

# The Jersey Broadcaster

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW JERSEY ANTIQUE RADIO CLUB



May 2002

Volume 8 Issue 5



## MEETING/ ACTIVITY NOTES

### Reported by Marv Beeferman

As you can see from our notice, the next NJARC meeting will take place at the Sarnoff Library in Princeton. Your president and executive board have investigated many potential sites in the Freehold area over the last two months and have yet to find any that are suitable to fit our needs. In some cases, cost was excessive. In others, although the price was right, Friday meetings could not be accommodated or space was limited. A Lutheran church in the Freehold area at first looked promising and the price was reasonable, but we would have had to share our meeting space with the church alter. So far, the search has become a little disappointing, but we are confident, with a little patience, that we will be successful in the future. Our new swapmeet location in Hazlet was just a stroke of luck, but, although the date seemed inconvenient, we sold out all available tables and spaces and the meet received rave reviews.

The April meeting opened with discussions of the Morris County Library exhibit, our March Swapmeet, recent progress at InfoAge, our 2-tube homebrew radio contest and our participation at the Trenton Computer Festival on May 4th. With regard to the TCF, we'll be sponsoring a small exhibit of radio collectibles in the indoor commercial exhibit area so drop by and say hello if you're in the area. The festival is held at the NJ Convention Center (Raritan Center) in Edison just off Exit 10 of the NJ Turnpike on the 4th and 5th. With regard to our homebrew contest, Technical Coordinator Al Klase has announced that judging will be moved up to the September meeting. Al wants to give members a little



## MEETING NOTICE

### \*\*\*\*\*IMPORTANT NOTICE!\*\*\*\*\*

The next meeting of the NJARC will take place on Friday, May 10th at the Sarnoff Library on 201 Washington Road in Princeton. A map is provided in this month's *Broadcaster*. This is only a temporary location until a permanent meeting location can be found.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Included in this month's activities is a presentation by Al Klase on some tips and techniques in designing your entry for our homebrew 2-tube radio contest. In addition, we'll be accepting nominations for elections to be held at the June meeting

extra time to find parts and digest the construction hints he will be presenting at the May meeting.

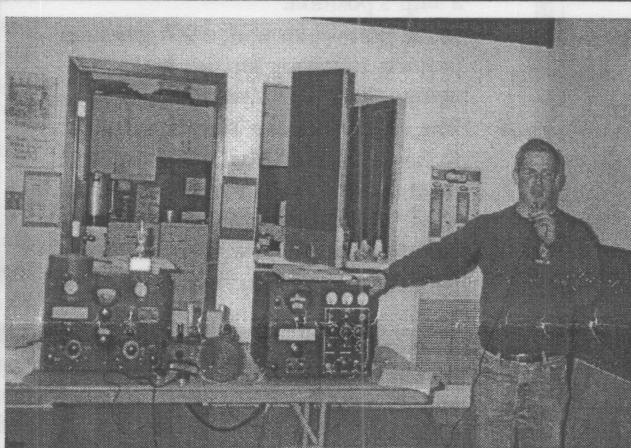
competition and made a good showing for total mileage. The NJARC took the trophy for this year but the Delaware club formed a firm base for some stiff competition for next year. A full list of the contestants and winners, courtesy of Tom Provost, is published in this month's *Broadcaster*.

Robert Flory's presentation on the US Navy RBA, RBB and RBC receivers won critical acclaim...and believe me, it was well-deserved since our group isn't the easiest to please. Extolling the accurate frequency display of the RBB, he said that "During the New Jersey Antique Radio Club AM Broadcast Band DX Contest, I found it possible to find the carriers of European stations on odd channels by just estimating where to put the dial between the 5KC ticks." Using "miscellaneous exotic antennas,"

Robert logged 11,889 miles.

Robert also noted that he is participating in the "RB's" restoration on the battleship New Jersey where kids will be able to use them to map 300 KHz beacons.

Some of the interesting highlights of the RBB series that Robert covered included:



NJARC member Robert Flory dispels the theory that  
"boat anchors ain't got no class."

Thanks to Al Klase and Tom Provost for sponsoring a very successful Broadcast Band DX contest. There were 16 participants with each of the five winners being awarded a \$25 gift certificate to Antique Radio Classified. Five members of the Delaware Valley Historical Radio Club registered their scores for the inter-club

**THE JERSEY BROADCASTER** is the newsletter of the New Jersey Antique Radio Club (NJARC) which is dedicated to preserving the history and enhancing the knowledge of radio and related disciplines. Dues are \$15 per year and meetings are held the second Friday of each month at the Grace Lutheran Church, corner of Route 33 and Main Street in Freehold N.J. The Editor or NJARC is not liable for any other use of the contents of this publication.

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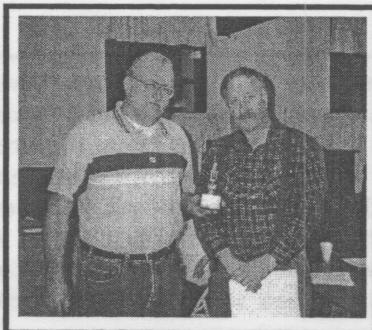
**MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY:**

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(609)-660-8160



An interested listener.

- The RBA is a TRF while the RBB and RBC are both single-conversion superhets with a 400 KHz IF.
- All three receivers are mechanically robust since they had to survive the shocks and vibrations of a warship. They also had to be carefully shielded to prevent radiation from giving away a ship's position.
- In the preselector unit, a 991 gas tube protects following circuits from damaging voltages and overloads.
- The receivers have significant gain. Robert said that "My Drake R4C and most modern ham receivers I have used require preamplifiers to get enough signal level with small, terminated loops on lower frequencies."
- In place of AVC, the RBB/RBC use an output limiter in the CW mode to regulate audio output. This type of circuit recovers quickly, allowing Robert to run full break-in (can hear someone interrupting him, even during a word).



NJARC President Phil Vourtsis accepts the trophy for total logged miles by an individual club from Tom Provost. The Delaware Valley Historic Radio Club made a good initial showing for their first BCB DX contest and we're expecting some stiff competition for next year's event.

Phil Vourtsis, NJARC President, accepts the trophy for total logged miles by an individual club from Tom Provost.

New Jersey Antique Radio Club  
**2002 DX Contest Results**

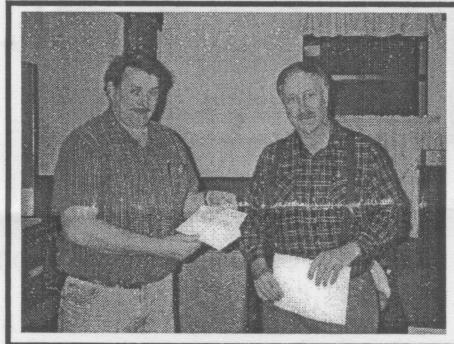
Compiled by Tom Provost 3-23-02

Winners are designated by an asterisk (\*)

**Category A-Crystal Radios**

\*Gary Damico 6,256 pts

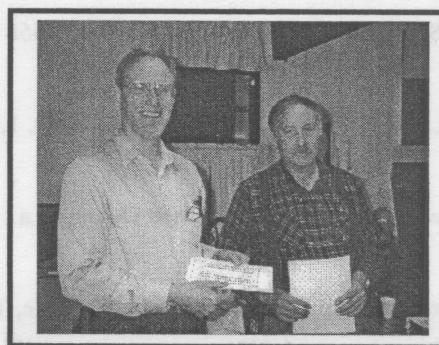
Homebrew set (2002) using 80 m dipole ant., MDS (Most Distant Station) 570 R. Reloj, Cuba, 1,279 mi.



**Category B-Primitive Receivers (1 or 2 tubes)**

\*Nevell Greenough 6,936 pts

Radiola III (1925) 2 tube, using 90 ft. inverted L ant., MDS 870 WWL New Orleans 1,128 mi.



Walt Heskes 3,467 pts

1 tube homebrew (2002) using inverted V attic ant. MDS 870 WWL New Orleans 1,128 mi.

**Category C-1920's Battery Sets**

\*Marv Beeferman 7,677 pts

Crosley Tridyne Regular (1925) 3 tube (2 used), using 50 ft. random wire, MDS 940 XEQ Mexico City 2,055 mi.



## Category D-receivers of up to 8 tubes (pre 1950)

\*Al Klase 11,192 pts

Navy RAX (GE) 6tubes, using homebrew shielded loop, MDS 750 YVKS Caracas Venezuela, 2,097 mi.



Gary Damico 9,225 pts

Navy DV-2 8 tubes, using 80 m dipole ant., MDS 530 RVC (Radio Vision Cristiana) Turks and Caicos Is. 1,309 mi.

Tom Provost 9,139 pts

Philco 38-620 6 tubes, using homebrew tunable loop, MDS 530 RVC Turks and Caicos Is. 1,309 mi.

Dave Snellman 8,054 pts.

Philco 38-12 5 tubes, using 20 ft. random wire ant., MDS 530 RVC Turks and Caicos Is. 1,309 mi.

Marty Friedman 7,430 pts

Philco 70 using 75 ft. random wire ant. MDS 1200 WOAI San Antonio Texas, 1,558 mi.

Abe Diehl 7,386 pts

Philco 42-390 (1942) using built-in loop ant., MDS 1040 WHO Des Moines Iowa, 1,014 mi.

Mike Koste 7,314 pts

Philco 37-650 (1937) using indoor random wire, MDS 870 WWL New Orleans, La., 1,128 mi.

Mario Volpe 5,011 pts

Belmont 7D22 using 50 ft. random wire w/rejector trap, MDS 650 WSM Nashville, Tn., 736 mi.

Rich Skoba 3,925 pts

Teletone (1947) 5 tube, using 200 ft long wire ant., MDS 650 WSM Nashville Tn. 736 mi.

## Category E-Open (any type radio built before 1950)

\*Al Klase 12,308 pts

Hammarlund HQ 120-X using homebrew shielded loop, MDS 750 YVKS Caracas Venezuela, 2,097 mi.

Rob Flory 11,889 pts.

Navy RBB using misc. exotic antennas, MDS 850 KOA Denver, Co., 1650 mi.

Rich Mueller 9,582 pts

Zenith 10-S-153 (1936) 10 tubes, using 70 ft. random wire ant., MDS 530 RVC Turks and Caicos Is. 1,309 mi.

Abe Diehl 7,917 pts

Zenith 9-S-242 (1937) 9 tube using built in loop, MDS 870 WWL New Orleans, La. 1,128 mi.

John Ruccolo 6,917 pts

National NC-183-D using 75 ft random basement ant., MDS 870 WWL New Orleans, La. 1,128 mi.

Mario Volpe 5,574 pts  
Hammarlund HQ-129X using 50 ft. random wire ant., MDS 750 WSB Atlanta, Ga. 717 mi.

**Members of the Delaware Valley Historical Radio Club registering their scores for the competition between clubs were:**

Al Klase  
Mike Koste  
Dave Snellman  
Abe Diehl

## THE KING OF THE QUACKS

Edited by Marv Beeferman

*The following is edited from J.D. Haines article "The King of Quacks: Albert Abrams, M.D." which appeared in the May/June 2002 issue of *Skeptical Inquirer*.*

Many radio collectors enjoy the diversion of having a few "quack" medical devices as part of their collection, either as a conversation piece or as an item of serious historical study. Perhaps the appeal comes from the fact that many of these devices actually looked like a radio. But the connection is more than a coincidence. Radio was new and poorly understood by the public and the prospect of using it to diagnose and cure disease in an easy and painless way, without the use of unpleasant drugs or surgery, was very attractive to a gullible public. When America became hooked on radio and fascinated by all the new gadgets it spawned, it provided a tremendous boost to quackery.

In the history of physician-quacks, Albert Abrams, M.D. has often been given the dubious distinction of being the undisputed king. While today we might laugh at those who fell victim to Dr. Abrams' ridiculous methods and treatments, the spirit of his work seems to be still alive and well.

Abrams began his career in the conventional way, obtaining a medical degree at the early age of twenty from the University of Heidelberg in 1882. He pursued post-graduate studies in Berlin, Paris, Vienna, and London before returning to his native San Francisco. By 1900, Abrams began to

turn increasingly from mainstream medicine to more eccentric beliefs. For example, he theorized that nervous exhaustion resulted in part from stagnation of blood in the abdominal veins and he introduced an apparatus of his own design to strengthen the abdominal muscles. In 1910, he published *Spondylotherapy* where Abrams claimed to be able to diagnose and cure disease by a steady, rapid percussing of the spine.

In 1917, Abrams pronounced "The spirit of the age is radio, and we can use radio in diagnosis" and introduced his electronic theory of diseases called "Electronic Reactions of Abrams" or E.R.A. One of the most famous cults of all time was thus born.

E.R.A. proposed that the human body possessed a characteristic rate of electronic vibration in health and disease. By measuring altered vibratory rates, the type, severity, and location of any disease could be determined. These vibratory rates were measured by an instrument "invented" by Abrams which he called the dynamizer. By linking the dynamizer to a series of other machines, Abrams claimed he could harness the new force of radio, which would revolutionize the field of diagnostics.

The system worked like this: a drop of blood on a piece of paper, a piece of preserved tissue or even a handwriting sample, or photograph from the diseased person was all that was needed to yield a diagnosis. Each of these samples supposedly possessed the vibratory rate of the diseased person. The sample was placed in the dynamizer, causing emanations to pass through a series of machines: a rheostat dynamizer, a vibratory rate rheostat, a strain rate rheostat, a measuring rheostat, and finally a proximal electrode. The proximal electrode was connected to the forehead of a healthy subject, called a

reagent, who was usually an employee of the laboratory. It was imperative that the reagent be facing west, with his feet resting on ground plates and his arms held out to his side to prevent "shorting out." The reagent also had to be first treated with a horseshoe magnet to remove any extraneous vibrations.

The apparatus could be adjusted to various settings corresponding to different diseases. At each setting, the Abrams practitioner would percuss the reagent's abdomen to determine areas of dullness. By changes in the areas of dullness at different settings, the diagnostician could deduce the diseases of the person providing the sample.

Many apparently healthy persons were commonly found to have multiple serious ailments including syphilis (euphemistically called diminished resistance), tuberculosis and cancer. But fortunately for them, the amazing Dr. Abrams had devised a new instrument that could provide a cure, the oscilloclast. The oscilloclast was simply set to the vibratory rate of the disease to be treated, and a cure would result. The treatment was likened to shattering a wine glass by sound vibration.

E.R.A. was reportedly so sensitive that it not only diagnosed the specific disease, but also the location within the body. The sex of the patient could be determined, and if female, whether or not the patient was pregnant. Most remarkably, the individual's religion could be detected according to areas of abdominal dullness to percussion. In the September 1922 issue of his journal, *Physico-Clinical Medicine*, Abrams printed a chart showing characteristic areas of abdominal dullness for Catholics, Seventh Day Adventists, Theophists, Jews, Protestants, and Methodists.

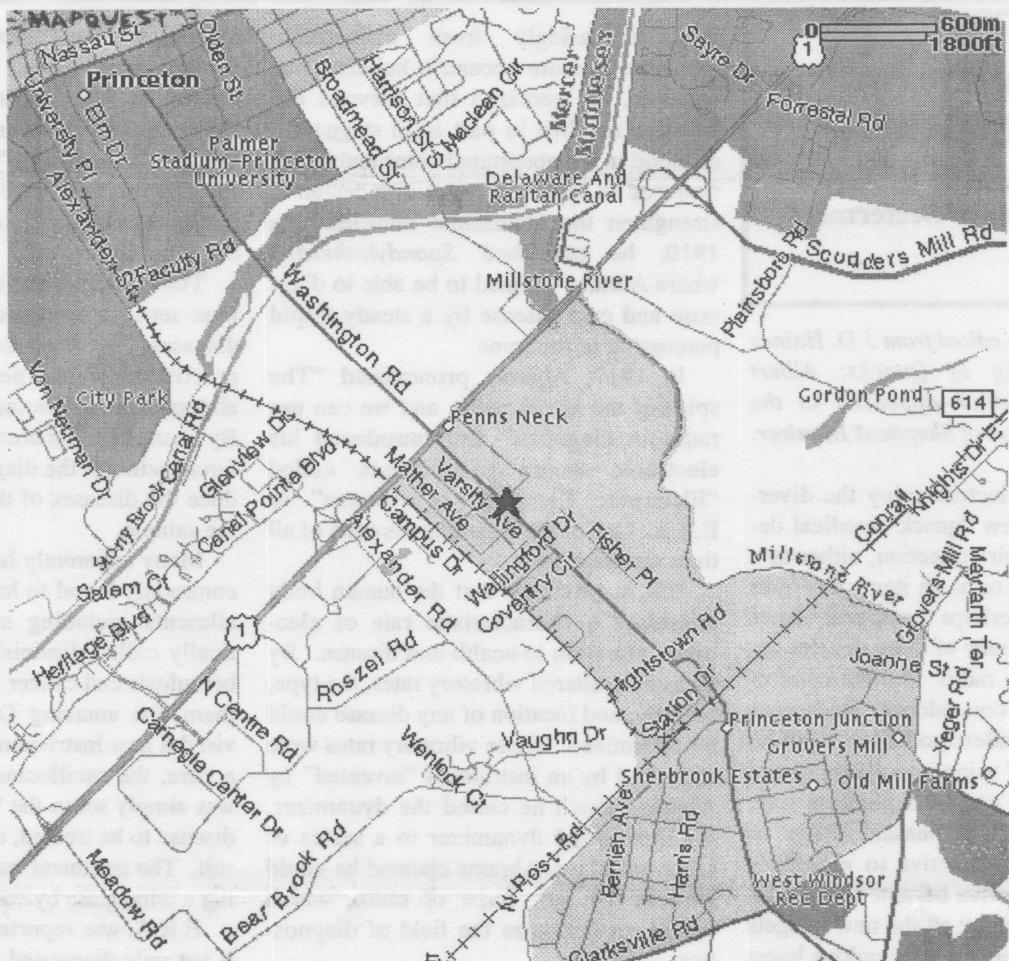
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## DIRECTIONS TO SARNOFF LIBRARY

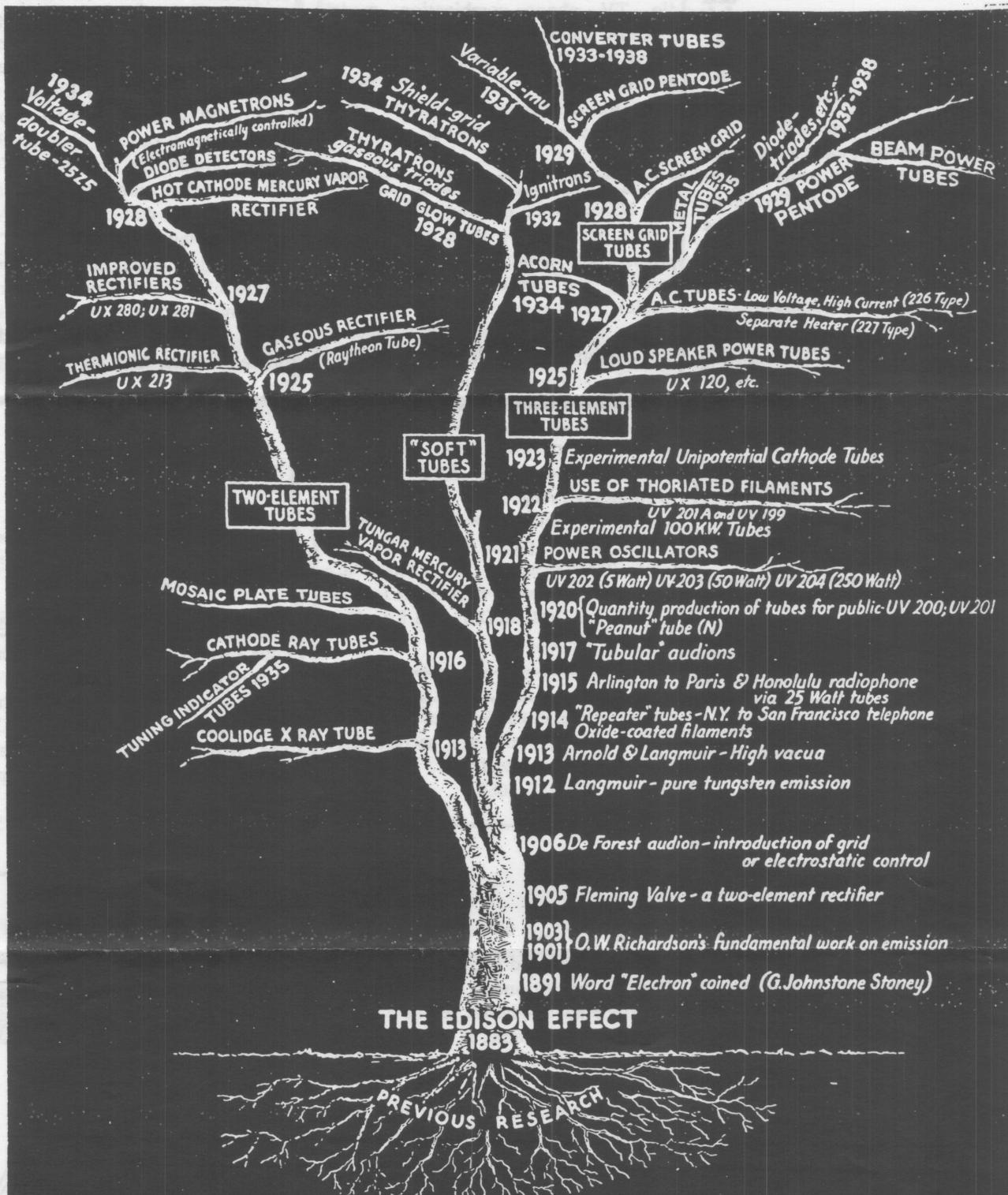
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**From the East and South, your best bet is to get on I-195 W and take the I-295 N exit (exit 60B) towards US-1/I-95/PRINCETON. Merge onto I-295 N and take the US-1 exit (67A-B) towards NEW BRUNSWICK/TRENTON. Keep right at the fork in the ramp and merge onto US-1 N. Turn right and then turn right onto Washington Road.**



...The family tree of the thermionic tubes

## CONNECTIONS

Free exposure for buyers and sellers! Unless requested otherwise, each ad will run for two months in both the *Jersey Broadcaster* and the *Delaware Valley Oscillator*. All buying and selling transactions are the responsibility of the parties involved.

## FOR SALE

Check out NJARC's capacitor program for those most commonly needed replacements. Contact John Ruccolo at any club meeting or call him at home (609)-426-4568 to find out what's available. All proceeds go to the club.

**For trade only...repair clinics, savings on swapmeet tables, tubes and capacitors, 12 issues of this year's Broadcaster, mini-auctions, technical presentations, contests, parties, fellowship of sharing a common interest with friends...\$15 check made out to NJARC. Marsha Simkin, 33 Lakeland Drive, Barnegat, NJ 08005**

Need a new home for a 1950 Admiral radio, TV, phono combination, model 32X36A. Complete, cabinet in good condition, has 12" round picture tube. Make an offer...must go. Local delivery possible. Aaron Hunter, 23 Lenape Trail, Southampton, NJ, 08088, 609-267-3065.

The NJARC tube program offers clean, tested, boxed tubes at very reasonable prices with availability at any club meeting (no dealers, please...not for resale). Proceeds go to the club. Of course, donations of radio-type tubes in any condition are welcome. See Gary D'Amico at the next meeting.

New index to AWA publications (*Old Timer's Bulletin*, *AWA Review*, misc.), 1960 through Aug. 1999. Formatted like the earlier version but with new "Author" section. Has 63 pages, 8-1/2" X 11" size. Gives 7000+ citations. \$12 postpaid anywhere. Make check/MO payable to: Ludwell Sibley, 102 McDonough Rd., Gold Hill, OR 97525.

Scott console, circa 1940, needs repairs; Philco console, circa 1945, needs minor repairs. Will take best offer. Tom Muccio, 609-448-1688.

Supplement 3 to Ludwell Sibley's *Tube Lore* is now available. At 24 pages, it replaces the 1997 8-page supplement. Included is an expanded index, new details on early Western Electric tubes, info on Western Electric tube sockets, fuller material (a page-plus) on Rogers tubes, pinouts for post-1948 Western Electric tubes (published for the first time ever!), the date code for RCA '50s-'70s receiving tubes and the 200 "most-often-needed" basing diagrams covering 1300+ tubes found in everything from an All-American 5 to a Trans-Oceanic. To order, mail your name and address, printed clearly, with six 34-cent stamps to:

**Ludwell Sibley  
102 McDonough Rd.  
Gold Hill, OR 975-9626**

## WANTED

Your surplus radio knobs. Buying bulk stock of pulls for matching service and resale. Look for Gobs of Knobs at regional swapmeets and monthly DVHRC meetings. Bring your orphans and I just might have its relatives in stock. Dial pointers also available. Mike Koste, 57 Tennis Ave., Ambler, PA 19002. (215)-646-6488

(Quack...continued)

While Abrams sold his diagnostic devices, he would only lease the oscilloclast. In addition to paying a healthy fee (\$200 to \$250 initially, then \$5 per month), the lessee had to agree by contract never to open the apparatus, which was hermetically sealed. Some did, however, and found a weird jumble of ohmmeters, rheostats, condensers, and other parts wired together in an incomprehensible manner. When the electrician who was producing the oscilloclasts was tracked down, he shamefully admitted that he was "prostituting" himself, but said the pay was irresistible.

With the American Medical Association and *Scientific American* embarking on ambitious campaigns against E.R.A., its popularity began to fade. Drops of chicken

blood and even red ink were submitted to Abram's practitioners, revealing seemingly terminal diagnoses, yet the prognosis was always favorable, if treated with the amazing oscilloclast and the accompanying \$250 fee.

Dr. Abrams died suddenly from pneumonia at age sixty in 1924, just as serious doubts about his methods were becoming widespread. At the time of his death, Abram's estate amounted to over \$2 million, a testament to the gullibility of the public and the greed of those who should have known better.

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