

The Jersey Broadcaster

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW JERSEY ANTIQUE RADIO CLUB

July 1998

Volume 4 Issue 7



MEETING/ ACTIVITY NOTES

Reported by Marv Beeferman
and Marsha Simkin

Elections held at the June meeting bring congratulations and sincere wishes for successful and productive terms for the following new officers:

- **President** - Phil Vourtsis
- **Vice President** - Jim Fisher
- **Treasurer** - Sal Brisindi (tentative)
- **Sgt. at Arms** - Dave Snellman
- **Technical Coordinator** - Al Klase
- **Trustee** - Gary D'Amico

Honorary membership certificates, artfully created by Marsha Simkin, were presented to Ruth and Jim Whartenby, who will make their new home in North Carolina, and Ludwell Sibley whose family is headed cross country to Oregon. For new phone numbers and addresses, contact your editor at (609)-693-9430. Both Jim and Ludwell have promised to remain active from afar with their thoughts and insights on the Southern and Western collecting scenes; look forward to their articles in future issues.

The club's "show-and-tell" sessions are always engaging and amusing and June's event was no different. Some of the entries that brought oh's, ah's and an occasional well-intentioned wisecrack included:

- John Butz Fiscina's Philco 39-70 farm radio running on military surplus A & B battery packs. John also showed a photomultiplier tube used on a prototype infrared telescope he obtained from a former member of RCA's Engineering department and a Zenith and Tung Sol advertising clock. The Zenith clock was obtained from a Connecticut repair shop where the owner



MEETING NOTICE

The next meeting of the NJARC will take place on Friday, June 12th at 7:30 PM in the Grace Lutheran Church, corner of Route 33 and Main Street in Freehold. Contact Marv Beeferman at 609-693-9430 or Phil Vourtsis at 732-870-7104 for directions. This month's program, hosted by Al Klase, will deal with the Alexanderson alternator. It will include a brief history, some technical details and an account of the reception of the recent transmission from Grimeton, Sweden on 18,000 meters. Plans for our upcoming swapmeet in September will also be discussed and first hand feedback from our June picnic will also be presented. Hope to see a great turnout in support of our new administration.

kept it lighted after the store closed so that people waiting for the bus outside his shop could anticipate the next scheduled arrival. A Norman Rockwell collector plate entitled "The Radio Operator" and a mystery crystal set rounded off John's contributions.

- George Shield's Australian version of a mid-30's Air King "Skyscraper" (described by plastic collectors as "one of the great American classics"). This version, manufactured by Amalgamated Radio of Australia with its chassis made in England, operates from 220 volts, has a tuning dial in meters and utilizes an interesting geared volume control. George noted that he received the radio as a gift from a New Zealand friend who he helped restore an early TV.
- Aaron Hunter's 1946 GE which gets power from a rechargeable 2.2 V lead-acid battery and vibrator. Based on its cast, pot metal cabinet, Aaron initially thought the radio was military.
- Bernie Gindoff's mother of all telephones. Bernie based his 2X model on a 1920's vintage Western Electric brass candlestick phone and crafted most of it from solid walnut. The phone even sports a radio that actuates through a mercury switch when the receiver is lifted

- Marty Friedman's Sonora advertising piece from the early 30's. A station is dialed in on a revolving cardboard wheel and the opposite side lists its associated city and frequency. Made for 3-dialers, it also allows settings to be listed for most often used stations.
- Marv Beeferman's rechargeable wet cell A/B battery consisting of 24 individual glass Exide cells in their original black wooden box. Marv also showed a Gray Endurance Battery (obtained from the Molettieri auction) made by Gray's Electro Chemical Lab of Bayonne, N.J. The 78 glass-cell, rechargeable unit sports outputs of 16, 18, 27, 45 and 100 volts at 2500 to 3000 mA. Marv is planning to restore both batteries to provide his sets with a more "historical" power source.
- Phil Vourtsis's vintage wire recorder and RCA cartridge recorder. The cartridge recorder had the advantage of a tape that wouldn't unravel, ran at 7/8 and 3/4 speeds but was only marketed for 3 to 4 years. Phil also showed a "Slide-O-Matic" record player which sold for \$5.95 in the 50's.
- Ben Tongue's 1" videocon (part of a monoscope?) and Jim Whartenby's Mother and Child religious icon in a glass tube envelope.

(Continued on page 2)

THE JERSEY BROADCASTER,

published a minimum of ten times each year, 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 with special emphasis on contributions made by the state of New Jersey. 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.

Submissions are welcome in typewritten or diskette (5-1/4" or 3-1/2") form with formats in ASCII, WordPerfect, Word, etc. Photos in high contrast black and white are appreciated but color photos are acceptable. The Editor or NJARC is not liable for any buying and selling transactions or for any other use of the contents of this publication.

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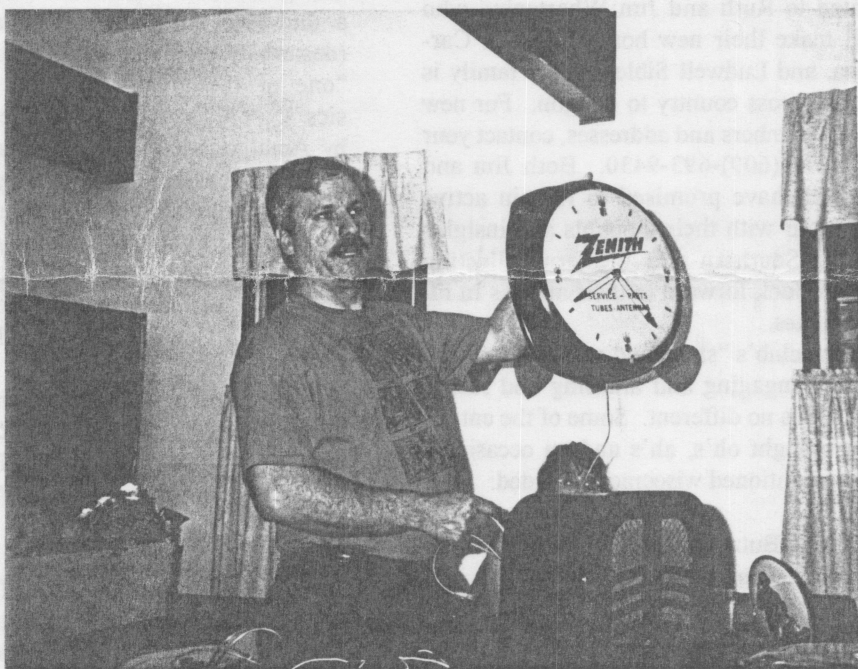
(Meeting/Activity Notes continued)

The NJARC-DVHRC combined breakfast-lunch-flea market-auction on June 20th at the Clinton Elks Lodge was a repeat success. The excellent weather and outdoor setting again represented Hunterdon County, NJ at its green best. The lunch - burgers, hot dogs, corn on the cob, potato salad, etc. - was simple but tasty in the *al fresco* setting. About 50 club and family members attended with about 15 tailgate vendors and the mood was relaxed and jovial. Our newly elected Technical Coordinator, Al Klase, put up a wire antenna and demonstrated his "secret agent" transceiver. The auction, professionally presided over by Bill Overbeck and Mike Koste, included mostly bring-ins and club donations. Entries ran the gamut from plastics, consoles, magazines and service literature, TV's, audio equipment, etc. to assorted parts and unknowns. Some nice box lots of tubes were available and a Radio Bar sold for \$69. The event was organized principally by Ruth and Jim Whartenby with representation by Marv Beeferman, Bill Overbeck and Lud Sibley.

We recently received a "modest proposal" from Al Klase regarding October 1999 which will mark the 100th anniversary of one of the earliest radio operations in the United States. Marconi, on board the sea-going steamer *Grand Duchess*, radioed reports of the America's Cup races to receiving apparatus installed at the Highlands lighthouse on the northern New Jersey coast. As Al suggests:

I think it would be appropriate to organize a commemoration of this historic event. The imagination runs wild. Imagine installing a spark transmitter, complete with 10-inch Rumkoff coil and plain spark gap, on a vintage boat and actually communicating with a coherer receiver at the twin lights! The amount of publicity this could generate for the antique radio community would surely make the effort worthwhile. Of course, we might have to make some allowances for practical and legal reasons, but I don't think we'd end up using two cellphones.

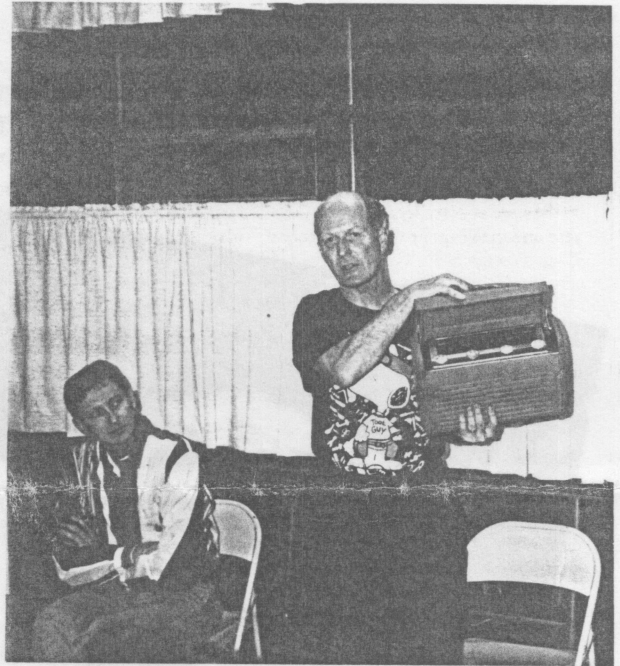
Any takers?



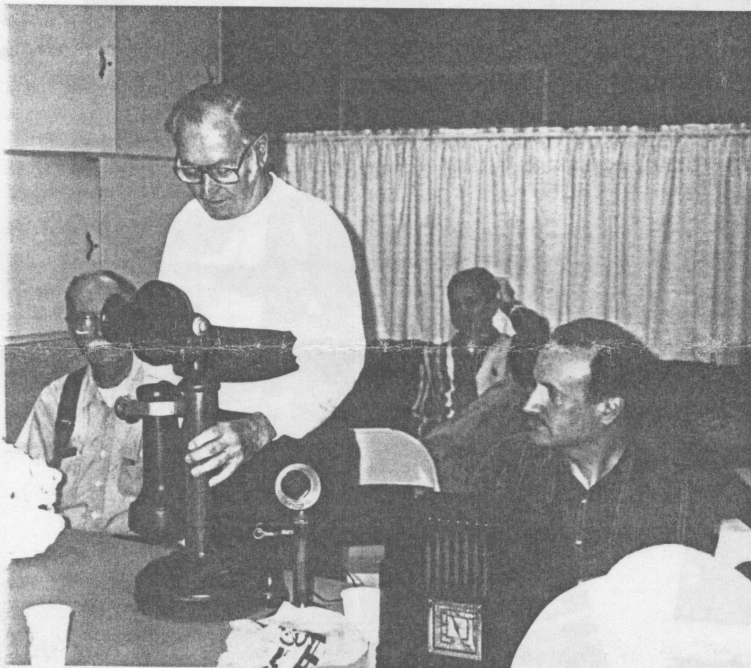
John Butz Fiscina's Zenith clock and Philco 39-70



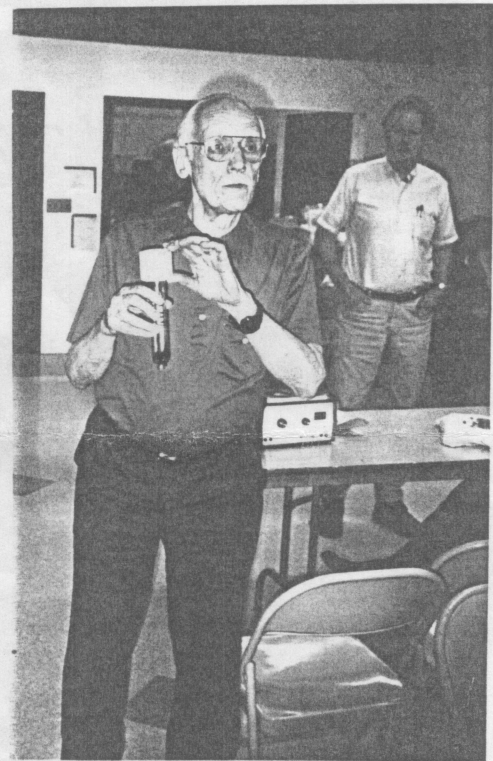
Ludwell Sibley and Jim and Ruth Whartenby proudly display their honorary membership certificates.



Aaron Hunter's 1946 GE portable

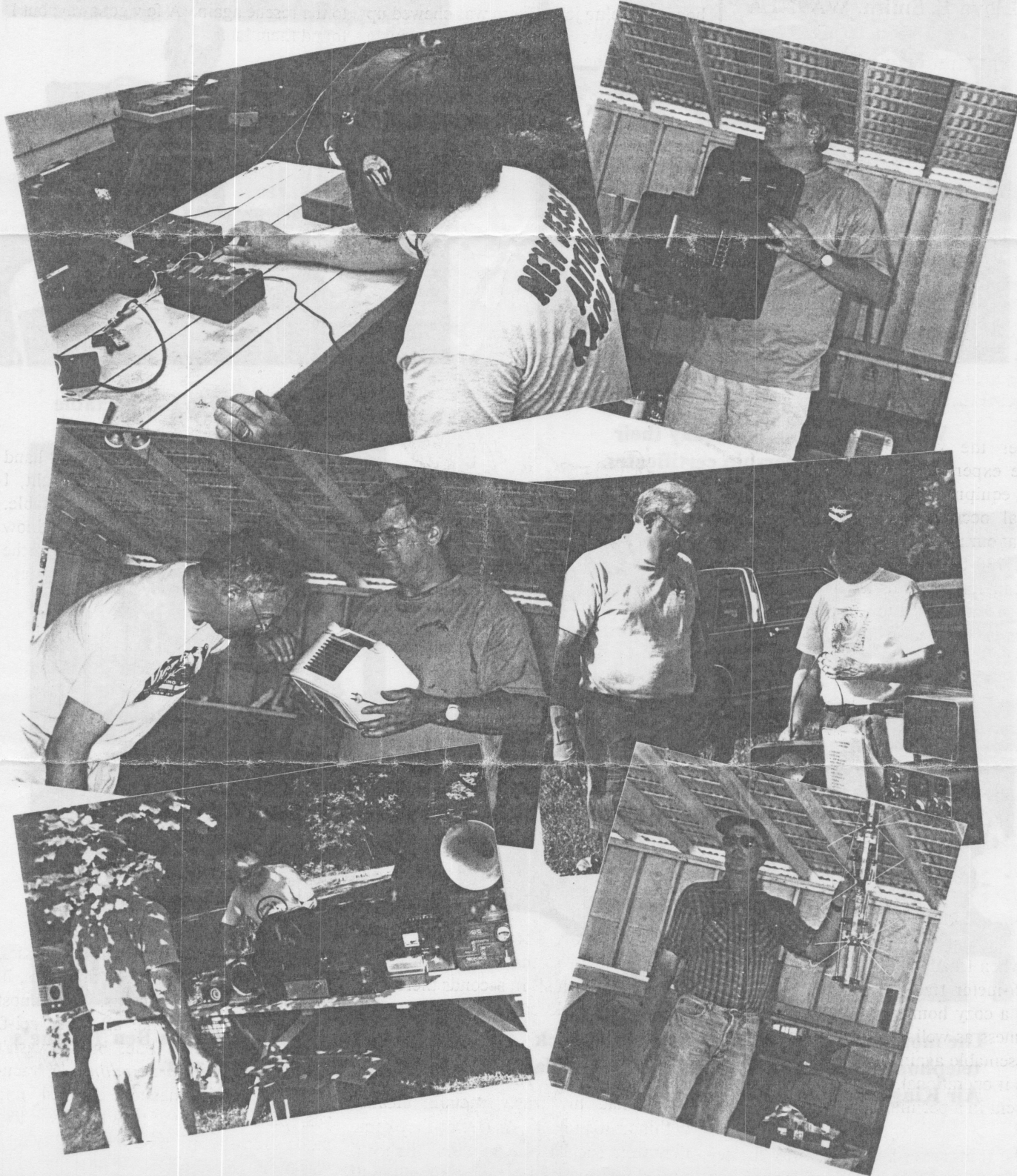


The mother (and daughter) of all candlestick telephones. George Shield and his Australian Air King is to the right.



Ludwell Sibley admires Ben Tongue's contribution from afar.

PICNIC TIME!



BUGGED!

By Lloyd L. Smith, WA9NLA

The next time you pick up a used radio, you might get more than you bargained for.

The following article is reprinted, with permission, from the March, 1998 issue of QST...Ed.

*"Incredible! These giant ants have created massive tunnels. They've cemented the walls with their own saliva."
"Yeah. Well, spit's about all that's holding me together, too." - from the 1954 sci-fi thriller, Them!*

Over the years we've all had unique experiences with used electronic equipment. One of my most unusual occurred recently when a client at our repair shop brought in an ICOM 730 transceiver to be sold on consignment. It seems the owner had taken ill and wished to dispose of his equipment. My co-worker Jim took inventory of the rig with a quick glance inside the boxes. Later in the day he priced it at fair market value and called the client back with our findings to make sure the price was agreeable. The rig sat in the shop for weeks. A few lookers, but no takers.

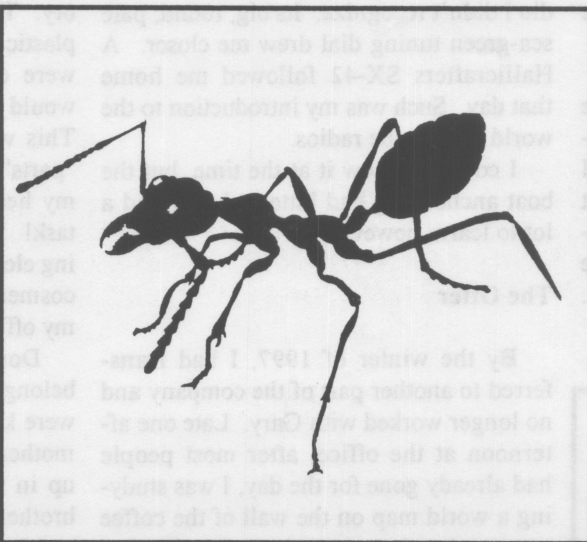
One afternoon I decided to take a closer look at this little gem. The first thing I noticed upon opening the boxes was that something had gnawed them from the inside. The only time I had seen this before was when I had purchased a Heathkit SB-110 6-meter transceiver. A mouse had made a cozy home inside and a considerable mess as well. A little cleaning made it presentable again and some repair effort made it operational. This was similar, but different in a peculiar, ominous way.

The transceiver box gave away the secret when the ICOM 730 was removed. At one time ants had made a nest inside the

box and a nasty mess. Unfortunately, their drippings had attacked the paint in one corner of the cabinet, blemishing an otherwise perfect transceiver. I disassembled the radio and began a tedious several-hour scrubbing job. There was chewed up cardboard in every nook and cranny; a vacuum cleaner and a can of air were of great assistance. Finally, the radio was sparkling once more, but would it work? Did the ant goo affect its operation? I would not know until I inspected the power supply.

Into the Nest

On opening the power supply box, I found the same telltale signs. Yes, the



ants had liked this box, too. They apparently liked it even more than the transceiver. Goopy evidence of their occupation was everywhere.

I could see that getting this power supply cleaned and operational would be a challenge. I grabbed the unit and proceeded to remove it from the box. What I did not know was that it was still inhabited by its residents! In seconds there were dozens of black carpenter ants everywhere.

I kept my cool. As luck would have it, I still had my trusty vacuum cleaner within arm's reach. As fast as they came they were sucked into oblivion. I shook, rattled and rocked the power supply until I got them all—or so I thought.

I had to be sure, so I grabbed my screwdriver and took off the top of the power supply. Sure enough, more ants popped out of the recesses and began scurrying across the bench. Vacuum cleaner to the rescue again. A few got away, but I found them later.

The "Bright Idea"

Now came my "bright idea." I couldn't shake any more ants loose, but I had to be sure they were all gone. Maybe if I blasted some air into the enclosure, the few remaining survivors would be exposed. It was worth a shot.

I'm a grown man, and there are very few things that frighten me, least of all ants. I don't think I'd like to try alligators, but then with big teeth they have a definite edge. Even so, I felt my skin beginning to crawl.

With a can of air in my left hand and a vacuum hose in my right, I steadied myself against the table. What could go wrong? I'd just blow a few ants from the underside of the power transformer and suck them up.

What I neglected to consider is ants only weigh a fraction of a gram, if that, and the air can to them must be the equivalent of a tornado to us. A short blast sent thousands of ants airborne in an instant and they never made it to the vacuum side. They went straight heavenward. I swear it was like slow motion. I could see them floating down, all wearing parachutes and carrying machine guns and hand grenades. In a second I was covered with ants, and they were mad!

Ants were in my hair, on my glasses, crawling inside my shirt, in my shoes, in the pockets of my pants. I almost screamed. It was like all those sci-fi movies rolled into one, but I wasn't watching, I was *participating*! I vacuumed, swatted, smashed, brushed, and yes, *spit* ants. (One of the little devils had made it inside my mouth, probably as I was trying to scream!)

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(Bugged!...continued)

To destroy the ants inside my clothes, I took drastic action, drowning them in the washer. For the next several days I was still shaking ants from the power supply. I even bombarded them with Raid. It took three days before I was absolutely certain that the last ant was gone.

Apply Power—At Last

Finally the day of reckoning came. The first application of power blew a fuse. Oh my goodness, I thought. The power transformer is trashed. The ants must have eaten through the insulation on the windings. However, I replaced the fuse the next day and it came to life. I figured the inrush of current to the capacitors for the first time in two years took the fuse.

Next, I mated the power supply to the radio. I was rewarded with booming signals. The story concludes here, because I became so attached to the radio I bought it myself. This is the second time I've experienced bugs in equipment. The first time was when a customer brought in a VCR. But that's a story for another day!

A ZENITH GOES HOME

By Larry Johnson, K5YF

The following is the first of a two-part installment. It originally appeared in QST for April 1998 and appears in the Broadcaster with permission...Ed.

This is a tale about a radio known in its time as "the Royalty of Radios" - the Zenith Trans-Oceanic. It tells how one radio affected different people in different ways at different times. But beneath it all is a story about Amateur Radio.

My Introduction to Boat Anchors

The story begins during the summer of 1994. I was perusing the aisles of the Gainesville, Texas, hamfest along with my Elmer, Gary Youney, K5QT.

Gary and I worked together. A year earlier, Gary had dropped a QST and the ARRL Operating Manual on my desk, hoping I might find them interesting. Indeed! In short order, I passed my Technician Plus exam. A few days before the hamfest, I got my Extra. I was on top of the world! In the midst of the hamfest crowd, I reasoned that I deserved to reward myself for passing my Extra. A flash out of the corner of my eye caught my attention.

Several aisles sunlight glinted off a radio I didn't recognize. Its big, round, pale sea-green tuning dial drew me closer. A Hallicrafters SX-42 followed me home that day. Such was my introduction to the world of old tube radios.

I couldn't know it at the time, but the boat anchor bug had bitten. I still had a lot to learn, however.

The Offer

By the winter of 1997, I had transferred to another part of the company and no longer worked with Gary. Late one afternoon at the office, after most people had already gone for the day, I was studying a world map on the wall of the coffee room. Another co-worker, Don Boley, walked in and wondered aloud why I was staring at the map. I explained that I was an Amateur Radio operator and was looking at the countries that I had not yet contacted. It turned out that Don's brother, Dick, is an active ham, N3HKN. This led to a conversation about the various aspects of the hobby.

After discussing DXing and contesting, our talk turned to boat anchors. Don said he had an old Zenith Trans-Oceanic at home.

I learned the radio had not been turned on in 35 years! He wondered if he should plug it in to see if it worked, but I suggested that might not be a good idea. Instead, I offered to check out the radio and see if I could restore it. Now mind you, I had never seen a Zenith Trans-Oceanic nor did I know anything about them. But,

mentally I was surmising, "new tubes, new caps, possibly a professional repainting of the cabinet. How difficult could it be?" The conversation soon was forgotten, at least by me.

The Offer Holds

A couple of months later, Don called me into his office. There, I caught sight of what looked like a dirty, scuffed black briefcase on a table. I didn't give it a second thought as I sat down. But, he walked over to the "briefcase" and flipped up the front cover, introducing me to a rather forlorn Zenith Trans-Oceanic H500. The case was separated, and, of all things, covered with ragged and dirty fabric. So much for the professional repainting theory. The dial was barely visible behind a plastic window clouded with age. There were cracks in the plastic. The back would not open as it was supposed to. This was beginning to look a lot like a "parts" set. Taking an even closer look, my heart sank. This was an impossible task! Even if I could get the radio working electrically, how could I ever restore it cosmetically? Already I was regretting my offer. But, I had offered...

Don told me the radio's history. It had belonged to his older brother when they were kids. Over time, it ended up in his mother's attic, and later, it almost wound up in the trash. As far as he knew, his brother had not seen the radio in decades and had forgotten about it.

Then, Don dropped the bombshell.

He wanted to know if I could restore the radio so that he could give it to his brother as a 60th birthday present the following year. He was sure his brother would appreciate it. After all, this same scruffy, dirty Zenith Trans-Oceanic sitting there on the table had introduced his brother to Amateur Radio some 45 years earlier and laid a path for his life and career. Through his interest in electronics and Amateur Radio, Dick Boley had gone on to a long and successful career in telecommunications and management at a large, well-known company.

Don recounted stories of his brother's shack in the basement. He remembered his brother working on radios that never had cabinets on them because they were

(Continued on page 8)

MISCH METAL • NIGROSINE • PORCELAIN • PETROLEUM JELLY • ZINC
CALCIUM ALUMINUM FLUORIDE • RESIN (SYNTHETIC) • ETHYL ALCOHOL

MATERIALS USED IN RCA RADIO TUBES

LEAD ACETATE • MALACHITE GREEN • GLYCERINE • ZINC CHLORIDE • IRON
MARBLE DUST • WOOD FIBER • STRONTIUM NITRATE • LEAD OXIDE • ZINC OXIDE
LAVA • MICA • TIN • SODIUM CARBONATE • SODIUM NITRATE • SILVER OXIDE

BARIUM CARBONATE
ARSENIC TRIOXIDE
STRONTIUM CARBONATE

CALCIUM CARBONATE
AMMONIUM CHLORIDE
POTASSIUM CARBONATE

ISOLANTITE

MOLYBDENUM

ALUMINA

BORAX

BARIUM

COPPER

CARBON

CHROMIUM

CALCIUM

CAESIUM

COBALT

IRIDIUM

MONEL

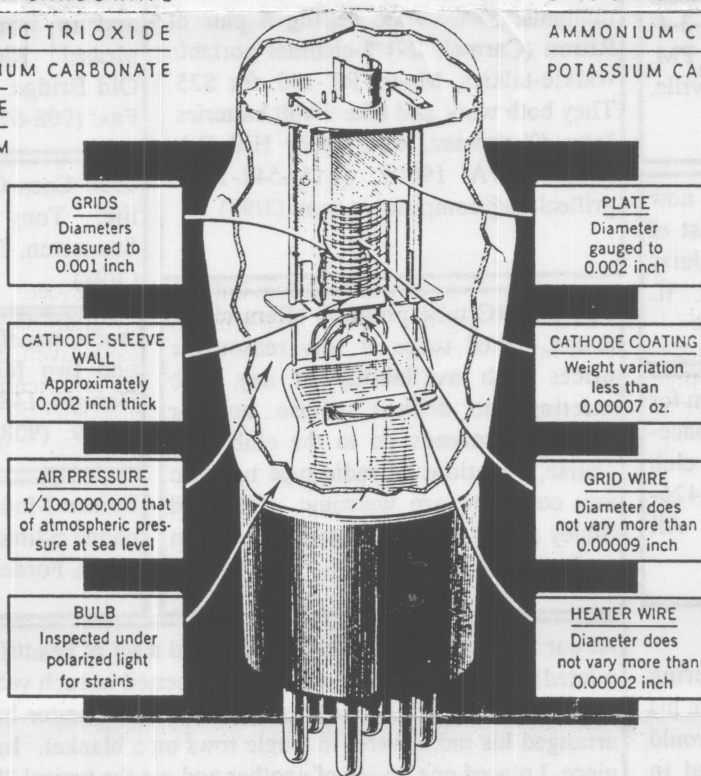
MERCURY

CALCIUM

OXIDE

BARIUM

NITRATE



BAKELITE

PHOSPHORUS

SILICON

SHELLAC

TUNGSTEN

TITANIUM

SILICA

GLASS

MAGNESIA

PLATINUM

STRONTIUM

MAGNESIUM

ROSIN

NICKEL

COBALT

OXIDE

THORIUM

NITRATE

Gases Used in Manufacture

NEON — HYDROGEN — CARBON DIOXIDE — ILLUMINATING GAS
HELIUM — ARGON — NATURAL GAS — NITROGEN — OXYGEN

Elements Entering into the Manufacture

ARGON — ALUMINUM — BORON — BARIUM — CAESIUM — CALCIUM — COPPER — CARBON — CHROMIUM — CHLORINE
COBALT — HYDROGEN — HELIUM — IRIDIUM — IRON — LEAD — MAGNESIUM — MERCURY — MOLYBDENUM
NICKEL — NEON — NITROGEN — OXYGEN — POTASSIUM — PHOSPHORUS — PLATINUM — SODIUM — SILVER
SILICON — STRONTIUM — TUNGSTEN — THORIUM — TANTALUM — TITANIUM — TIN — ZINC — RARE EARTHS

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

Howard Sams PhotoFact volumes 1-2-3-4-5-6. Good condition. Call after 5 PM. Steve Hrobak, 62 River Road, Montville, N.J., 07045. (973)-334-7024.

Next list of *highly collectible* tubes now being assembled. Send SASE for list of duplicates, to be mailed in May. Jerry Vanicek, PO Box 4743, Chicago, IL 60680. No phone calls, please. (3/98)

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.

(A Zenith Goes Home...continued)

He recalled how his father would bring visitors down to the basement and have his brother turn on the tubes, tubes that would light up the whole room. I listened in amazement, looking at the radio that had shaped his brother's life. This radio had a history and a personality. I didn't know how I was going to do it, but I had a mission.

In the next Broadcaster installment, Mr. Johnson attacks the restoration of his Trans-Oceanic, only to be confronted by the typical headaches we have all heard about so often: modifying a 1R5 to replace a 1L6 only to find its shortcomings, the bridging an electrolytic trap, skepticism over the dye-and-polish trick, faceplate cleaning without removing screened labels, etc....Ed

The ever-handy reference *Tube Lore* gives 186 pages of insightful scoop on about every North American tube there is. Reviewed by Eric Barbour in *Vacuum Tube Valley* as "an instant classic." Available from Ludwell Sibley, 44 E. Main St., Flemington, NJ 08822 for \$19.95 postpaid in the U. S. and Canada, \$24.95 by air overseas. Clubs get a discount on multiple copies. (3/98)

Tektronix 556 dual-beam oscilloscope with roll-around cart and 53C, 53/54B, 1A4 (4-channel amp) and 1A1 (dual-trace) type plug-ins. Working and with manuals, \$75. Also selling a pair of Ritron (Carmel, IN) 2-channel portable walkie-talkies, Model RT-150, for \$25. They both work and take 9-volt batteries. John Okolowicz, 624 Cedar Hill Rd., Ambler, PA 19002, (215)-542-1597, grillecloth@compuserve.com. (3/98)

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 Lud Sibley at any monthly meeting to obtain or donate tubes.

At our recent picnic auction, I purchased a set of beautifully bound books (not radio-related) that had the following notice inserted in each volume. It reminded me of one of my first flea market experiences where the vendor had carefully and deliberately arranged his radio wares in single rows on a blanket. In order to better examine one piece, I placed one on top of another and got the typical "looks can kill" stare followed by a well-deserved lecture on examining things you have not yet paid for. Vintage radio books deserve the same treatment...Ed.

NOTICE.

HOW TO OPEN A BOOK.

From "Modern Bookbinding."

Hold the book with its back on a smooth or covered table; let the front board down, then the other, holding the leaves in one hand while you open a few leaves at the back, then a few at the front, and so on, alternately opening back and front, gently pressing open the sections till you reach the center of the volume. Do this two or three times and you will obtain the best results. Open the volume violently or carelessly in any one place and you will likely break the back and cause a start in the leaves. Never force the back of the book.

Communications and military radios, test equipment and some radar items. Send long SASE for large list. No sales until you have received my list; looking for some trades. Ray Chase, 1350 Marlborough Ave., Plainfield, N.J. 07060. (908)-757-9741. (3/98)

WANTED

Buying European Radios! Grundig, Telefunken, Saba, Normende, Blaupunkt, French Radios, Polish Goplana, etc. Must be in mint or close to mint condition and in working order. No junkers, please! Richard Brill, P.O. Box 5367, Old Bridge, N.J. 08857 (732)-607-0299 Fax: (908)-679-8524) rgbent@aol.com

1950 Coca-Cola cooler radio, red bakelite. Tony Molettiere, 105 Main St., Souderton, PA 18964, (215)-723-7459 (3/98)

Audio transformers-one for a Crosley 51 and two for an Amrad S522. Jerry Dowgin, 1481 Newark Ave., Whiting NJ, 08759. (908)-350-6259 (2/98)

Edison Model 10 (or equivalent) dictaphone cylinders. Tony Trope, 33 Jackson Court, Fordes, NJ, 08863 (3/98)