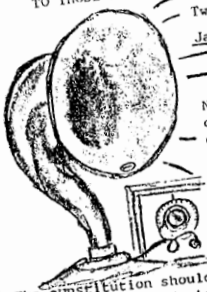


# Call Letter

of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society

*The first newsletter dated 12/23/74*

TO THOSE DEVOTED TO THE PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF OLD RADIOS



Two important agenda items for the next club meeting  
Jan. 11, 1975, Buena Vista Clubhouse, Oregon City, 10AM:

1. Selection of the club's name
2. Final draft for the club constitution

No doubt there will probably be as many names as the club has members. Agreement may require our best spirit of compromise. Some important points in my opinion include simplicity, brevity and a clear identification of the hobby. The name should attract potential new members with interests like ours. It should say to the public at large that the club exists for the preservation and restoration of old radios--- that somebody really cares about that old relic they want to get rid of. Yes, that's a tall order for a brief simple name. The constitution should make clear our purpose, who we are and how we will be conducting the club's business. Certainly it can't cover everything. Bylaws add to and clarify the intention of the constitution. He will be sending Art Redman is Chairman for development of the constitution. He will be sending each of us a draft of a possible constitution which can serve as a starting point.

Bob Bilbie suggested to me that I bring over a radio set, magazine etc. to the club meeting. I believe this would be a good policy for the future meetings. It would let us do a little "knob twisting" and reminiscing so that we can get better acquainted. If most of you are like me, there are dozens of old radios I've never heard of, much less seen, even though it is a hobby I have followed for 35 years.

We owe our thanks to Sandy Bilbie for finding such an excellent meeting room. Also, I am sure the club wouldn't have happened without her enthusiasm and the hours of phoning to get us all together.

In the first small get together we had to plan the first meeting of the club, at Sandy's house, we discussed the desirability of including spouse and family in the club membership. I personally would like to encourage couples in the club. Recognizing that mailing costs, etc. would not be greater for a husband and wife than a single member, a lesser dues for spouse will encourage an active interest in the hobby and provide an opportunity to "do things together". I wonder how the members feel about this.

Ron Waldron is Membership Chairman. He is developing an application form and coordinating publicity efforts to attract other members active in the hobby. We can help Ron by inviting hobbyists we know to the next meeting. My editorializing in a sort of news letter form like this is intended to draw attention to important issues facing the club. It is your club to do with as the majority decide and not as any one individual would try to impose. I hope my comments are taken in that spirit and pledge to give everyone an opportunity to speak and be involved in helping together to make this unique club become pretty much what we all hope it could be. See you there!

Harley Perkins *HP 12/23/74*

P.S. Joe Tompkins, Salem, will be editing a swap sheet. If you have stuff you would like to sell, buy or trade or have leads to non members having a desire to get rid of same, please bring the information to the next meeting.

# The Northwest Vintage Radio Society

The Northwest Vintage Radio Society is a non-profit historical society incorporated in the State of Oregon. Since 1974 the Society has been dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of "Vintage radio" and wireless equipment.

Membership in the Society is open to all who are actively interested in historic preservation. The dues are \$15.00 for domestic membership, due on January 1st of each year (prorated quarterly).

The *Call Letter* has been a monthly publication since 1974. It was originated with the founder, Bob Bilbie, and our first president, Harley Perkins. Through several editors and with the assistance of numerous society members, the *Call Letter* has continued to be a publication that informs members of the society's business and that supports the hobby of collecting, preserving, and restoring vintage radios.

Society meetings are held the second Saturday of each month (except July and August) at the Abernethy Grange Hall at 15745 S. Harley Ave. in Oregon City, Oregon. They convene at or about 10 AM for the purpose of displaying radios, conducting Society business, and exchanging information. Guests are welcome at all Society meetings and functions (except board meetings).

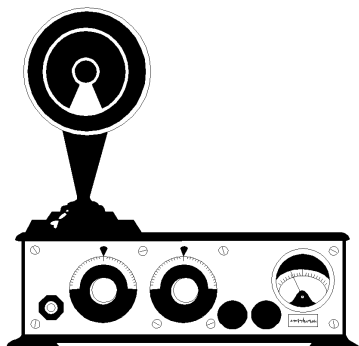
Other Society functions include guest speakers, auctions, radio show, and radio sales which are advertised in the *Call Letter* and are held in and around Portland.

## Society Officers for 2000:

President	Charles Kent	(503) 281-9335
Vice-President	George Kirkwood	(503) 648-4809
Treasurer	Ed Charman	(503) 654-7387
Secretary	Liles Garcia	(503) 649-9288
Board member at large	Dave Rutland	(541) 929-4498
<i>Call Letter</i> Editor	Rick Walton	(503) 284-5648
Librarian	John Bucholtz	(360) 693-7135

The Society's address is:

The Northwest Vintage Radio Society  
Post Office Box 82379  
Portland, Oregon 97282-0379



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# January 2000

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**On the cover:** The first newsletter announcing the meeting on January 8, 1975 to decide on a name for the new radio club and to develop a constitution.

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**Call Letter Deadline  
10 days prior  
to meeting day.**

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**Don't miss the first meeting of the new year (and millennium) January 8. Monthly feature:  
Ham and military radio gear.  
Tailgate swap meet starts at 8:30!**

**Visit the Northwest Vintage Radio Society web site at  
[www.nwvrs.org](http://www.nwvrs.org).**

The Call Letter is the official publication of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society. Circulation is limited to the membership and guests of the Society. The Society is not responsible for the material contributed for publication, nor the quality, timeliness, or accuracy of the items offered for sale in the SWAP SHOP. By common agreement of the board of directors, the buyer assumes all responsibility for the satisfaction of any transaction.

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# From the Editor

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by *Call Letter* Editor, Rick Walton

I've been having a great time poring over the *Call Letter* archives in preparation for our 25th Anniversary Celebration, and especially in preparation for this month's issue. The result of all this looking back is the article I've put together covering the history of the *Call Letter*.

In this issue is also a great article by Mike Parker, who is once again "In the Shack." Mike tells us about the "illustrated" front early sets and includes a couple of great photos.

The photo display this time features the folks who brought in the test equipment and Christmas theme radios to the December meeting.

The Swap Shop is pretty bare, with just a couple of items to go along with the constant advertisers.

Have a great New Year!

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## NWVRS 2000 Calendar of Events

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- January 8** Regular meeting. Bring your ham or military radio equipment for the monthly feature.
- February 12** 25th Anniversary celebration.
- February 19** Year 2000 Salem Hamfair (Rickreall), presented by the Salem Repeater Ass'n. and the Oregon Coast Emergency Repeater, Inc. \$6 advance, \$7 to register at door.
- May 20** Spring Swap Meet.

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# Meeting Minutes

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by Liles Garcia, NWVRS Secretary

President Charles Kent called the December 11, 1999 meeting of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society to order at 10:05 AM. The minutes printed in the Call Letter were approved as written. Charlie welcomed guests, member's spouses, and member's families to this December meeting and Christmas party.

## Announcements

The latest information is that Dick Bosch continues to recover well from his surgery.

Charlie and many other members mentioned that the new Call Letter cover looks great. Many thanks to Rick Walton!!!

## Old Business

Library-- John Bucholtz reports that the library is doing well.

## New Business

Election of Officers—The existing officers were nominated for election at the November meeting. Members elected these people to their respective offices for this next year. Club officers are: President—Charles Kent, Vice-President—George Kirkwood, Secretary—Liles Garcia, Treasurer—Ed Charman.

Classes—If any members are interested in classes on certain topics, please let Charlie and George know.

## Leads And Needs

Dave Brown needs a manual for a Supreme 339 Radio Analyzer. A good copy would be fine.

The program topic for the January meeting will be military surplus radios and communications receivers.

Our program today was radios with a Christmas theme, and old test equipment. Members showed and discussed the radios and test equipment that they brought.

The meeting was adjourned, and then we had our annual Christmas party. There were many snacks and treats, and everyone had a great time.

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# Twenty-five Years in Print!

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by Rick Walton

Twenty-five years ago this month, the members of our fledgling radio collectors club met to decide on a name for the club and to adopt a constitution. The invitation to this meeting went out to the members via the newsletter that you see on the cover this month, the newsletter that is considered to be issue #1 of the monthly publication that is now the *Call Letter*.

Over the past twenty-five years the *Call Letter* has been edited by a number of folks, and has changed its appearance several times, but it has always remained the source of information for the membership about the club, its members and its activities.

The first newsletter editor was Bob Bilbie, one of the leaders in the founding of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society. During his term as editor, the newsletter remained in essentially the hand-typed, mimeographed format of that first letter signed by President Harley Perkins.



**NORTHWEST VINTAGE  
RADIO  
SOCIETY**

DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF OLD TIME RADIO EQUIPMENT

President: Harley A. Perkins      Secretary: Sandy Bilbie  
Vice President: Peter Young      Treasurer: Bob Bilbie

Meetings: Second Saturday of each month at Buena Vista Club House,  
Sixteenth and Jackson, Oregon City, Oregon, 10:00 AM.

Information, call: 665-6633 or 659-7735

The club now has a name and a draft of the Constitution approved. About 25 radio hobbyists attended the January meeting to see the club off to an enthusiastic start. The majority have already paid their dues of ten dollars and will be listed as charter members of the club. Any others who still wish to join and have confirmed their standing by payment of dues before the first of March will also be listed as charter members. The Board of Directors has decided that after February, new members should use the regular application forms and follow the procedure prescribed by the Constitution. A mailing list of members and known potential members will be distributed to the members in good standing at the **February 5, 1975** meeting of the club.

The first Swap Meet is planned for late in March. Details will need to be worked out. Already the club has been asked to show some of our radios at several places. A display at Mall 203 to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of broadcasting in Portland has been approved by the club. You might be interested to know that the Call Book for Fall, 1925 lists the following broadcast stations in Portland: KFZC, KFIF, KFJH, KFVW and KDNV. Vancouver Washington lists: KFVL. The entry has the following to say about KDNV: The Morning Oregonian, Portland, Ore. 491.5 meters, 610 kilocycles, 500 watts. Slogan: "Keep Growing Wiser".

Come and join in the fun! The few old radios and books at the last meeting were the center of a lot of attraction. Let's bring a lot more. CU there.

The second issue to appear carried the new banner of the club, the Northwest Vintage Radio Society.

Issue #3 had the first poetry. By Bob Bilbie, it was called "Ballad of the Radio Collector."

Then in issue #4, the first poetry by Tom James appeared, called "The Old Timer's Lament." In the next issue, another and different Tom James poem appeared but with the same title. With those beginning poems began the *Call Letter's* longest running feature and contributor. For almost the next decade Tom contributed new poetry to the *Call Letter*.

In the June 25, 1975 issue (#7), the familiar "Hunkerdyne" logo made its first appearance. Bob Bilbie wrote that it was the "club logo by Don Hunker and 8 anonymous people who helped move the horn to the far end of the radio."



1st Anniversary Special Edition

An important issue during Bob's editorial reign was the first anniversary issue. This issue was important because not only did it celebrate the first full year of the club's operation, but it also carried for the first time the name that still graces the masthead, the *Call Letter*.

This edition was special in a number of ways. It was printed on heavy stock, with the text typeset rather than pasted typewriter text. It also made lavish use of graphics, and at eight pages was much larger than any previous issue. Much of this was the work of Mark Moore, who Bob Bilbie had described in an earlier newsletter as "the club's youngest member." As explained in that issue, Mark was the originator of the name *Call Letter*.

In April of 1976, another printed issue appeared that is noteworthy because Tom James' poetry, which had been carried under the heading of "Tom James' Poetry Hour" or "Tom James Poetry Corner," appeared for the first time under the heading "Atmospherics." Later altered to "Atmospherica," this title remains in use today when Tom's poetry is reprinted in the *Call Letter*.

In July of 1976 while Bob Bilbie was out of town, Mark Moore produced the *Call Letter* and did so in a way that previewed the future format. Mark produced the newsletter in the half-page booklet format that is still in use today. It was a one-time shot, and it would be another year before the format changed for good.

In February of 1977 the Ladies Auxiliary selected a recipe from "Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes (1927)." It was the first appearance of a recipe in the *Call Letter*, and began a long series of articles that later appeared under the heading "Power Supply."

The following month, Tom James edited the *Call Letter* in the absence of Bob Bilbie, who was hospitalized due to a heart seizure. Ever ready with a limerick, Tom wrote:

*Bob Bilbie, in the flea-market game  
Went Hell-bent, to create a name.  
But his "ticker" said, "NOPE,  
Better slow down, you dope!"  
And let someone else garner the fame.*

Also of note in that issue was the appearance of a horn speaker as part of the "Atmospherics" heading, although the familiar striped horn did not appear until the June issue.

In April 1977, Bob Bilbie, in what was apparently a surprise move, announced his resignation from the *Call Letter* and from the club. It was his last issue. On an archived copy of that issue, Tom James inscribed this intriguing comment: "Note: this is the issue Bob Bilbie delivered to the house himself. He

paused for nothing, not even to pass a genial greeting, so eager was he to be on his way. No real explanation has ever been given as to his real reason for ‘bolting the party’ – He has since made overtures to re-join our ranks, but as of this writing, has received no bids. TJ 9/8/79”

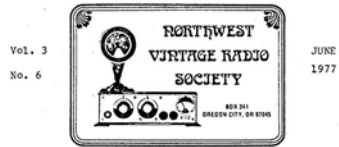
The next month in the June issue, the lead article carried the headline “Bilbie Resigns.” Bob and his wife, Sandy, left the Northwest Vintage Radio Society “for personal and health reasons” according to the article, and gave up editing the *Call Letter*. The duties of editor passed on to Bob Hay, who “volunteered to help with the Call Letter and was asked ... to assume the duties of Editor.”

The most obvious change in that June issue of the *Call Letter* was the size and format. Bob adopted the half-size booklet format, which is still in use. Inside, new features appeared: “Power Supply” for reports from the Ladies Auxiliary, and “Swap Shop” for the classified ads that appeared. The following month the first paid advertisement appeared for “J.K. Hills, dealers in antiques and collectibles.” Thus began a practice that continued for a decade or more and included advertisers such as Ja-Mac Speakers, Cascade Surplus Electronics, and Wacky Willy’s.

In June of 1978, just a year after taking the reins, Bob Hay announced that this was his last *Call Letter*. Tom James stepped in to the position and it was his name listed as editor of the July issue. New headings for existing features included “Cartoon Clippings” often contributed by Art Redman, and “Radio Static” by Glen Gonshorowski (it was renamed “I.Q. Trimmer” the following January). Other contributors during Tom’s tenure were Virginia Rankin with “Power Supply” and Hugh Rankin with “Our People.”

In December of 1979, Tom announced his resignation as editor and turned the job over to Bill DeVey, who first edited the January 1980 issue. Tom James continued as a contributor with “Atmospherica” and “Olé” and Bobbie Kibler assumed the “Power Supply.” A new feature in that issue was the table of contents.

In January of 1981, Jim Mason became the editor of the *Call Letter* although there had been no previous announcement. Perhaps this was because Bill DeVey was elected Vice President of the club in the December meeting. In that issue, “Wireless Quote of the Month” appeared as a new feature. In May, “Display News” by Dick Karman began to appear, and in June “Bits and Pieces” made its debut. In February of 1982, the meeting minutes began to appear in the *Call Letter*. In January of 1982, the last “Power Supply” column appeared although editors and writers referred to the Power Supply for years afterward when speaking of the Ladies Auxiliary. In March of 1982, “Our People” appeared for the last time, and in December, “Bits and Pieces” made its final appearance. In January of 1983, Jim announced that he was resigning as editor, and turning over the position to Dick Karman.



## CALL LETTER

### BILBIE RESIGNS

For personal and health reasons, Bob Bilbie resigned from the Northwest Vintage Radio Society. Bob has contributed much personal effort to the NWVRS since its conception. His ideas, enthusiasm, and desire to help others learn about vintage radio have been a tremendous asset to this club. For these reasons we are all sincerely disappointed by Bob's resignation; but, we are understanding of his reasons. Bob's wife, Sandy will also be greatly missed. Sandy has been one of the club's most ardent supporters.

As a result of Bob's resignation, Tom James, current Vice-President, has been asked by the Board of Directors to assume the Presidency for the remainder of the year. Alan Shadduck was asked to fill the Vice-President position. Bob Hay volunteered to help with the Call Letter and was asked at the last meeting to assume the duties of Editor.

THEY TRADED AN OLD KOIN FOR A NEW KYTE - N. Moore

On May 13th, Portland woke to the new KYTE as KOIN, since it first began in 1926, was officially gone forever. We didn't really believe that it could happen, but the new owners from Oklahoma wanted to change the image completely and that included changing the call letters. (cont. on page 2)

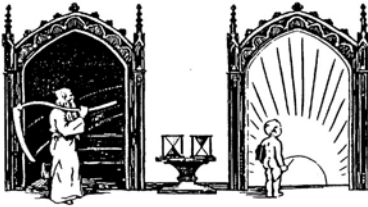
The June, 1976 issue announcing Bob Bilbie's resignation.





January '84

VOL. 10 No. 1



\*\*\*\*\*Happy New Year\*\*\*\*\*

In July of 1984, the *Call Letter* had the sad duty of announcing the passing of Tom James, poet, past editor, and regular contributor. Tom was, in the words of Dick Karman, “the longest (and only) continuous contributor” in the decade of the *Call Letter’s* existence. On the cover of the July issue, Dick placed this self-portrait of Tom that had first appeared in the November 1976 issue. Dick obtained permission to continue printing Tom’s poetry and writing, so that “Atmospherica” continued to appear regularly for more than a decade following Tom’s death, and still appears occasionally in these pages.



In September of 1984, “Accession” replace “Olé” as the column that listed the most recent acquisitions reported by club members.

Dick Karman continued to edit the *Call Letter* for another three years before announcing his resignation as editor to the club in the June 1987 issue, citing the need to balance time for faith, family, and other interests with time spent editing the *Call Letter*.

In June of 1987, the job of editor passed to Ed Buhite, who made immediate changes to the appearance of the cover. The “Gay 90’s” type returned to the banner harkening back to an earlier format, and a striped horn speaker appeared, although by October it was permanently replaced with the club logo and name in an ornate frame. In February 1988, “Olé” returned, replacing “Accession.”

The *Call Letter* took on a new look with a Dick Karman in 1983. The “Gay 90’s” lettering in the banner gave way to less flamboyant fonts, and after a couple of experiments, the cover settled into the format shown here in the January 1984 issue. This issue in particular is of note because the cover announces that it has been a full decade in print.

Features that began to appear during Dick’s tenure as editor include “Yesterday” and “Pages from the Past.”

In March of 1983, the first classified ads from the Puget Sound Antique Radio Association appeared in the *Call Letter*, often under the heading “Tradio.”

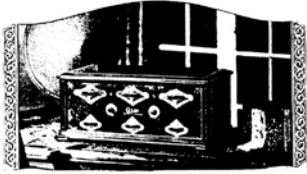
Along with changes to the cover, Dick also made changes to the appearance of the text, including new graphics in the headings and new fonts in places.

# CALL



# LETTER

NORTHWEST VINTAGE RADIO SOCIETY  
VOLUME 13 NUMBER 8 AUGUST 1987



# CALL LETTER

VOLUME 14 JULY 1988 NUMBER 7

**ATWATER KENT RADIO**

1929's ELECTRIC SET  
GIVES YOU THE THRILL OF AT ITS BEST

**MODEL 481-A** 6-tube, 500-watt, 100% audio-amplification system. \$149.95 in S. C. and \$159.95 in all other areas. \$199.95 and \$249.95 in S. C. and \$209.95 and \$259.95 in all other areas. \$299.95 and \$349.95 in S. C. and \$299.95 and \$349.95 in all other areas.

The most significant change took place in July of 1988, when the *Call Letter* merged with the *Horn of Plenty*, newsletter of the Puget Sound Antique Radio Association. Minutes of both clubs' minutes appeared in the *Call Letter*, and when rosters were published, they included the memberships of both clubs.

In May of 1992, editorial responsibility began alternating between Seattle in the even months, and Portland in the odd months. David Dintenfass of PSARA was the interim editor in Seattle, sharing responsibility with Ed Buhite. But in October of 1992, David announced that he could no longer carry on as editor. That proved to be the last joint issue of the *Call Letter/Horn of Plenty*. In November, the *Call Letter* was the monthly newsletter of just the NWVRS, and was once again in the editorial hands of Dick Karman.

The front cover appearance changed with that issue, but just to a temporary format. The January 1993 issue shown here, Dick arrived at the basic format that continues to the present.

Significant feature changes were the addition of Mike Parker's "In the Shack" in January of 1995, and Dick's own column "Wandering on the Web," a sure sign of the times that marked the merging of the antique radio hobby with the latest Internet technology. By the end of 1996, Dick once again realized he could no longer keep up the demands place on him by both his faith, his family, and the commitment to editing the *Call Letter*. In December of 1996, Dick resigned from his second tenure as editor having served a total of right at six years, longer than any other editor.

## The Call Letter

of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society  
Portland, Oregon

Vol. 19 January, 1993 No. 1

### This Month:

- January 9th Meeting at the NVRS Museum
- Feature Story by David Rutland
- Dues Are DUE !!

### Next Month:

- The Return of the "Hunkerdyne"  
*Call Letter* Art Comes Alive
- Meeting on February 13th at the NVRS Museum
- History From Tex Sloat

Don't miss an issue of the *Call Letter* -  
Pay your dues NOW

For the *Call Letter* this proved to be a crucial moment. Dick's resignation announcement in the December issue did not include his successor, because no one had as yet stepped forward to do the job. In that same issue, the meeting minutes quote President Greg Bonn as saying, "If no one volunteers, then this publication is history."

At the December meeting the request was made again for a volunteer, and I, your current editor, stuck my hand in the air. I was nervous about taking over because I feared I had neither the equipment nor the skills required, even though I am by profession a technical writer. With a lot of help from Dick Karman, I managed to publish a January 1997 issue, and it has gone on from there. By the middle of the year I was able to produce an issue without assistance. Since that time, the tools I have to work with have improved, including the scanner purchased for me by the club that I use for photos and antique ad copy, and better word processing tools that I have acquired. The decision by the membership last February to accept higher cost production has resulted in much improved pictures and art work.

So after twenty-five years in print, the *Call Letter*, like the club it serves, continues to thrive.

The  
**Call Letter**  
of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society

Vol. 24 January 1998 No.



In print since 1974

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## A photo from the Christmas Party

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Dick Karman

Matt Neill at the organ

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# Photo Display

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Photos by Rick Walton

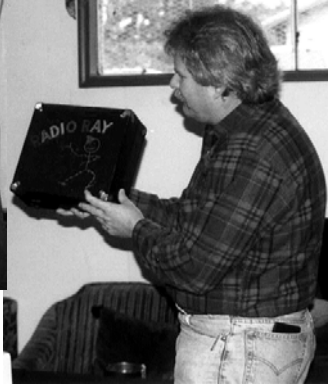
Here are the folks who participated in the December monthly feature, vintage test equipment and radios with a Christmas theme.



Jerry Talbott



Dave Brown



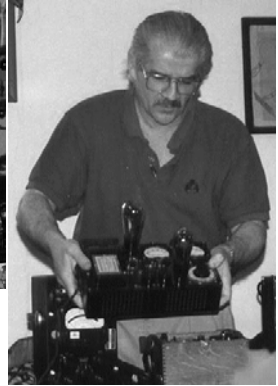
Charlie Kent



Tony Ranft



Del Dixon



Ron Hershey



Sonny Clutter



Tony Hauser



Wendy Johnson-Kent



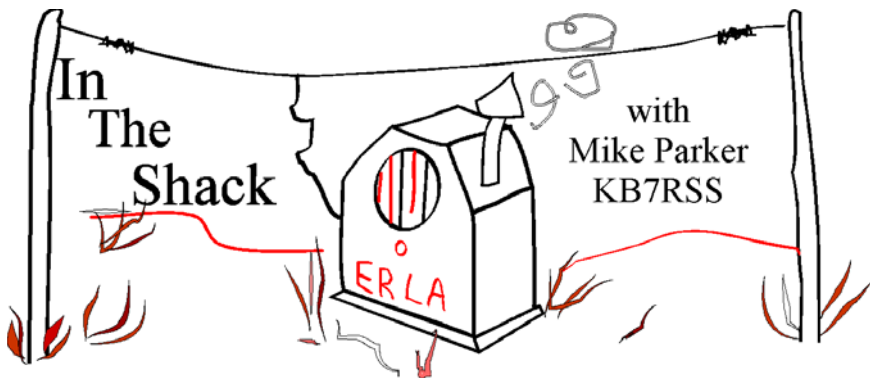
Rudy Zvarich



Ed Charman



Joe Beseda



## All That Glitters is Gold

Ever since the start of my interest in 1920's radios, I have been fascinated, no, make that distracted, by the various and seldom seen battery set models with the so called "illustrated" front panels. These are also referred to as "art panel" or "decorative panel" sets. They are scarce today for two reasons: they were only sold for a short time and with age and use, the gold etching tended to rub off, leaving them very ugly.

Apparently not much is known about how this "fad" came about. I call it a fad because that is exactly what it turned out to be. Highly significant of the rollicking "Roaring 20's" it came and went in a period of less than a year while radio design was in an extreme state of change and advancement. In fact, one could say that the illustrated panel fad lasted for a shorter time than some of the other well known fads of the 20's such as raccoon coats and goldfish swallowing!

The quest for decorating the radio front panel, which I estimate to have begun in mid-1925, was simply due to the hundreds of previously offered radio sets, especially after the large influx of "3-dialers" that appeared in 1924. Before that, the industry was just figuring out how to get the wire connection posts around to the back or inside of the set and how to eliminate the myriad of knobs, dials and peep holes for tube lights. As the home radio became more of a visible household item, the demand increased for a look that did not represent an electrical item sitting on a shelf in a science laboratory.

But even by the 1924-25 season, literally hundreds of factory production radios were offered with a plain Bakelite front panel, 3 tuning knobs, two rheostat knobs, a switch and the jacks. The manufacturers name and/or the model and sometimes the company location was engraved someplace on the panel and that was all! After all the fuss about

cleaning up the front of the set, they still turned out these plain jane 3-dialers by the hundreds.

Meanwhile the “art nouveau” era was in full swing. Decorative filigree was found on everything: books, literature, record labels, note paper, announcements. Before the Frank Lloyd Wright school of design, they were hanging on to the Victorian era of over decorating everything. Buildings were built with elaborate cornices and overhangs depicting this extravagance. Why not a radio?

Why not? In 1925, a company called Insuline, who manufactured radio panels was experimenting with a process of etching gold on to their material. Although the panel material was called “Insuline” by them, they also implied that the same process could be applied to Bakelite. The first radio to be offered with this Insuline process was the “Newlands” 3-dialer, sold only by the Incandescent Supply Co. of New York City. Insuline’s “Etch-O-Gravure” process was demonstrated quite well on this model, which I have in my collection, with chain of fleur-de-leis like etching draped across the top of the panel and dropped down between the tuning dials. Around the switch, centered in the lower middle of the panel, is the word “Newlands” in stretched lettering with some fancy filigree on each side of the word and bold lightning bolts projecting in all degrees upward from the switch. Even though the set was an ordinary Freshman type 3-dialer marketed by an obscure distributing jobber, I suspect it sold fairly well just because of the new departure in panel decorations. Another company offering this process was the Formica Insulation Co., with their “Veri-Chrome” process.



In early 1926, Crosley perpetuated the fad and boldly introduced the fantastic RFL-60 and RFL-75 model radios. These were not touted as their main radio offered, but more of something extra, the circuit inside and the decorative look outside. This panel is absolutely stunning, with a gold etched on Bakelite woodland scene complete with scantily clad “nymphs” depicting music and dancing and listening. One nymph is

shown playing a horn and in the background are trees and hills and a wire fence bobbing over the hills. Far away city buildings are shown behind the hills. The knobs have protruding pointers of gold similar to an old fashioned clock hand pointing to the etched gold numerals on the panel. A good view of this amazing set can be seen in the video, "Empire of the Air" which aired on PBS several years ago. Ironically, later on in 1926, Crosley re-designed both models with plain, wood grained front panels. Talk about a "flash in the pan" and it was over, that quick.

But not so with other companies, Midwest Radio dressed up their Miraco Ultra-5 set with a very nice gold on Bakelite design depicting a seascape scene with the ocean on the left and a beach and hills leading to a fantastic castle on the right with turrets. This set was offered in 1927 with a carry-over model sold at a reduced price in 1928, long after the fad had gone.

The Westingale radio of 1926, a short lived company, offered a 2 dial set with an ocean scene with ships, I have never seen one other than a poor picture of it. Another well known illustrated panel set, which sold quite well was the Metrodyne Super Seven. This rather innovative set used one dial tuning with a lighted drum dial and had a very fantastic etched gold panel depicting what I think is an Egyptian temple scene with scantily clad girls kneeling on a tile floor, the tile squares making up most of the lower part of the panel. The girls are kneeling on each side of a cauldron, with the "Metrodyne Single Dial" name on the side of it. One can see the very detailed columns in the room from floor to ceiling and the detailed ceiling arches make up the top portion of the picture. The volume knob, off to the right, is pictured inside of a huge pendant, with fancywork surrounding the knob and two chains suspending it from the ceiling. Just simply beautiful! But by the 1927-28 season, it too was history, replaced by a woodgrain panel! Another illustrated set was the Northland 3-dial, from Minnesota. It portrayed a deep North woods scene with evergreen trees etched on the panel. Quite appropriate for a set from Minnesota, yah. Stewart-Warner also used their dancing girls scene, found on some of their speakers, on the panel of their higher priced consoles. There are other illustrated sets, I am sure, yet to be discovered.



But the radio that really took me by surprise was the Masterphone, made in Iowa City, Iowa, (see photos). This was offered for sale last



summer on Sonny Clutter's excellent website, [www.radiolaguy.com](http://www.radiolaguy.com) and did not last very long because I bought it! After being caught up in this illustrated panel set craze for so long and frustrated at not finding a good example for sale, I bit the bullet and hauled out enough dough to purchase it. I am not sorry...it is really an eye catcher. The gold etched Bakelite panel depicts what looks like a Medieval European woodland village and is so detailed that I am still finding things in it I did not see at first. A friend looked at it and immediately spotted a rustic bridge, over a creek in the scene that I had overlooked. One marvels at the extreme detail used by the artists of these panel illustrations.



The Masterphone is also unusual because I can find no mention of the name or the company in any of the sources available so far. It is just an ordinary 5 tube TRF 3-dial set that happens to have an extremely attractive illustrated panel. The cabinet and the entire look of the radio however, is a blatant rip-off of the Crosley RFL-75 art panel set and I can imagine that Powell Crosley had more than a few words with Masterphone about it....maybe even ceased their production! I hope to find more info about this set and that should be a real challenge for this millennium.

And so I say.... as for the short lived illustrated radio panel fad....All that glitters, IS gold! Happy 25th anniversary, NWVRS! QSO you next time.....IN THE SHACK Mike Parker.

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# Swap Shop

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*FOR SALE:* Thousands of tubes, hundreds of radio parts, panels, meters, surplus, etc. R5-D3 electronic surplus, Bob Lee, 6111 SE 82nd Ave., Portland, OR, (503) 774-6560.

*BUY, SELL, & TRADE:* Vintage Radio, Early Television and Hi-Fi.

Wanted: Tubes, Parts and whatever you might have related to early radio & TV. Visit my web-site at: < <http://www.radiolaguy.com> > or e-mail me at: < [sonny@radiolaguy.com](mailto:sonny@radiolaguy.com) >

Thanks, Sonny Clutter, phone (360) 834-5741

*WANTED:* The Crystal Radio Guy wants crystal sets and toy germanium diode radios. Buy outright, or trade for other radios. Galen (503) 231-9708.

*FOR SALE/TRADE:* \*1947 Scott 800B AM-FM-SW radio/phono console. Motor drive tuning, chrome good, excellent condition. \$150. Jerry Talbott (503-649-6717)

## Leads and Needs

See the meeting minutes.

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# Roster Corrections and Additions

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Neil has a new e-mail address.

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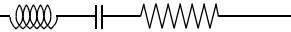
**McKie, Neil WA6KLA**

Box 6267

Bend, OR 97708

(541) 318-7112 [n.mckie@bendcable.com](mailto:n.mckie@bendcable.com)

Mobile Radio Tech Manuals



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# Meeting Location!

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Our monthly meetings are held in the Abernathy Grange Hall, located at 15745 S. Harley Ave. in Oregon City. Here are instructions for getting there and a map.

1. Take the OR-213 exit, exit number 10, towards PARK PLACE/MOLALLA.
2. From the South, turn RIGHT onto SR-213, or from the North, keep RIGHT at the fork in the ramp and merge onto SR-213.
3. Turn LEFT at the first traffic light onto CLACKAMAS RIVER DR.
4. Turn RIGHT onto S FORSYTHE RD.
5. Turn LEFT onto S HARLEY AVE. The Abernathy Grange Hall is a little past S. Taylor Lane.

The written instructions came from “Map Quest” on the Internet; the map is scanned from a AAA map with much detail removed for the sake of clarity.

