



The Jersey Broadcaster

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW JERSEY ANTIQUE RADIO CLUB

February 2025

Volume 31 Issue 2



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 February meeting will be held in Bowen Hall, Princeton University on Friday, 2/14. At this meeting, Prof. Mike Littman will present his recently restored vacuum tube and solid state classroom-size "Radio Demonstrators" We plan to livestream the meeting on YouTube at youtube.com/user/NJARC. Directions to InfoAge can be found on Google Maps at <https://bit.ly/4jZe8XI>.

Meeting Review

Our January meeting featured a "members-only" auction and tips from Al Klase on how to participate in - and get the best results in - our annual Broadcast Band DX Contest.

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

Calendar of Events

February 14: NJARC monthly meeting, Princeton

February 21: HARPS monthly meeting, Suffern NY

March 10: DVHRC monthly meeting, dvhrc.com

March 14: NJARC monthly meeting, InfoAge

March 21: HARPS monthly meeting, Suffern NY

March 22: NJARC Spring Swapmeet, Parsippany

April 11: NJARC monthly meeting, Princeton

April 15: DVHRC monthly meeting, dvhrc.com

April 18: HARPS monthly meeting, Suffern NY

April 25-27: International Marconi Day, InfoAge

April 26: NJARC Spring Repair Clinic, InfoAge

May 9-10: Kutztown Radio Show, dvhrc.com

May 16: NJARC monthly meeting, InfoAge

May 23: HARPS monthly meeting, Suffern NY

June 10: DVHRC monthly meeting, dvhrc.com

June 13: NJARC monthly meeting, Princeton

June 20: HARPS monthly meeting, Suffern NY

July 8: DVHRC monthly meeting, dvhrc.com

July 11: NJARC monthly meeting, Princeton

July 15: HARPS monthly meeting, Suffern NY

July 26: NJARC Summer Swapmeet, InfoAge

August 8: NJARC monthly meeting, Princeton

August 23: NJARC Summer Repair Clinic, InfoAge

From the President's Workbench

Greetings Fellow Enthusiasts!

Well, we are into the second month of the new year and for me it was past time to empty some files from my bulging file cabinet. We all know the adage "Out with Old, In With the New" but usually for us the adage is reversed, "In with the Old, Out with the New!" So in the process of tossing some very expired



The President's Workbench.

house insurance and car insurance policies, I came across some "classic" NJARC memorabilia that dates back through our club's existence all the way to the very first day: July 16th of 1992. Now, our remaining "Charter Members"- Dave Sica, Tom Provost, Marsha Simkin, and Norm Sandbach - all know our club's history. but some of you might not!

The following is the succession of our club Presidents: NJARC founder Tony Flanagan, followed by Jim Whartenby, then Phil Vourtis and finally me, your current humble servant!

Did you know about our club's nomadic search for a home? Our first meeting was at the Monmouth County Library. Then our meeting location was church hall at the Grace Lutheran Church in Freehold. After that we moved for a while to the VFW

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.

PRESIDENT:

Richard Lee (914) 589-3751
radioricardo61@gmail.com

VICE PRESIDENT:

Paul Mondok
AA2PM@earthlink.net

VICE PRESIDENT EMERITUS:

Sal Brisindi
salb203@optonline.net

SECRETARY:

(Position open)
email

TREASURER:

Harry Klancer (732) 238-1083
klancer2@comcast.net

NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Dave Sica (732) 382-0618
newsletter@njarc.org

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS (WEST):

Darren Hoffman (732) 928-0594

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS (EAST):

(Rotating)

TRUSTEES:

Ray Chase (908) 757-9741
raydio862@verizon.net
 Phil Vourtsis (732) 208-4284
philvourtsis@gmail.com
 Bill Zukowski (732) 833-1224
n2yeg@optonline.net

TECHNICAL COORDINATOR:

Al Klase (908) 892-5465
ark@ar88.net

TUBE PROGRAM:

Ray Chase raydio862@verizon.net

SCHEMATIC PROGRAM:

Aaron Hunter (609) 267-3065
ahunter01@comcast.net

CAPACITOR PROGRAM:

Richard Lee (914) 589-3751
radioricardo@gmail.com

MUSEUM CURATOR:

Ray Chase (908) 757-9741

WEBSITE COORDINATOR:

Dave Sica webmaster@njarc.org

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY:

Marsha Simkin (609) 660-8160
 33 Lakeland Drive, Barnegat NJ 08005
mhsimkin@comcast.net

President's Workbench

(Continued)

Hall in East Brunswick, the David Sarnoff Library and Museum in Princeton, and finally to our present locations alternating between the InfoAge Science & History Museums 9032A meeting room and Bowen Hall at Princeton University!



Tony Flanagan



Jim (& Ruth) Whartenby



Phil Vourtsis

Our swapmeets were not always at Parsippany PAL nor the field at InfoAge. Our first swapmeet, an outdoor event, was in Freehold. Soon, we moved to the Hightstown Country Club and later to the Hazlet Fire Department's catering hall. We also held a few on the lawn of the Marconi Chief Engineer's cottage at InfoAge. (The cottage was soon to become our first Radio Technology Museum.) The swapmeet was then moved to the infamous Dover American Legion Hall, with a multitude of front steps to be navigated, not a pleasant memory for any of our vendors! Then we got lucky, and found a home for our swapmeets at the PAL building in Parsippany, where we have been for the past 20 years! Summer swapmeets initially held at the PAL building soon moved to the south field of InfoAge, where we now set up around "Dee Plane!"

In the file of almost-lost club paperwork, I found where we tried to auction off vending tables on eBay at our PAL Fall Swapmeet in 2008.

Hmmm, too bad, no bidders. Previously, for our 2006 Spring Swapmeet we contracted to advertise on radio station WFUV-FM's *The Big Broadcast*, a 10 second and a 20 second promo spot! I'm not sure how well it worked, but it seemed like a good idea at the time! There are many more interesting and/or funny stories to tell from within our past 32 years. If you have a story to share about our club's history, why not send a note to our Jersey Broadcaster editor, Dave Sica davesica@gmail.com.

- Richard Lee, Pres. NJARC



Our original 'home'

President's Workbench
(Continued)



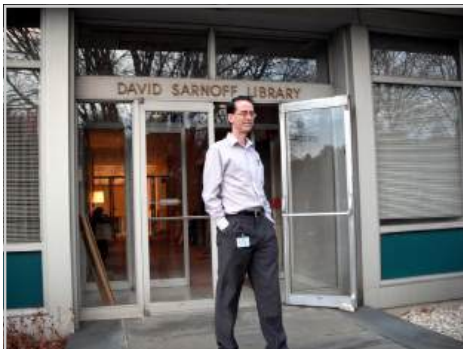
Grace Church



East Brunswick VFW



East Brunswick VFW



David Sarnoff Library



David Sarnoff Library



Freehold Swapmeet



Hightstown Country Club



Hightstown Swapmeet



Hazlet Swapmeet



InfoAge Cottage Swapmeet

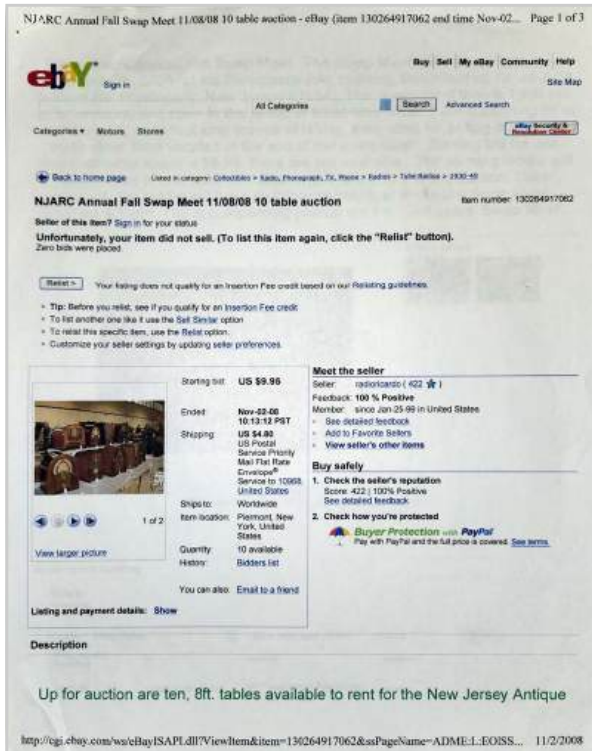


Cottage Museum



Dover Swapmeet

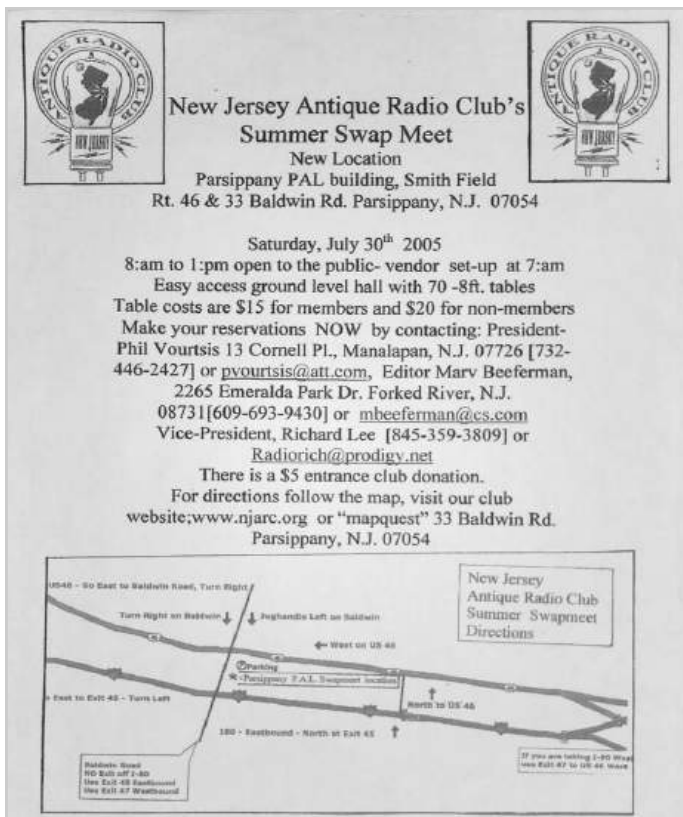
President's Workbench (Continued)



Our eBay auction of 10 vending tables: no bidders!



Contract with WFUV for Swapmeet Radio Ads



'Primitive' directions to the Summer Swapmeet at Parsippany PAL



First swapmeet flyer from print shop, 2005

This Box is Without Merit

By Joseph Divito

I recently came across an eBay auction for a New Old Stock IF transformer from an aftermarket company called Merit. I like to stock up on Merit-made transformers since I know that in the realm of aftermarket repair parts, Merit IF transformers are high quality, being made with real capacitors inside, not those cheap exposed mica sheet style capacitors most manufacturers used back in the day. So, when I stumbled across this part, it piqued my interest (especially since I have a Zenith radio that I'm hoping to fix up and put into service soon, and I have come to assume that I'll be doing silver mica disease treatment as part of the restoration process). However, looking at the auction pictures, something wasn't right—the plastic is the wrong color, and there was no Merit logo on the pictures of the part inside that box. After a while with it lingering in my eBay “watch” list, the seller made me a discount offer I couldn't refuse, and I decided to bite, and before long, I received my purchase. I took it apart to see what was inside that unmarked can, and here's what I found:

As the picture shows, I was right to be suspicious, what was inside was most definitely NOT a genuine NOS Merit IF transformer. I paid a low enough price so I was still OK with the deal. It confirms what I have often come to observe—repairmen back in the day often stuck the used defective old part back into the box the replacement part came in. Then, instead of throwing it away, they kept it, perhaps relegated to a corner of the shop. I don't fully understand why this was done, my guess is it's a holdover from the generation of people who lived through or grew up during the Great Depression, where you never threw any-

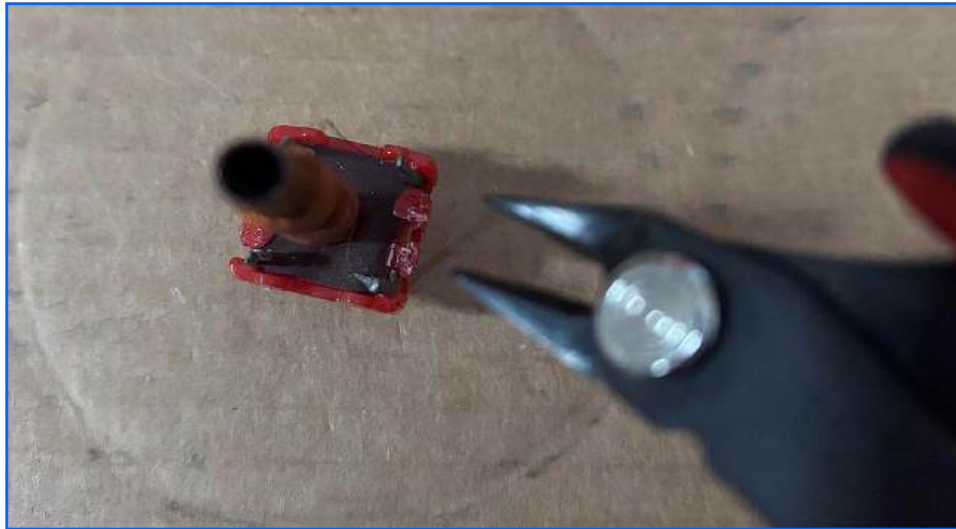


thing away, no matter how seemingly useless it may be. Perhaps they used them for parts—removing a broken ferrite slug from a good radio and using a compatible one from their boxes of “junk” transformers. Whatever the reason, it can be frustrating and confusing to today's hobbyists. I've often heard discussions about seemingly NOS IF transformers being bad right out of the box. My personal suspicion is that what people often complain to be bad right out of the box NOS parts are actually defective old parts like what I found inside this “Meritless” box. Based on past experience, this would have come from a GE radio, a telltale clue being how the top cover holding down the mica sheet is literally balsa wood and crimped down by plastic literally folded over with some type of heated tool on the assembly line.

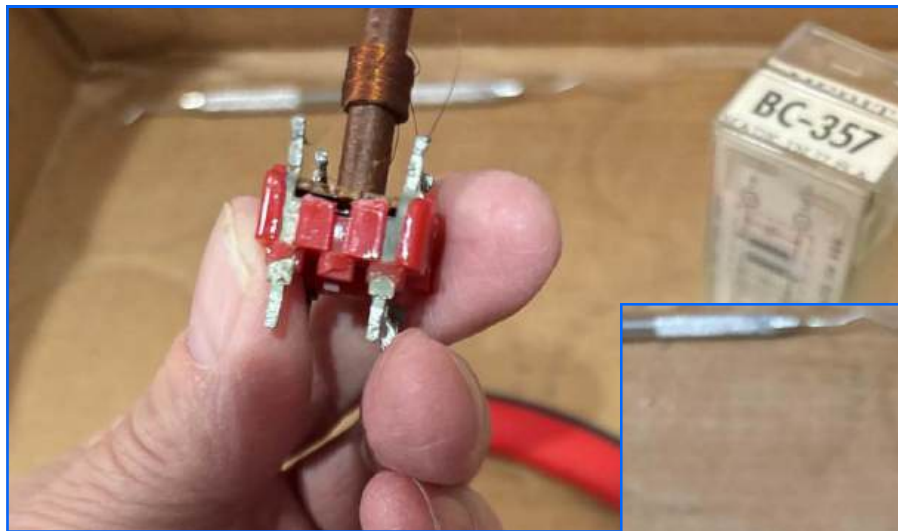
Having done several IF transformer repairs, and having verified the coils are both intact, I proceeded to do a normal silver mica repair on this “Meritless” part, and what follows are a step-by-step documentary of how I approach disassembly of this style of IF transformer. Each manufacturer put these things together in their own way, so what follows will apply specifically to the General Electric-made transformers. GE transformers are very cheaply made as you can tell, but this actually works to my advantage taking them apart.

This box is Without Merit (Continued)

The first step is to get that balsa wood top cover off to expose the mica sheet. I use a pair of flush cut clip-pers to score and break off those plastic tabs. Be careful and take your time. Here you see one of the tabs are already broken off when I took this picture:

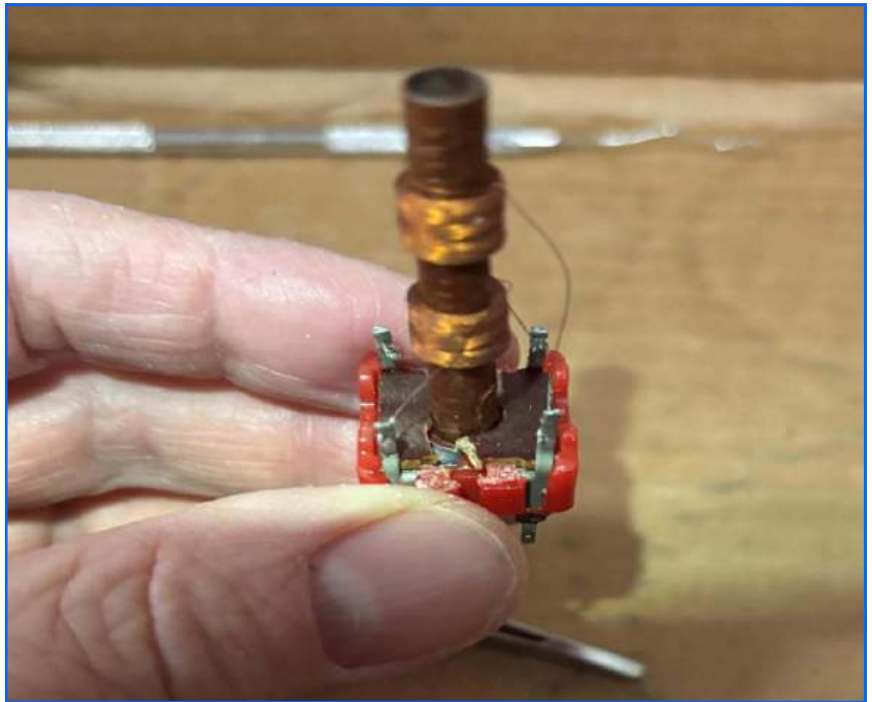


Here's another look of what you are trying to achieve—get enough of those plastic tabs chewed off so you can get in there with your clippers and cut that balsa cover in half:



This box is Without Merit (Continued)

Obviously, hold onto that transformer as you cut. Here, I am holding my camera with one hand so I can get the picture. You will be discarding that wood cover, so don't be too nice to it - it's got to go - in pieces if need be, so you don't damage those fine wires. I have been able to splice breaks in that hair thin wire, but trust me, you don't want to be fixing breaks in those coils if you can avoid it!



Here you see progress, I've got enough of that wood chipped out that I can start to get a pair of tweezers in there to rotate it up and slide each piece out of there...



Here I have that balsa wood cover removed, exposing the mica sheet. You can see the contacts that the wood cover pressed down against the mica sheet. Without a doubt, this was a defective old part (even discounting that it wasn't the original Merit made part). The silver migration is clearly visible even with those big metal terminals hiding most of the sheet! It's pretty obvious that an unsuspecting buyer of this "NOS" part would have been understandably concluding that those repair parts can go bad just sitting in the box! My personal suspicion is that in most of these cases, true NOS doesn't just go bad sitting in the box unused—but rather a cleanly removed diseased part found its way back in there, confusing the issue.

This box is Without Merit
(Continued)

The next step is to get that mica sheet out. I use a small screwdriver to ever so gently get under the end of each of the top contacts and gently pry them up:



You don't want to do all the bending with that screwdriver. I bend the ends up just enough to grip them with a pair of tweezers or small needle nose pliers to do the rest of the bending. Remember, easy does it, and watch out for those wires!



More to come!

More from the President's Workbench:

Another artifact I found in my bulging file cabinet: the very first issue of our club newsletter, from way back in March of 1993!



At our February meeting we will also be auctioning a very nice condition, playing! General Electric model A-82 Tombstone Radio.

We will be taking reservations for our Spring Swapmeet, to be held at the Parsippany PAL on Saturday, March 22. (See flyer on the last page of this newsletter and on our website.)

And... 2025 club dues are overdue. Anyone who has not yet paid can join/rejoin at the meeting.

See you there!



New Jersey Antique Radio Club's

Spring Ham Fest & Swap Meet

Parsippany PAL Building

33 Baldwin Road

Parsippany, NJ 07054

Just off Route 46,

Adjacent to Smith Field



Saturday March 22, 2025



Refreshments Available

(40) 8 Foot Tables

\$30.00 for members

\$35.00 for non-members

Reserve Additional tables \$25.00

At the door \$30.00

Open to the Public

8am to 12 noon

Vendor setup at 7:15am

\$7.00 Entrance Fee

Club Donation

For Directions

Visit our website: www.njarc.org

or use your favorite phone app

33 Baldwin Road

Parsippany NJ 07054

Vendors Make Your Reservations Now!

Contact:

NJARC President

Richard Lee

(914)589-3751

radioricardo61@gmail.com