

The Jersey Broadcaster

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW JERSEY ANTIQUE RADIO CLUB

January 2003

Volume 9 Issue 1



MEETING/ ACTIVITY NOTES

Reported by Marv Beeferman

Tenth Anniversary Party

Happy New Year! Our tenth anniversary party at the Sarnoff Library came off with flying colors and there are a few people I would like to recognize as putting forth that extra effort to make our evening so enjoyable. Credit for the professional looking table decorations and efficient buffet layout goes to Marsha Simkin (ably assisted by her husband Jerry), who also provided some hot dishes directly from her kitchen, purchased drinks, utensils, serving dishes and hot trays, collected guest payments, and did a host of other little chores to make everything go smoothly. Always worried that people would go hungry, she also resisted my attempts to add an extra tray or two (well...maybe three or four) of food. Under Marsha's guidance, the party was heads above last year's (which was professionally catered) and cost the club significantly less. Part of the cost savings was a result of Marsha's vigilant perusal of sale circulars weeks prior to the party.

Thanks to Dave Snellman, Phil Vourtsis, Ray and Edit Chase, Sal Brisindi (and daughter), Richard Lee and a number of others for arriving early and assisting Marsha and me with table setup and last minute preparations. Phil also purchased that beautiful and delicious cake you see on the cover and designed the tenth anniversary logo. He was also instrumental in interfacing with library director Alex Magoun in arranging an early opening, table setup and audio-visual support. Unfortunately, Alex could not make the party but we are again in debt for his gracious



MEETING NOTICE

The January meeting of the NJARC will take place on Friday, January 10th at 7:30 PM at American Legion Post 177. Consideration of a potential move to the East Brunswick Museum was voted down at the museum's committee meeting. Reference past *Broadcaster* issues for directions or contact Phil Vourtsis at 732-446-2427. Our popular show-and-tell session will highlight the evening's activities. For new members, an interesting or amusing radio-related item that was recently acquired or is part of your collection is displayed and described in a short narrative. We'll also be firming up plans for the club's exhibit at the Cranbury Museum, fielding questions for our upcoming BCB DX contest and collecting dues (\$20) for 2003. Membership Secretary Marsha Simkin asks that if you plan to pay at the January meeting, small bills would be appreciated.

hospitality. Thanks also to all those who stayed late to help with the cleanup including Aaron Hunter, Leon Assur and Rick Weingarten (plus the many others who I can't quite remember).

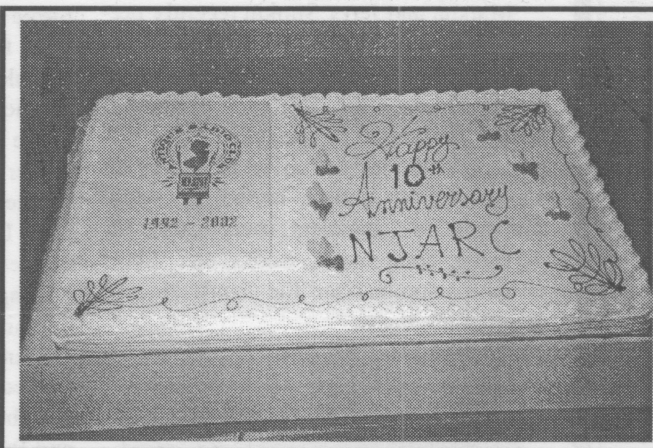
program as a marketing tool for club membership.

We were also treated to a vintage cartoon (shown on a restored 16mm projector) starring Felix the Cat which was left to Robert Flory by his grandfather. Felix is transported through the ether via the magic of wireless to escape the dangers of this continent only to be confronted by the same dangers in the Far East. Robert said that the film might have been used as a demonstration piece for early television.

The Mystery Grab Bag again proved to be a lot of fun, with a beautifully constructed crystal set quickly making the rounds between contestants. If you look at the photo gallery on the following pages, that smile on Sal Brisindi's face didn't last long...nor did the crystal set he is displaying. The photo gallery also shows winners in our equipment contest, impartially and ably judged by Al Klase.

2003 Dues

With the new year, it might be appropriate to reflect on what 2002 meant to you as an NJARC member. Did you participate in our repair workshops? What about our swapmeets? If you attended all 3, it added up to \$15 of table rental savings. Did you participate in our BCB DX Con-



In the entertainment area, Dave Sica's video providing a brief history of the club and carefully edited show-and-tell segments was the hit of the evening. You have to give Dave extra kudos for this project since much of it was done while Dave was recovering from surgery. Thanks Dave...you've given the club a remembrance that we'll cherish for many years to come. But Dave is a perfectionist at heart, and at the suggestion of John Dilks, is considering producing a final version of the

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.

The Editor or NJARC is not liable for any other use of the contents of this publication.

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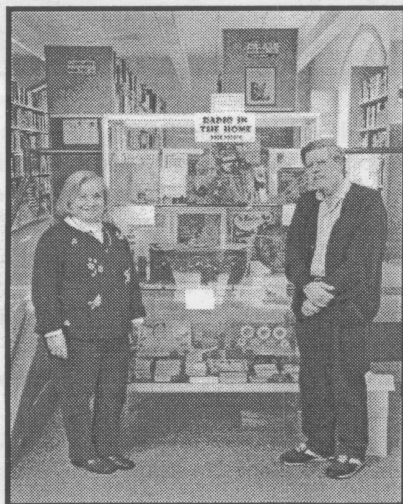
test and Home-brew-One Tube Radio Contest? Find any bargains in our numerous mini-auctions? Did you enjoy the technical sessions on loop antennas, radio troubleshooting and alignment, RB-type receivers and cabinet restoration? Get a few chuckles from Richard Lee's video tour of an Italian flea market? Were *Broadcaster* articles helpful or entertaining? Take advantage of the bargains in our tube and capacitor programs? Enjoy our InfoAge picnic or 10th Anniversary party? Or did you just enjoy the fellowship of sharing a common interest with good friends? When you add it all up, do you think it's worth \$20 or \$25 for a joint membership? Then please take a few minutes to send this year's dues (make out checks to NJARC) to our membership secretary at the address below or plan to pay at the next meeting...we've got a great 2003 planned for you and 200 of your fellow NJARC members!

**MARSHA SIMKIN
33 LAKELAND DRIVE
BARNEGAT, NJ 08005**

Barnegat Radio Display

Marsha and Jerry Simkin recently presented a very nice radio display at the Barnegat library which they titled "Radio in the Home - the 1920's." Although space was limited to one cabinet, the display offered representative pieces of all aspects of our hobby, including crystal sets, tube sets, speakers, sheet music, advertising, components, books, etc. Short write-ups summarized the significance of some of the items.

The Simkins have also completed what



Marsha calls "a labor of love." It is a compilation of nearly 100 radio-related sheet music covers, all in color. The covers are professionally presented in a notebook format ("allowing for the easy insertion of updated, revised or personal information") and contains some introductory remarks regarding collecting sheet music. It also contains an alphabetical listing of titles and a reference section listing title, year, the reason the item was included, the publisher, the place it was published and some relevant comments. *Radio-Related Sheet Music - A Collector's Checklist* is available from Marsha and Jerry Simkin for \$20 plus postage.

Steve Conklin Passes

Richard Lee reports on the passing of fellow collector Steve Conklin:

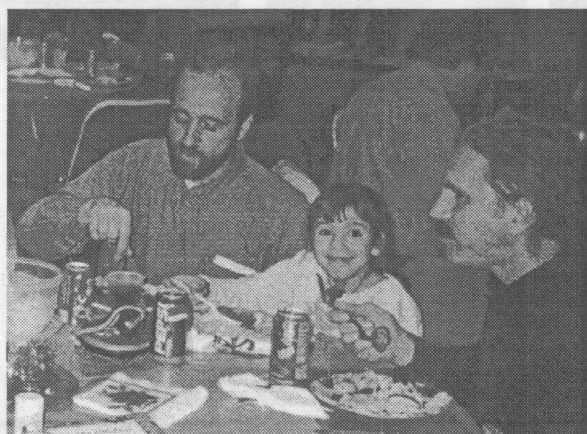
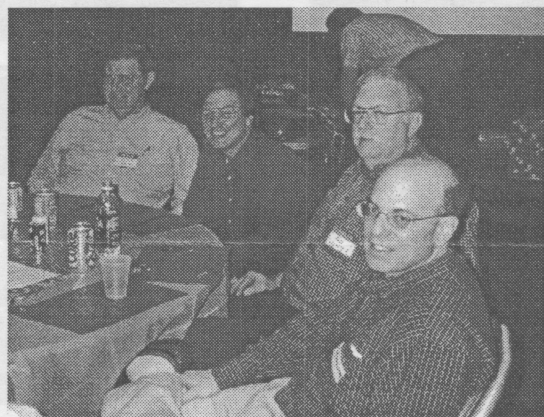
"At our Winter swapmeet, via cell phone, I learned of the death of Steve Conklin on Dec. 7th, 2002. He died of heart failure due to complications of juvenile diabetes. As you know, Steve was an avid collector and restorer of vintage radios. He was eager to share his vast knowledge of early radio with anyone, just for the asking. I knew Steve through attending the Greater New York AWA monthly swap meets in Ronkonkoma, L.I., NY. Though Steve was almost blind, he could "walk you" through a restoration problem. Jim Koehler, of the L.I. Antique Radio Repair Service, told of how while hospitalized, Steve was helping him with an AK-42 power supply question via telephone!

Steve was memorialized on Sunday, Dec. 15th at Rocky Point Long Island, the former Marconi Co. and RCA Co. transmitting site. His ashes were scattered at this historic site by his brother Mark. Approximately 20 friends and family attended including myself and NJARC members Tom McCawley, Bruce Mager and Peter Grave."

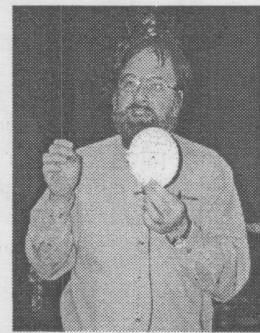
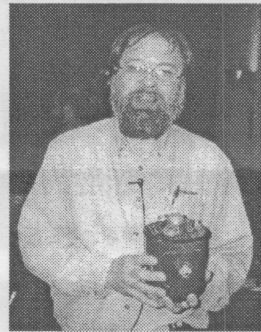
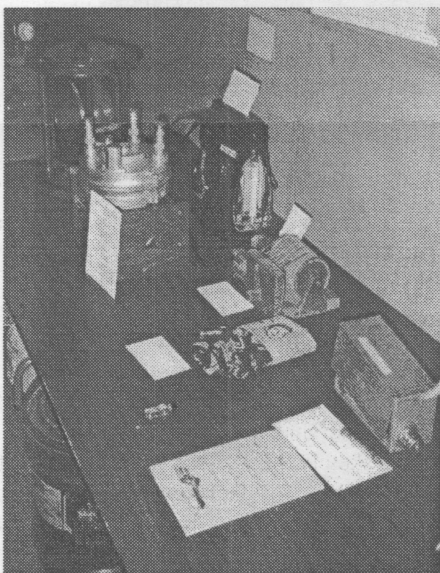
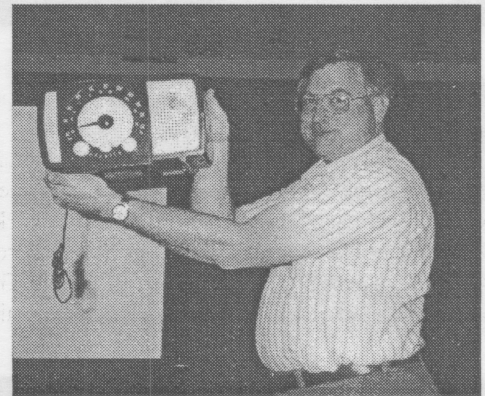
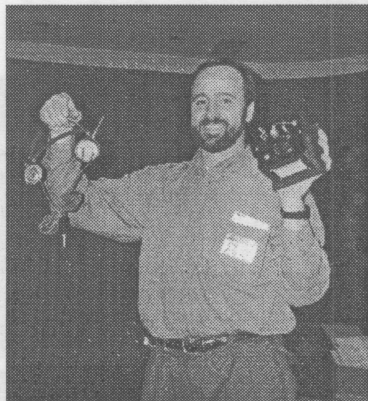
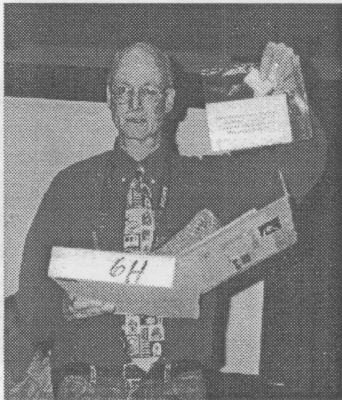
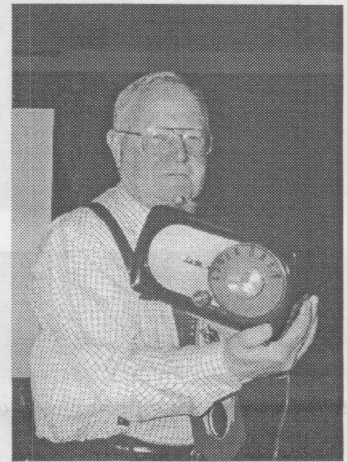
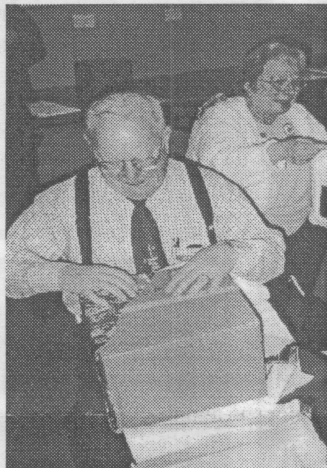
Cranbury Museum Exhibit

The club is ramping up for a 3 month radio display at the Cranbury museum. Ray Chase has done some extensive up front work and finds the layout very inviting. Unfortunately, the curator is looking at a January 11th time frame for at least part of the display which will be somewhat more balanced than the Olde Towne exhibit. Contact Ray at enrpnr@erols.com if you are interested in participating. More detailed information will be provided at the January meeting.

HAPPY 10th ANNIVERSARY NJARC!



MYSTERY GRAB BAG/CONTEST WINNERS



BROADCAST BAND DX CONTEST ANNOUNCED

By Al Klase

This year's NJARC Broadcast Band DX Contest will be held January 24 through February 2. Receiver classifications have been revised to encourage greater participation. Categories A, B, and C (crystal sets, 1- and 2-tube receivers, and battery sets respectively) remain unchanged. Category D will encompass all other tube radios sold for home entertainment, and category E is for amateur, commercial, and military tube-type communications receivers. By request, we have added category F for transistor (or hybrid) radios introduced before 1970.

Official contests rules appear on page 6 of this month's *Broadcaster*. Frequency lists, log sheets, and other information will be available at the January meeting and on the NJARC webpage. Feel free to contact me with your questions or comments (908-782-4829, skywaves@bw.webex.net).

SOME MEMORIES OF MY BROTHER - ROBERT C. GOLD

By Myra Gold Steinbrink

As part of the NJARC effort to document the life and preserve the artifacts of Robert C. Gold, the following article appeared in the January 2003 issue of QST through the efforts of John Dilks. It can also be found at John's web site <http://www.eht.com/oldradio/arrl/2003-01/memories.htm...Ed>

When 13-year-old Robert Gold was in the 8th grade he designed and built an electric map of the United States. I don't remember exactly how it worked, but there were two wired pointers, and when the state or capital was touched the corresponding state or capital would light up. Everyone marveled at his invention.

In 1932 when Robert was in high school

(probably 15 or 16) he built a radio and walnut cabinet to house it for our parents. They had this radio for over 30 years. In 1937 on my 16th birthday (Robert was 21) my brother let my girl friend and me spend that Sunday talking to ham radio operators all over the country. He had recently built his first "rig" which took up one whole little room on the second floor of our house. He later built a combination shop/ham radio building in our back yard. There was always a steady stream of friends who spent a lot of time in that building.

I remember he erected two very tall antennas for that equipment, one on top of the building, the other in a pasture across the street. Electrical storms were always a concern, and I remember when one was struck by lightning. There was also a fire in the radio building. On both occasions Robert got the fires out before the local fire department arrived.

To earn his way through Graceland College (now Graceland University) in Lamoni, Iowa, Robert operated the projectors in the local movie theater. Luckily when he went on to Iowa State College at Ames he was able to do this same type of work the whole time he attended school there. I think it was during the time he was in Graceland I talked him into building a small bedside radio for me, so I could listen to the remote broadcasts of dance bands across the country. There was a price for this; I had to clean his room! All the radio parts he left scattered all over made cleaning a real challenge.

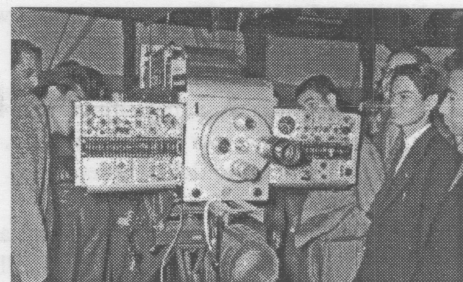
Robert joined RCA in the summer of 1941. I rode with him in his new car to Kansas City, MO, where he was first assigned, but not for long. He was one of the first persons chosen by RCA to be taught the complexities of radar and sonar. A short time later while still working for RCA he was assigned to the US Navy as a Naval Technician, a post he held all during World War II.



After the war Robert was stationed at the New York City office and I remember him telling me when there were only 50 TV sets in the whole city and he was assigned to service them. He knew David Sarnoff and

worked a number of times with Dwight Hemion, winner of 24 Emmy Awards, who directed some of the "specials" that NBC produced. Robert mentioned having been the first to televise the birth of a baby for a hospital or medical school.

In 1957 he traveled to Japan for RCA, to introduce color TV. He said, that at that time the Japanese were having trouble getting color to work properly. He spent quite a bit of time working with the engineers there; some of that long time was because of the language differences. Eventually the Japanese figured it out with his help.



RCA was always sending him to international trade fairs in such places as Greece, Italy, and Germany. Robert and his crew received an Emmy for the process that connects a number of unrelated commercials together. Something we naturally take for granted now.

He was at the Berlin Wall, on May Day just after it was built, broadcasting this event to the world. On the other hand, in 1950 he broadcast the 50th anniversary of the Nobel Prize, and demonstrated the same for the King of Sweden and Sweden's Parliament. Later he was in charge of building the television display for the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago. He also authored several technical manuals for RCA.

When he traveled to other countries, he made it a point to look up and find fellow hams. He would visit them and see their stations. It is my feeling that during the 40+ years spent working for RCA, he never really lost his love of being a "ham" radio operator.

I remember the last time I saw my brother at lunch in Philadelphia in 1988 or 1989 he showed me a "circuit board" he had sketched out and wanted me to draft it up for him. By that time he was suffering from Parkinson's disease. That board never came to pass, however, but his mind was still figuring out electrical puzzles.

The 2003 NJARC BCB DX Contest

In the 1920's and 1930's some radio listeners would compete with each other for the reception of the most distant stations using the same receivers that that we restore now. We can recapture some of the excitement that the early DX'ers experienced in our own contest.

Official Contest Rules

THE OBJECT: To use vintage radios receivers to receive broadcast-band signals from the greatest possible distance. Performance will be judged by the total mileage for your ten best loggings during a 24-hour session. You will be competing against competitors using similar receivers.

ELIGIBILITY: The contest is open only to members in good standing of the New Jersey Antique Radio Club.

CONTEST PERIOD: The contest period will be from 12:00 Noon, local time at receiving location, Friday, January 24, 2003 through 12:00 Noon, Sunday, February 2, 2003..

SESSIONS: Contestants may submit logs for any two 24-consecutive-hour sessions (noon to noon) during the contest period. You may use only one receiver during a session. That means you may not "bird dog" the simple radio with the more complex radio. You may submit logs for two different receivers. They need not be in the same category.

FREQUENCIES: The Broadcast Band, as defined for the contest, will be from 530 to 1600 kilocycles. No stations on the new extended band, 1600 to 1710 kilocycles, will be counted since many early radios did not cover those frequencies.

RECEIVER CATEGORIES:

- A - Crystal radios
- B - Primitive tube receivers (homebrew also) -1 to 2 tubes plus power supply
- C - 1920's Battery sets (homebrew also) -batteries or modern power supply is OK
- D - Other tube radios sold for home entertainment.
- E - Amateur, commercial, and military tube-type communications receivers.
- F - Transistor radios introduced before 1970.

ANTENNAS: Anything you like.

LOGS: Submit a log for each of your contest sessions (maximum of two). Each log header should include contestant's name, address, phone number, category, and description of receiver and antenna. Please include you listening address if it is different from you mailing address.

Make a log entry for each station you claim to have heard. Stations must be positively identified. (This is being done on the honor system, and is a somewhat variable concept. If you hear Boston weather on what you know is 1030KC, then go ahead and log WBZ. However, just because you heard a signal on 1160KHz doesn't mean you heard KSL in Salt Lake City.) The contest committee reserves the right to disallow what it feels are outrageous claims. Each entry should include time, frequency, call letters, location, and optional comments. Although we're only judging your ten most distant loggings, submit as complete a log as possible. The committee may make special awards for most stations, most interesting log, etc. as it sees fit.

A log sheet has been provided for convenience. You may reproduce it or generate a similar one of your own.

Logs must be postmarked not later than midnight February 7, 2003.

DISTANCES: Distances to stations will be calculated by the committee and will be based on great circle distances from Freehold, New Jersey for listening posts within a 100-mile radius of Freehold. We will calculate mileage for other entries based on actual listening location. In all cases, please indicate your ten best loggings to make our job easier.

Submit logs to: Tom Provost, 19 Ivanhoe Dr., Robbinsville, NJ 08691

Questions: Al Klase - 908-782-4829, Tom Provost - 609-243-2508

HACKIN' THE RADIO DJ

By Marv Beeferman

The Wild Planet "Radio DJ" (hackers call it the WPRDJ for short) is an FCC Certified Part 15 toy AM broadcaster which has a built-in tape player, sound effects generator, microphone with a slide fader, an "ON AIR" light, an external jack for an audio input such as a CD player, antenna and ground wires and a volume (modulation) control all in one compact molded plastic case. Frequency of operation is crystal-controlled and fixed at 1610 kHz and the unit is powered from 4AA batteries.

The buzz was that the quality was very good for the price; they normally retail for about \$20 but I bought 2 from Amazon for \$9.95. The lower price may be the result of the introduction of the "Radio DJ Studio" which has a white or cream plastic case but which hackers say is electronically similar to the original blue-cased model. My intent was to obtain an inexpensive broadcaster with limited power that could be used at exhibits and displays to provide that true "radio days" atmosphere and could left unattended for long periods of time. Of course, it was anticipated that an AC-powered DC supply would be needed to replace the batteries.

When I tried out the unit, I was very pleased with the results. The audio quality was very good and range ran from 30-60 feet depending on the antenna and ground setup. In fact, I was so impressed that I was hesitant to tear into the second unit to see, as my dad used to say, "where the feet grow." But the acquisition of a third unit at our 10th anniversary party's Mystery Grab Bag game quickly changed my mind. What I intended to do was to eliminate all the kid's stuff (tape player, microphone, sound

effects, "ON AIR" light, etc.) and wind up with a more "adult" looking device that could be driven continuously from a CD player with a disc of old radio programs.

But before starting on my project, I decided to look into what NJARC member Sal Brisindi said was a lot of modification chatter circulating on the web. To my amazement, I found that even the world of the six-year-old is not free from adult intrusion. For example, a typical site was titled "Hardware Hacking: Modding and Hot-Rodding the Wild Planet Toys Radio DJ." In it was found schematics and pictorials of the circuit board with locations of major components and their function, a calculation of the unit's output, two pages on just how to get at the circuit board, ways to increase range, modulation and to

around the neighborhood to find that he could broadcast over a mile with an unmodified unit.

But nonetheless, I did take away some bits and pieces of information that might help with my project. First, I found out how to get to the bottom of the main circuit board (two screws are hidden under the rear rubber foot pads) where the cassette speed adjust trimpot and antenna trimmer capacitor are located. Not that I would suggest anyone try to bend FCC rules, but as a matter of information only, the antenna trimmer is probably not adjusted for maximum output. If you would care to experiment with this circuit (only to help with visualizing the concept of tuning), ensure that the DJ is grounded.

Second, I found out how to remove the circuit board. Since the knob for the microphone fader is glued to a slider pot which is soldered onto the circuit board, the plastic slider volume control knob must be broken off with a pair of wire snips to avoid destroying the pot.

Third, I learned an external DC power source must be regulated so as not to exceed 6 volts; unregulated supplies will have a much higher voltage at no or light load and the CMOS oscillator chips used in the DJ are maxed out at 7 volts. I also learned to avoid a "wall wart" (even if rectified to DC and regulated) to avoid the possibility of a hum

on the transmitted signal. (The DJ draws about 50 mA when the cassette motor is not running.) Also, a switching type DC jack is needed to automatically disconnect the batteries when the external DC supply plug is inserted and reconnect them when it is removed. Finally, a little battery life can be conserved by disconnecting the "ON AIR" LEDs.

Well, it appears that I'm off and running. I'll keep you informed of my progress, and if you happen to hear the strains of *My Yidesha Mamma* on 1610 some evening, give me a call; it definitely wasn't intentional.



change the frequency and a technical discussion on how to increase power and modulation to bring the unit up to Section 15.219 of the FCC rules (that's a final RF stage input power of 100 milliwatts folks with the capability of a 1 mile transmission range!). One section even offered suggestions for modifying the output so it can be used to drive coax for an outboard 100 mW linear amplifier!

The whole thing started to make my head spin. I felt that I was being sucked into some sort of Home Improvement time warp...an episode where I would be held captive until I could figure out some way to modify the DJ so it could broadcast to Venus. I guess the last straw was some guy who wrote in claiming that he hooked up his DJ to his ham antenna and drove

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.

Nice working consoles. All cabinets are nice and clean! Atwater Kent Model 74 lowboy - \$200. Grunow model 1151 - \$200. RCA 810-K (good eye tube) - \$225. Zenith 8S-463, black dial, good eye tube, wave magnet - \$250. Contact Joe Murphy at (856)-228-0585

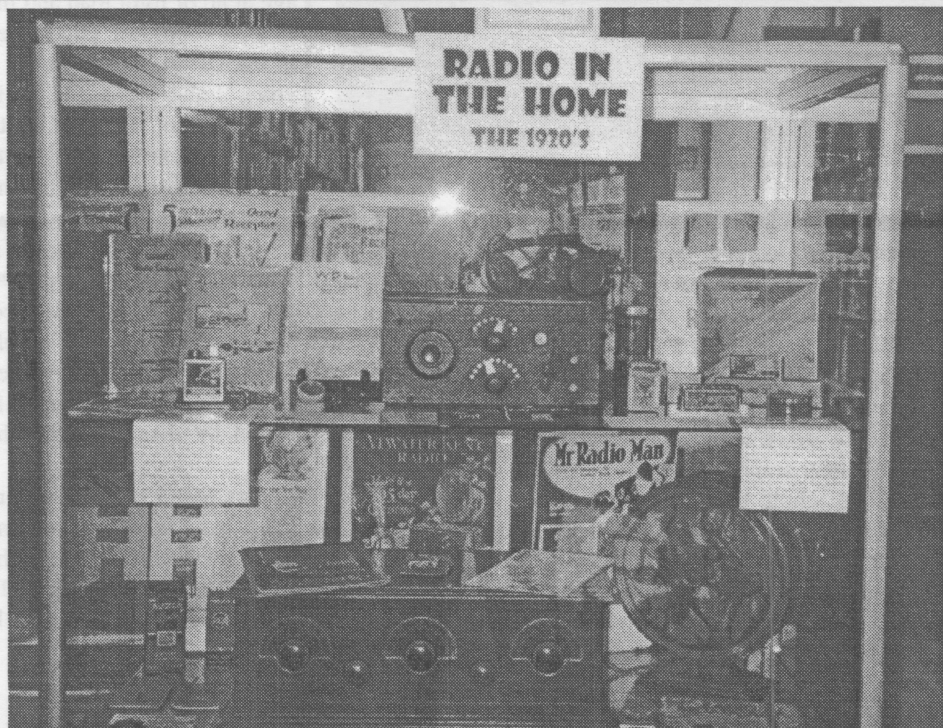
The NJARC tube program offers clean, tested, boxed tubes at very reasonable prices with availability at any club meeting (no dealers, please...not for resale). Proceeds go to the club. Of course, donations of radio-type tubes in any condition are welcome. See Gary D'Amico at the next meeting.

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...\$20 check made out to NJARC. Marsha Simkin, 33 Lakeland Drive, Barnegat, NJ 08005

WANTED

EICO 324 signal generator and RF probe. Tony Galella, (201)-823-0116, tgalella@att.net.

YOUR AD HERE (FREE!)



Closeup view of part of Marsha and Jerry Simkin's recent radio display at the Barnegat library.