-in-your-ear, clip-to-your-belt, wrap-around-your-head radios, these old sets don't look like the explosion in communications technology they were but something that belongs in Victorian parlors - intricate wooden cabinets, speakers curved like tubas with pictures of roaring lions coming out of their mouths, grille cloths woven in scenes of ships at sea.

But the appeal hasn't changed much. One ad reads, "Unsurpassed tone... Super performance." The blurb for a miniature speaker promises, "You will find many uses for the Midget Cone - listening in to distant stations when the family has gone to bed, for personal use at your armchair... or on the dining room table to have music with your meals." Could be a Walkman.

Beeferman has a wide array of styles but specializes in the older ones that ran on batteries.

"this is a portable," he says, straining to drag one three-foot-wide model off a high shelf. Stuffed with tubes, weighing about 30 pounds, "without the batteries or speakers, which attached separately," it is portable only in that you don't have to plug it into a wall.

He holds another easily in one hand. "I call it the original clock radio. They embedded a regular wind-up clock in a case next to a crystal set." The small cabinet looks and feels like ivory. "It was made by the India Ivory Co. of Providence, R.I., but it's a plastic called Catalin. These are worth a lot now because their colors are great, they make good decor, antique collectors love them."

Beeferman collects radios "just for the fun." He also fixes them, finds old tubes, unclogs circuits, gets them playing again. He refers to the original manuals for repair work whenever he can and uses original test equipment which he also collects. "Using the technology of the time makes it seem more authentic." Spoken like a purist. Or a fanatic.

"It's wonderful to take something that was made in the '20s and then put in the attic to die, and work on it, get it to speak again. You bring it back alive and finally turn it on and hear it again; there's nothing like it."

Tubes, Trumpets And the Call from Space

But he's also fascinated by the shapes and designs.

A cluster of speaker trumpets grows out of the floor like some kind of metallic fungi. Tubes with brass bases and silvered sides and pointed tips catch odd beams of light, like animal eyes in some sort of primitive electronic jungle. Dials and jacks and crystals and cat's whiskers look as if a touch could bring them back to life, ready to

fill the room with a voice from the other side of the world, or the universe.

"Actually, the sound quality was pretty bad," says Beeferman, "mostly tinny and scratchy. But in those days it was news mostly that people wanted, information, what was happening somewhere else. Only later did music, plays, operas start to get popular."

It was a station in Pittsburgh, KDKA, that began broadcasting entertainment in the '20s. "Once it took hold it went like lightning," says Beeferman. "In those days a lot of people built their own sets, put them together in the garage between tinkering with their cars."

The old VW in the driveway, it turns out, is his tinker, and he has the eternal tinkerer's lament: "I haven't been able to put much time on it lately."

Beeferman is a bachelor - "it'd have to be a very understanding wife to put up with all of this." He combines the calculation of a scientist with the curiosity of the boy he still resembles. You have the feeling that if Eve had given him the apple, he'd have taken it apart to see how it works.

"I've always had a fascination with electronics," he says. Trained in instrumentation, he spent six years in the Navy, most of them aboard the nuclear sub *Abraham Lincoln*. He was the one who controlled the reactor.

"They put us through pretty good training for 2½ years - all kinds of electronics, fluid flow dynamics, heat transmission, hydraulics." Now he works for the Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station.

Like many collectors, he started by picking up a set here and there. "I like battery-operated sets, but I'll grab anything interesting." That includes books, such as *Wireless Telegraphy and Hertzian Waves* published in 1910, and piles of catalogs and collectors guides published yesterday. There are postcards that feature old transmission towers. Here's a greeting card with a radio wreathed in holly - "Everybody in our house is broadcasting to everybody in your house Merry Christmas."

And much miscellaneous memorabilia: the photo of a woman standing next to a floor model that towers over her like the King Kong of radios; a poster for RCA Radiotrons promising "The World's Finest Programs"; a letter from Powel Crosley III, one of the pioneers of radio, submitting his latest model to Consumer's Research for testing; a formal invitation to "come for a radio party."

The collection includes the wet cell batteries used to charge the sets., linked in series and rechargeable at the service station "like your car

MEMBER PROFILE (Continued from page 12.)

battery," he grunts, shifting a box of 24 that must weigh a pound apiece. If you didn't have a car, you could get a Pioneer Trickle Charger and do it yourself at home.

"Sometimes you needed three batteries per tube, one for the filament, one for the grid and one for the plate," an arrangement that was replaced by the transistor, the diode and then the printed circuits in use today.

Prices weren't cheap. The one-dialer Westingale went for \$54 in the '20s. "That was without tubes or batteries or speakers," points out Beeferman. "tubes would be about \$5 each, and you needed five for this set."

Perhaps inevitably, his collection also contains an early television set, an Emerson, its unblinking eye staring out over the voiceless radios. "Oh, yeah, if I see on that's good I'll take it too."

He has no idea of what his mini-museum might be worth. "It's worth as much as I enjoy it." Nor how much he's spent on it. "Too much, I'm sure." The most he ever paid for a set was \$750 for a deForest. "I think it was \$750. Something like that. Maybe not. It came with all its original equipment."

He drags the parts out of the plain box, including a wooden carrying handle and canvas strap. Inside is a board of dials and switches. A cross-wired antenna perches on top. It looks like something from a World War I movie - "Getting a lot of flak from Jerry at this end, sir"... static..." 'It's a long way to Tipperary' "... static... static. A tag says it came from La Roe's Music Store in Woonsocket, R.I. 'that's who sold radios in the early days, music stores.'"

With all the sets piled in every corner, it's hard to believe "it's a small collection," as Beeferman maintains.

"I know guys who have houses and there are sets all over every room, on every table, every shelf, in the kitchen, in the bathroom. You get crazy with these things."

One of his books shows photos of the tabletop radios of the '50s, lit like jewels, art deco designs, Mickey Mouse, Hopalong Cassidy, Coca-Cola. "When people started getting interested you could buy in for \$100 or \$200 a set. Now some are up to \$5,000."

Last year, some New Jersey collectors formed the state's first Antique Radio Club. Its first newsletter discusses such things as its "active tube supply program" and "proper veneering techniques."

Tubes are important. The club salvages old tubes, cleans them, fixes them, tests them and makes them available.

"Makes a big difference," says Beeferman. "Some antique dealers just want the cases and put modern transistor radios inside." But you get the idea that is clearly no fun.

There are also swap meets. The last one attracted dozens of participants, happy to know they weren't crazy alone, eager to see what everybody else had. The next one is expected to draw hundreds. "This thing is growing," says Beeferman.

He thinks it's the most satisfying hobby going. "you can do the mechanics, the electronics, even woodworking on the cabinets." The newsletter tells you what kind of sandpaper to use.

He brings out a set of sample grille cloths, those woven, patterned fabrics that cover the speakers. "There's a guy who now reproduces all kinds of knobs. You know, they were always the first things to go."

He rubs his hand affectionately over the panel of a Hallicrafters. "Some people fix these things, won't play any rock 'n' roll on them, only big bands."

He looks out the window, through the spring pines toward Deer Head Lake. *And now, from the beautiful Sunset Ballroom in Almonesson, New Jersey, we bring you the mellow music of Alvino Ray and his Orchestra* "... static... scratch... squeal... static...

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

(Continued from page 10.)

David Chmielewski	Jon Butz Fiscina
John Cliver	James Fisher
John Conti	Onalee Fisher
Peter T. Corrigan	Tony Flanagan
Donald Cruise	Kathleen Flanagan
Gary D'Amico	Jeff Foster
Hugh Davey	Martin C. Friedman
Bob Dennison	Paul Fulton
Gerald Dowgin	Raul Gil
Barry Durinda	Robert W. Hamilton
Sam Faust	Michael Hammer
Frank Feczko	R. Vincent Hanrahan
Mike Feher	

Continued on page 14.)

DESERT TOUR (Continued from page 14.)

And of course, there were a few "unpublished" treasures to be found, plus I finally bought a reproduction dial for my Philco cathedral. (I actually tried to make one about fifteen years ago!) And some grill cloth. And some parts. And books. Altogether about a half-a-suitcase full of stuff to bring back home.

So after cruising the aisles once more for good measure, double-checking the close-out bin to make sure I didn't miss anything important, and saying good-bye, we still managed to get back to the afternoon meeting without being terribly late. A lot of folks say that the Arizona desert is a pretty nice place to visit, and I agree. Especially for a certain obscure corner of South Maple Avenue in Tempe.

MEMBER PROFILE (Continued from page 13.)

Ernest Hartman
Bob Haworth W2PUA
Glenn Heimroth
George Hennicke
Norm Hertz
Bryan Hodgson
Jeff Holz
Elwood Hunt
Aaron Hunter
Stipo Ivanko
W. R. Johnson
Merodie Johnson
Joseph J. Jordan
Joe Kajeski
Stephen A. Kalista, Sr.
John Kara
Gene S. Katz
Bill Kehoe
Fred A. Kelly
William Kilmurray
Peter J. Klovekorn
Joseph W. Kouten, Jr.
Dr. Riccardo Kron
Harry Kundiat
Sal Lentine
Joseph Loubriel
Robert Lynn
Alan MacDonald
Bruce Mager
Joe Milano

Mark Mittleman
Michael Molnar
Harvey Nash
Rick Nasti
John Okolowicz
Bob Olawski
Eugene Patrick
James Patterson
Harry Poster
Thomas Provost
Monty Purviance
Earl Reynolds, Jr.
Larry Rubins
John Ruccolo
Norm Sandbach
Paul Sass
Clay Seidel
Lew Seto
George B. Shields, Jr.
Dennis S. Shimozone, JHITNS
Ludwell Sibley
Dave Sica
Steve Sideroff
Jerry Simkin
Irwin Sobelman
Anthony P. Spenna
Rich Stamer
William E. Stokes
John V. Terrey W5DTQ
David Thompson

Stanley H. Thompson
Ben Tongue
James Troe
John Trosky
Phil Vourtsis
William Wade, Jr.
John N. Watson
Rick Weibezahl
James Whartenby
Ruth Whartenby
William Zukowski

Important Notice:

The membership roster is published in order to facilitate interaction between club members. One goal of the club is to improve the exchange of information between members. To this end, a roster is published as a member service. Please inform the editor if you **do not** wish to have your address and telephone number included in the next published membership roster.

A DESERT TOUR (to Antique Radio "Mecca") by Dave Sica

On a business trip a while ago, I had the occasion to be in Phoenix, Arizona for a few days. One of the big tourist things to do in Arizona is to take a desert tour. And I did, sort of.

On a map, I noted that the town of Tempe is just outside of Phoenix. And Tempe, as many radio collectors know, is the home of Antique Electronic Supply, one of the largest suppliers to the antique radio collector community.

I first ordered from AES several years ago, so I was familiar with their business. Finding myself with a couple of hours free one day, I decided to hop in the car with my (decidedly less enthusiastic non-collector associate) and head for Tempe to tour this wonderland in person.

A short drive later, we were in Tempe trying to locate AES, and trying to decide on a good place to eat lunch. Of course my vote was to skip lunch entirely in order to allow more time for checking out the treasures we would soon be wallowing in. My vote lost, and we compromised with some quick drive-through window cuisine.

AES is on South Maple Avenue, and Tempe is an interesting town, especially in the way they laid out their streets. Maple Avenue runs nearly the full length of town, North to South, but never for more than two blocks at a time. Ready to give up after an string of dead ends, and with lunch hour nearly over, we finally stumbled across a beautiful, incredibly large office and warehouse building in a modern industrial park in the desert.

Even though it was lunch time and many of the staff were out, we were welcomed and given a tour. An almost unimaginable quantity of (mostly new!) old tubes lining shelf after shelf, top to bottom, row after row from one end of the gigantic warehouse interior to the other. Even my companion was impressed! She elected, for some reason, to wait more or less patiently in the lobby while I carefully examined roll after roll of grille cloth and picked through box after box of items too small in quantity to be listed in the catalog, boxes which certainly would contain some unimaginable treasure.

(Continued on page 13.)

WE REVIEW "THE REVIEW"

The AWA has done it again. **The AWA Review, Volume 8** is out. This most scholarly of publications on the subject of antique radio continues the tradition of earlier issues. Volume 8, edited by Ludwell Sibley, provides an in-depth glimpse into several areas of the antique wireless world which might be difficult or impossible for the average collector to experience personally.

Unusual Military Morse Keys is a fine example of the level of scholarly research and analysis published by AWA. Author Louis Meulstee, PAOPCR, is an internationally published expert on the subject.

Rare Tubes: How to Recognize Them, and Why They Are Rare, is an insightful look by Gerald F. J. Tyne, the man who literally wrote the book on antique tubes.

A New Bibliography of Reginald A. Fessenden provides a thought-provoking perspective on the man we associate with vacuum tube development, but who also evidently was a bit of an expert in a staggering number of diversified fields.

"Federal" as a Telephone Company provides an opportunity to have your copy of Volume 8 autographed by the author as well as the editor, NJARC member Ludwell Sibley.

The KFS-Federal-Mackay Story: From CW Arc to Silicon Valley provides a view of the "other" Federal, past and present.

Joseph T. Fetsch: Vacuum-Tube Engineer and Collector offers a photo-tour of one of the best surviving early tube collections.

A History of the National Electrical Supply Company provides a "behind-the-scenes" look at this famous supplier of wireless gear.

Navy Electronics Directory, a comprehensive reference guide to Navy electronic equipment dating back to the World War I era. Fun reading (if you're a military collector!)

A Glimpse at Old-Time Transmitter Development contains efforts to push the state of the art into the future (in 1930, that is!)

Editor Sibley is to be commended on yet another monumental undertaking. **AWA Review, Volume 8** is softbound, with 154 pages and 163 illustrations. The book sells for \$12.50 postpaid, but can be purchased at meetings directly from the Editor at a discount.

Antique Wireless Association, Inc., 44 E. Main Street, Flemington, NJ 08822-1224

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE: Ryders Vol. 1-14, Ryders 1931, Sams Vols. 1-809. Over 1000 TV & radio tubes. B/op Sold only as one. After 4 pm. 908.571-6183. Jeffrey R. McDaniel, 569 Winter Street, Long Branch NJ 07740

WANTED: TV's and television-related books, advertising, accessories. Predictca parts, especially CRT shroud back cover. Thanks to all who have helped me improve my collection. Dave Sica, 1459 St. Georges Ave., Rahway, NJ 07065. 908.382-0618

WANTED: Cable-operated car radios, tubed car radios, parts and literature. Any old auto radio-related items - car speakers, antennas, antenna kit boxes, etc. Bryan Hodgson, 14 Evergreen Drive, Voorhees, NJ 07043. Tel: (H) (609) 424-0312, (W) (609) 722-2886.

WANTED: Guild radios: Grafonola and Tea Pot. Jim & Ruth Whartenby, 120 West Franklin Street, Bound Brook, NJ 08805. Tel: (908) 271-7701

WANTED: Old, Old, Old (!!!) test equipment. Circa 1930's, preferably by RCA. RCA test equipment from the '50's and '60's. (Blue cabinet/blue knobs) RCA memorabilia. Will pick up at monthly meeting. Bryan Hodgson, 14 Evergreen Drive, Voorhees, NJ 07043. Tel: (H) (609) 424-0312, (W) (609) 722-2886.

WANTED: Need the following W.E. tubes: 101D/F, 104D, 205D/F, 252A, 274A/B, 275A, 300A/B, 350B, VT-25, VT-52. Richard Brill, P.O. Box 5361, Old Bridge, NJ 08857. Tel: (908) 679-8026 Fax: (908) 679-8524,

FOR SALE. The *AWA Review* vols. 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 & 8 are available at NJARC meetings at the special discount "conference" price (\$10.00 each). Also, back issues of the *AWA Old Timer's Bulletin* can be purchased at the conference price (\$2.00 each).

PRESIDENT'S BROADCAST

(Continued from page 3.)

to a meeting. If everybody brought in just one new member, by next year, we'd be over 200. For perspective, consider that the New England club has reached membership level of over 700, and there are thousands of members of national organizations like AWA. They're out there.. Let's make it our job to bring 'em in.

Happy collecting!

Tony Hargan



New Jersey
Antique Radio Club
92 Joysan Terrace
Freehold NJ 07728

MEETING REVIEW (Continued from page 8)

Sibley demonstrated how loose endpapers can be easily repaired by the careful application of PVA glue. Once the endpapers have separated, the book loses its shape and is in danger of losing its cover completely. To repair, just dab some glue along the separated joint, cover with wax paper and close the book. After the glue dries, the book will be good for use again.

For faded bindings, the group was instructed to look to the kitchen: ordinary food coloring works well to rejuvenate the faded colors of cloth bindings.

Mildey presents a common challenge to the book collector. Suggested solutions included: leave the musty material in a very dry place, like an attic for a winter, placing the book in a plastic bag with some chloroform kitty litter also seems to be effective in killing the odor; lemon oil also destroys objectionable odors; Lysol brand disinfectant spray was also mentioned as a possible solution.

Sibley avoided the topic of completely rebinding a book, as this requires specialized materials, specialized skills and techniques outside the range of the average weekend restorer. For valuable books, a professional bookbinding service can work wonders.

A common affliction of many old magazines and papers is the presence of adhesive labels of one sort or another affixed by a previous owner. Sibley advised that many adhesive labels can be removed successfully by *carefully* applying drops of a solvent such as acetone. By soaking the label lightly but thoroughly, many adhesives can be dissolved and labels removed without damage to the underlying paper. Just go slowly, lift the label little by little, applying more solvent as necessary to gracefully remove the label.



Hubert H. Humphrey



Jerry Linkin
10 Carleton Lane
Metuchen, NJ 07747