



The Jersey Broadcaster

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW JERSEY ANTIQUE RADIO CLUB

January 2025

Volume 31 Issue 1



The *Jersey Broadcaster* is distributed to members of the New Jersey Antique Radio Club via email as a PDF file. Back issues of many of our newsletters are available on the club's website:

www.njarc.org/broadcaster/

Meeting Notice

Our January meeting will take place on Friday, 1/10 at InfoAge in Room 9032A. At this meeting, we'll be having our annual "Members-only Auction" where members in good standing can auction off radios and related equipment and keep 100% of the proceeds for themselves! Also: info about the upcoming DX contest.

We hope to livestream the meeting on YouTube at youtube.com/user/NJARC. Directions to InfoAge can be found on Google Maps at <https://bit.ly/3Ps0Pki>.

Meeting Review

In December, we gathered at the West Lake Country Club for our annual Holiday Party. You can watch RadioWild's video coverage of our Holiday Gift Exchange at <https://bit.ly/4fPFtIn>.

Many of our meeting presentations are available on the club's YouTube channel <https://bit.ly/3yZ5yoR>.

From the President's Workbench

Greetings Fellow Enthusiasts!

Welcome to 2025! 2024 went out with a bang at our grand Holiday Party on December 14th at the WestLake Golf and Country Club, in Jackson, NJ.

Lynn and club Trustee Bill Zukowski were, as usual, our gracious hosts for the evening. Our club is fortunate to have Lynn and Bill living at WestLake to host

our event in their festively decorated Clubhouse. If you are a "legacy" club member, you will remember the origins of our Holiday Party in the Lutheran Church, in Freehold... What a big difference!



The President's Workbench.

Calendar of Events

January 10: NJARC monthly meeting, InfoAge

January 17: HARPS monthly meeting, Suffern NY

February 14: NJARC monthly meeting, Princeton

February 21: HARPS monthly meeting, Suffern NY

March 14: NJARC monthly meeting, InfoAge

March 22: NJARC Spring Swapmeet (preliminary date)

March 28: HARPS monthly meeting, Suffern NY

April 11: NJARC monthly meeting, Princeton

April 26: NJARC Spring Repair Clinic, InfoAge

April 26: International Marconi Day, InfoAge

May 9-10: Kutztown Radio Show

May 16: NJARC monthly meeting, InfoAge

June 13: NJARC monthly meeting, Princeton

June 27-29: ARRL Field Day, InfoAge

July 11: NJARC monthly meeting, Princeton

July 26, NJARC Summer Hamfest/Swapmeet Tailgate Show, InfoAge

August 8: NJARC monthly meeting, Princeton

August 23: NJARC Spring Repair Clinic, InfoAge

September 12: NJARC monthly meeting, InfoAge

September 19-20: Kutztown Radio Show



NJARC Holiday Party, Freehold (circa 1993)

President's Workbench

(Continued)

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 \$25 per year and meetings are held on the second Friday of each month either at InfoAge or at Princeton University. Neither the editor nor NJARC is liable for any other use of the contents of this publication other than for information.

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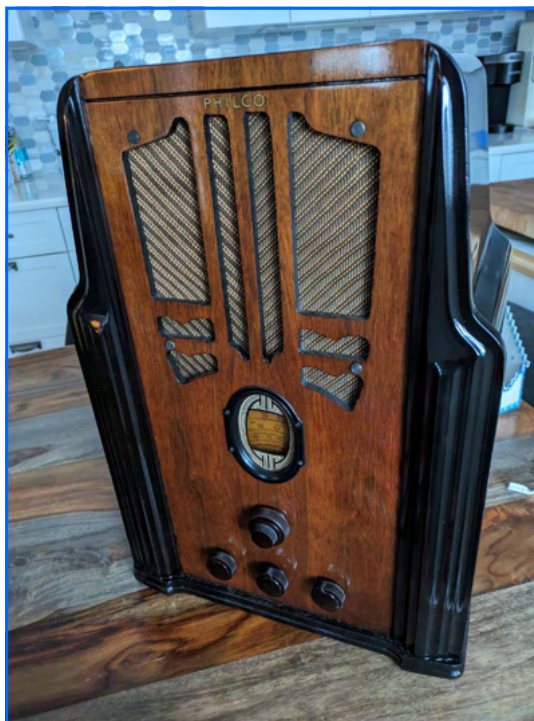
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The evening started off with cocktails & hors d'oeuvres, followed by the main meal of salmon and Chicken Francese, and finished with a decorated sheet cake marking our club's 32nd year of happy survival! And yes, there had to be at least one obligatory speech from your club President! I reviewed our club's events over the past year: who we lost (Radio Willie, Jerry Dowgin) and how we are continuing to hold our own in the number of club members we have (234.) A special shout-out went to our intrepid Mistress of Club Renewals, Marsha Simkin for her work, and a special shout-out to Arkansas DX member former club president Jim Whartenby who continues to answer complex radio/electronic questions asked by club members on the club's Communicator!

AHHH! The Game... More than half of the Party guests entered the Evil Grab-Bag Game which consists of members entering wrapped radio-related gifts to be "distributed" to other club members in a rather vicious way: each person gets to pick a gift and decide whether they will keep the (wrapped) gift they chose or to 'steal' a gift from a previous recipient. DX club member Dan Gervais drove down from Montreal and entered the most beautifully restored Philco Cathedral radio anyone has probably ever seen. Consequently, the radio travelled through many disappointed members' hands until the last lucky winner took it home!

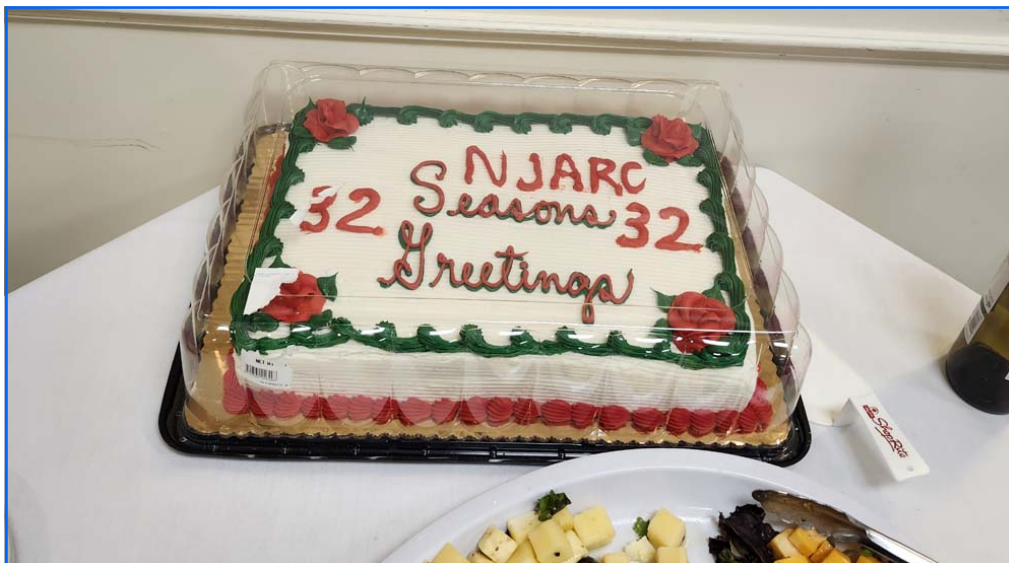


The awesome Philco!

President's Workbench
(Continued)

I look forward to our club's continuation in our 33rd year, 2025. Happy New Year NJARC!

– Richard Lee, President, NJARC



President's Workbench
(Continued)



Hot Rodding an All American Four Radio

By Joseph Divito

When I first started collecting tube radios in 2011, one of the radios I acquired was a 1961 Admiral model Y-2998. I knew nothing about the differences in performance between a typical five tube radio and my little Admiral four tube set. It was already recapped and looked kind of different, so I bought it. It didn't take me long to discover the shortcomings inherent in the breed. To put it plainly, it had the tuning selectivity of a barn door, and was pretty deaf. After a few years messing with it, I eventually sold it, having become bored with it. Fast forward a few years to 2024, and at the fall Kutztown show, I came across this teal example of the Admiral that I used to have.



It was unrestored and needed a little work, but I dug the color. I've never been overly fond of the "All American Four" radio, having been burned by this model the first time, but in a pang of nostalgia and curiosity to see if there was anything I could do to make it perform any better, I took the plunge, and this plucky little Admiral followed me home.

The first thing I did was recap it, which wasn't much of a job. The radio had a single three section electrolytic can style capacitor mounted on a circuit board. The rest of the circuitry (if you could call that Spartan thing a circuit) was either enclosed in one of those early integrated circuit chips called Couplates, or in a few ceramic disc capacitors. Within an hour of careful unsoldering (to avoid lifting any of the foil traces off the board), I was again the "proud" owner of a mostly deaf but hum-free Admiral. Oh, joy!

I have learned a few things about doing an alignment since 2011, so I attempted to follow the factory steps for aligning my little Admiral. When I was done, I had a slightly less deaf Admiral. It was useable enough that I could play some of the local radio stations, which was pretty much how I suspect they intended it to be used back in 1961. Not wanting to see myself get bored with it again, I studied it and thought about what could be done to improve it.

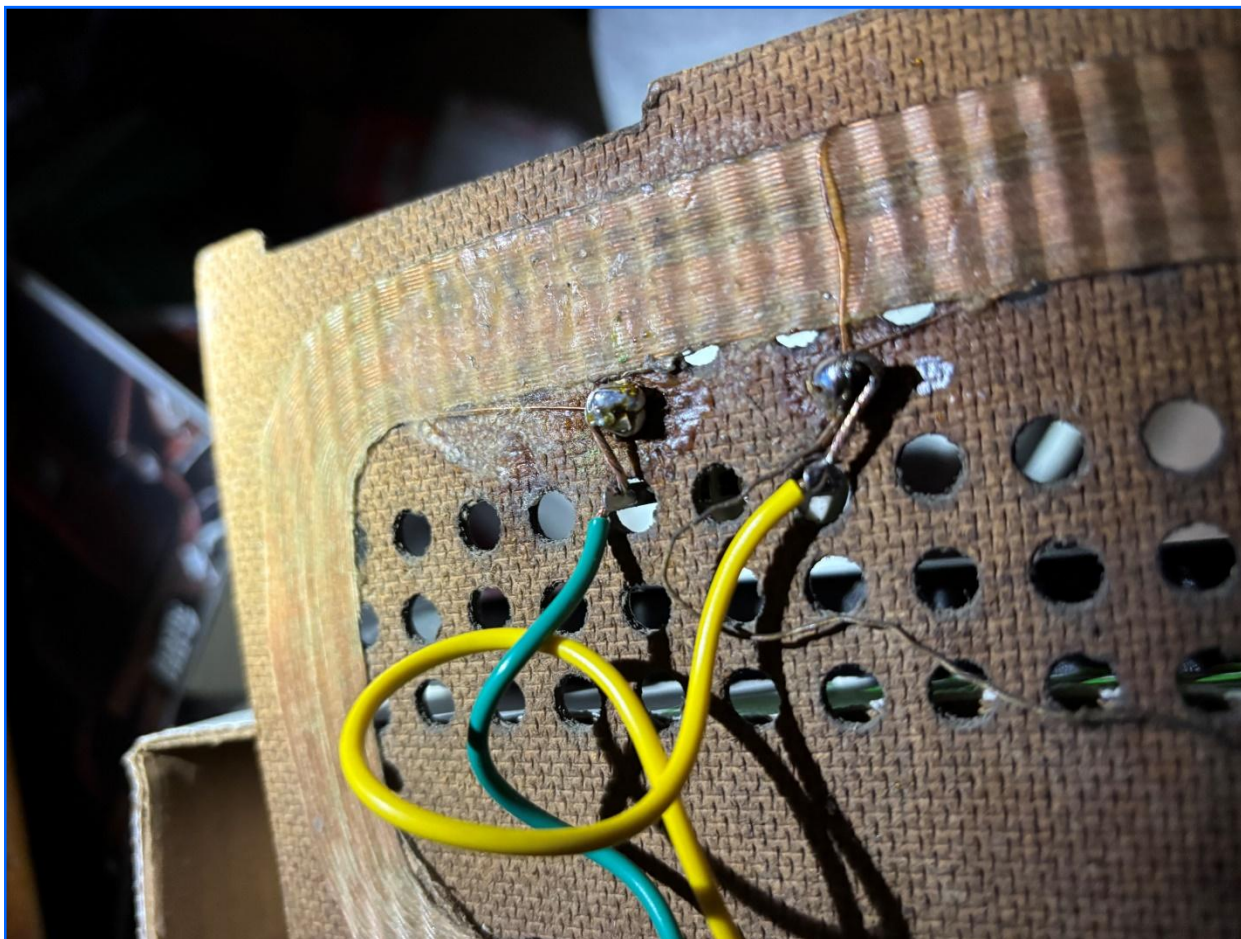
Hot Rodding an All American Four Radio (Continued)

One thing that immediately caught my attention was the factory had deleted the trimming capacitor on the antenna circuit. On most every radio I've collected, and even those few other four tube radios that I have, there were always two adjusting screws on the tuning capacitor, one on the small set of blades that sets the local oscillator (so your tuning follows what your dial is set to), and the other "peaks" up the antenna circuit, giving you the best resonance on what is usually called the "front end" of the circuit---the antenna, tuner and local oscillator. This adjustment would be on the large set of blades on the tuner, and it was just not there! A look at my SAMs photo fact (which has a picture of the actual radio) proved this was no accident---it was deleted right from the factory. This gave me an inspiration!

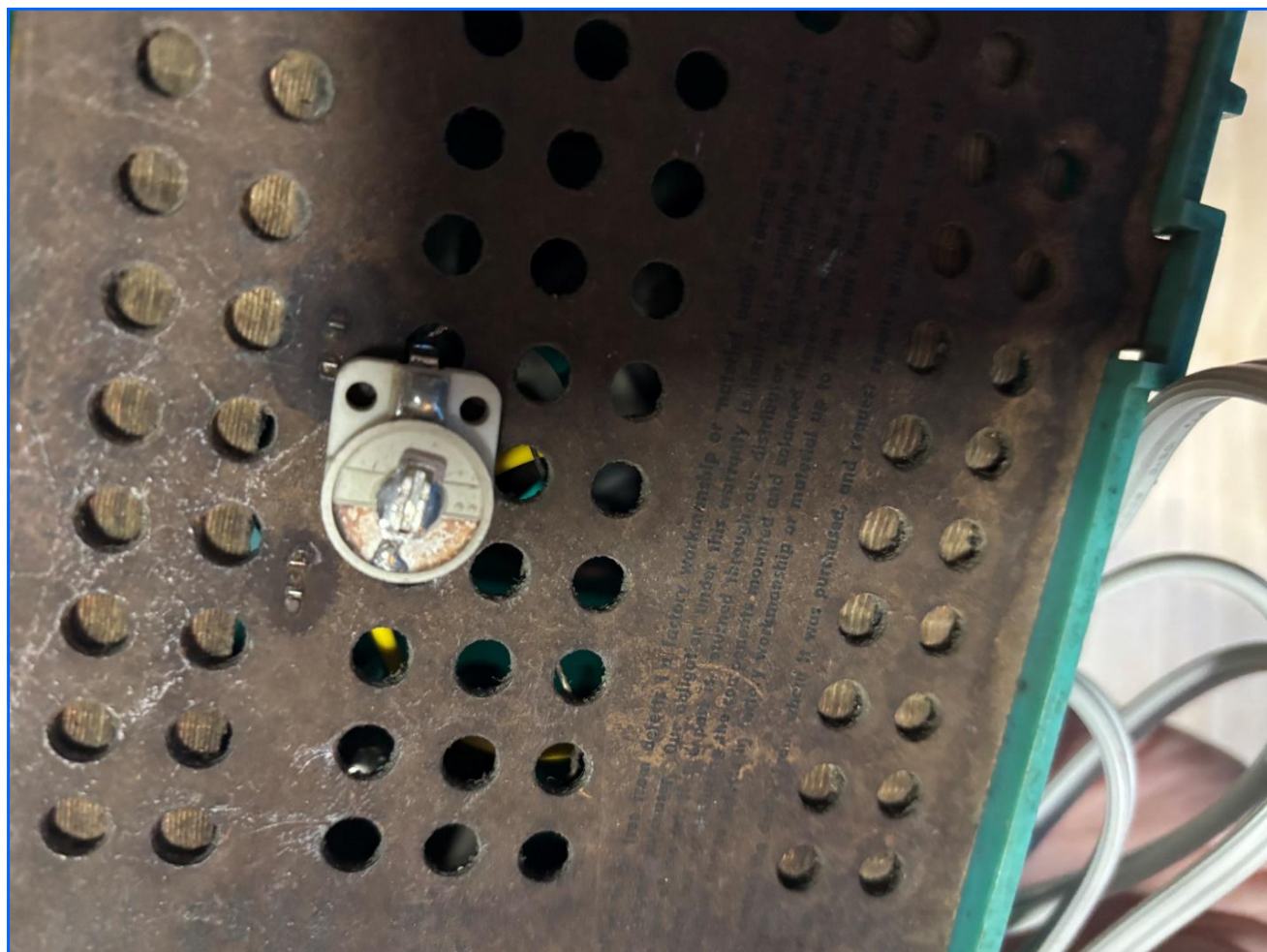
I found on Radio Daze something that looked like it would work, a New Old Stock ceramic variable capacitor (<https://www.radiodaze.com/trimmers-padders/>). It was adjustable from 7-45 pico-farad. I ordered one.

I installed it across the terminals of the antenna coil on the back of the radio. After some experimentation, I found a point in the adjustment that worked the best. When I say it worked, I mean the level of improvement totally blew me away! I was now able to pick up stations all across the dial, and the selectivity was on par with my other five tube radios. I was now able to tune in a station (my favorite) at 1240AM that the Admiral simply couldn't find before, losing it between 1210 and 1290. Amplification was a bit low as expected since it didn't have that IF amplification circuit, but I was able to make 1210 quite listenable across the room without having to turn the volume all the way up. This was looking promising!

Here are a few pictures of how I mounted the adjustable ceramic trimmer:



Hot Rodding an All American Four Radio (Continued)



I mounted it on the antenna back so that it was the most protected from the heat of the tubes, and thus be least likely to drift with use.

I next made another improvement to my little Admiral by the substitution of the stock 12AU6 tube with a 12AW6. I had a few 12AW6 tubes that were thrown in with a tube buy I did a few years ago, and were sitting around not doing anything. I found the 12AW6 is pin-compatible with the 12AU6 and both are sharp cutoff pentodes, but the 12AW6 has a higher amplification. I had already experimented with the 12AW6 in another four tube radio (a Firestone) my wife really digs, and had come home with us a year before. In the Firestone, I could hear a definite gain in reception, and thought I'd try the same trick it in my little Admiral. Sure enough, it did indeed raise the volume even more. Not as radical a gain as my added on capacitor, but I could definitely hear a difference when I switched between the tubes, leaving the volume alone between tube swaps so I could hear which one was better.

Now this plucky little Admiral was a little plain, and the paint on the tuning knob and dial face had worn off years ago. Thanks to the magic of the Internet, I was able to get a good idea of what it should look like. I used a black fine tipped Sharpie marker to touch up the numbers in the proper shade of black. Not having access to the machinery to properly chrome plate the plastic, I settled for another Sharpie that writes in a very shiny oil based chrome paint. I gave the chrome highlights two coats—it was a snap to apply since the Sharpie's tip is very fine, so I had pinpoint control where the paint went.

Continued on next page.

Hot Rodding an All American Four Radio (Continued)



The touched-up dial

So, that is my adventure “hot rodding” a four tube radio, turning it from a cheap piece of crap into good looking, good performing and listenable little radio.

I now had a great reason to use it; it is small, sensitive, and easy to use. If I were to have officially been participating in the contest, based on its size, it would fit in category G (shirt pocket category) of the DX contest, but since it was very expensive new (800 Deutsche Marks in 1987, according to radiomuseum.org), it must be entered into category K, the “any radio” category.

Unfortunately, I did not spend a lot of time DXing in Italy. Due to logistics issues, I had much less free time than planned, I was tired/jetlagged most evenings, and simply had other things to do. I did manage to do so briefly on two different occasions, once in Venice, and once in Florence. “When In Rome” jokes and references came up throughout my trip, but for whatever reason I never applied it to listening to my radio while I actually was in Rome. Next time...

More About the Tucker Radio

By Bob Bennett

Way back in 2018 I wrote an article for the Broadcaster about a restoration I did on a radio for a 1948 Tucker automobile. Hemmings Motor News recently ran a story about the car, so here, along with the original Broadcaster article, is ‘the rest of the story.’

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY FROM THE SUSSEX HAMFEST

By
**Bob Bennett &
Marv Beeferman**

*Originally published in the August
2018 Issue of The Broadcaster*

The story begins on July 15th with a call to member Matt Reynolds by someone asking if an NJARC member could restore a 1948 radio that was to be installed in a 1948 Tucker 1044. Matt provided the caller with the number for president Richard Lee. When Richard saw a Michigan number come up on his phone, he first thought it was just one of the numerous calls he gets each day asking for what a radio was worth, where to sell a collection, when and where is the next swap meet, etc.

The caller explained his problem - that he needed the radio restoration completed by July 23rd since the Tucker was ultimately going to a Pebble Beach show for exhibition. Immediately, member Bob Bennett came to mind as a good candidate to tackle the job, but Richard explained that since the car was in Michigan, it would be difficult to complete the project in such a limited time. The caller responded that the Tucker was not in Michigan but was presently in the final steps of restoration at Ida Automotive in Morganville, New Jersey. Richard gave the caller Bob's contact information and, not catching his name at first, asked him who he was. "Oh, this is John Tucker, Jr., grandson of Preston Tucker."

The story continues in Bob's own words:

While driving home from the Sussex hamfest, my phone vibrated twice but I did not answer since I was focused on my driving and wanted to get home safely. I was so tired when I got home that I forgot to check my messages. On the following Monday morning, I found this on my email:

Hi Bob

I hope you got my phone message. I need some help with a Motorola 708 radio that is going in a 1948 Tucker. Please give me a call or email me.

All the best,
John Tucker Jr

At first, I thought this may have been a practical joke, but when I called John back, I found him to be completely legitimate. John is the grandson of Preston Tucker, the man who developed and produced the Tucker automobile.

John came over to my home and he was a pleasure to talk to. He was happy to find someone who could restore the radio so quickly since the car restoration was being completed as we talked. I gave him the nickel tour of my radios as well as my '67 Buick wagon. I wanted to make him feel at ease, and I learned much about the car as well as his grandfather.

I had to find out two important things. First, does the car use a positive or negative six volt ground and second, what is the time frame for completion? I was informed that the ground was positive and I had one week to do the job!

Now about the radio itself. The Motorola 708 series of radios were given to dealers, and sometimes directly to buyers, so the radio could be installed after the car was completed. I did some research and found that they were also used on 1941-1947 Plymouth, Chrysler, Dodge and DeSoto cars. The radio was mounted under the dash with a remote head using two cables - one for volume and one for tuning.

The radio has some interesting features. To manually tune, the "T" button must be depressed. For tuned presets, the U, C, K, E or R buttons must be held down for a few seconds to memorize that station. This is achieved with a solenoid on the chassis that rotates a switch to a position after the tuning has been completed and memorized. The volume control also has a solenoid for tone control. You depress the volume control and rotate a three-position switch for the desired tone. This was your 1948 graphic equalizer.

The radios' eight tubes tested good but "surgery" involved lots of testing and parts replacement. Following an alignment and over three hours of bench burn-in, I gave the radio my seal of approval. (Editor's Note: Bob is very modest in describing the work he performed on this radio; he really put his heart and soul in it. There's a lot more to be told and the "rest of the story" will be revealed at the August meeting.)

I am happy this went well for myself and for the club. A shout-out goes to member Sal Brisindi - your shrink tubing made it into the radio! John Tucker Jr. told me he will let me know when the car restoration is finally completed so I can see it before being shipped to Pebble Beach for its showing.



"The radio has some interesting features."



"Lots of testing and replacing parts."



From the Vanderbilt Cup website: "Fortunately, John Tucker, Jr. (right) has friends with the New Jersey Antique Radio Club. When John approached the club, they immediately joined the Tucker 1044 restoration team. The radio is now working and somehow broadcasting 1948 radio shows!"



Tucker 1044 completing restoration at Ida Automotive in Morganville, NJ.



The Motorola 708 (left) used in 1941-1947 Plymouths, Chryslers, Dodges and DeSotos. The Tucker radio is similar but uses a different head and has a hammertone, copper finish.

More About the Tucker Radio (Continued)

►HMN SHOW COVERAGE



The best of show award went to this 1948 Tucker 48, owned by Howard Kroplick of East Hills, New York. This example, #1044, is one of just 51 assembled, 47 of which survive. Howard had the car restored by a team that included Rob Ida and two of Preston Tucker's great-grandsons, Sean and Michael. The former *Hemmings Classic Car* cover car has been returned to its original Andante Green color.



Howard Kroplick holds his best of show award for his Tucker. Howard stands with two of Preston Tucker's great-grandsons, Sean and Michael, who helped to restore the landmark car. ☛