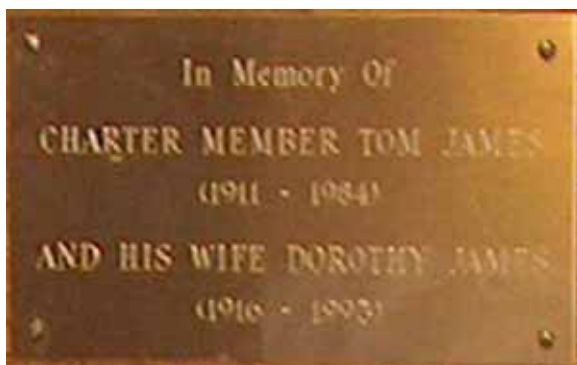


*The*  
**Call  
Letter**

January, 2005  
Vol. 31 — No. 1



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**30** years in print!

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# 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 \$20.00 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).

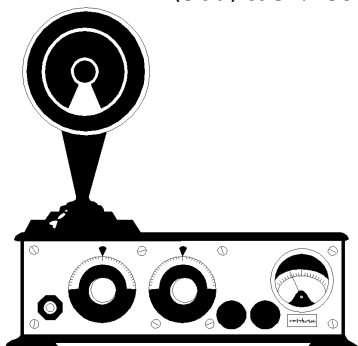
Other Society functions include guest speakers, auctions, radio show, and radio sales which are advertised in the *Call Letter* and are held in and around Portland.

## Society Officers for 2005:

President	George Kirkwood	(503) 648-4809
Vice-President	Dave Brown	(503) 585-4667
Treasurer	Ed Charman	(503) 654-7387
Secretary	Liles Garcia	(503) 649-9288
Board member at large	Cliff Tuttle	(503) 666-7005
<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 2005

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**On the cover:** In case you haven't seen it before, on the cover is our club's "mascot," the Hunkerdyne, with a close-up view of the plaque in the cover commemorating Tom and Dorothy James. This photo was taken at the December meeting.

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**The next meeting is on January 8, 2005.**

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**Annual dues are due!**

**January Feature: Pre-war wood AC/DC Radios**

Visit our web site at <http://nwvrs.org>.

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**February Call Letter Deadline: February 2, 2005.**

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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

A Happy New Year to each of you. I'll keep these comments brief so you can get on with the rest of this issue. The calendar is full once again, but is probably missing some events. Let me know.

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## NWVRS 2005 Calendar of Events

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- January 8** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- February 12** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- February 19** Salem Hamfair, Salem Repeater Association, Polk County Fairgrounds, Rickreall, OR  
<http://www.qsl.net/w7sra>
- February 26** Hamfest, Naval Postgraduate School ARC, Seaside (Monterey), CA <http://www.radiofest.org>
- March 12** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- March 12** 23rd Annual Electronics Show & Fleamarket, Mike and Key ARC, Puyallup, WA.  
<http://www.mikeandkey.com/flea.htm>
- April 9** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- April 9** Inland Northwest Hamfest & Computer Show, Lilac City ARC & Lilac City Chapter of 10-10 International, St. Ann's Parish Hall, East 2120 First Avenue, Spokane, Wa.
- April 16** Yakima Amateur Radio Club W7AQ Hamfest 2004 Selah Civic Center, Selah, WA.  
<http://eagle.ykm.com/~W7aq/hamfest.html>
- May 8** NWVRS Spring Swap/Sale at Salvation Army Rose Center.
- June 11** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- June 17-19** SEA \*PAC, Northwestern Division Convention, Seaside, OR Oregon Tualatin Valley ARC <http://www.seapac.org>

- July 15-17** Glacier-Waterton International Peace Park Hamfest July 18-20, 2003, East Glacier, MT.  
<http://www.gwhamfest.org>
- August 13** Hamfest and Electronics Flea Market, Radio Club of Tacoma; Bethel Junior High School  
22001 38th Avenue East, Spanaway, WA
- September 10** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- October 8** NWVRS Fall Swap/Sale at Salvation Army Rose Center.
- November 12** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.  
Nomination of officers for 2006.
- December 10** NWVRS monthly meeting and annual Holiday Party 10 am. Election of officers for 2006.

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## **NWVRS Meeting Minutes**

### **December 11th, 2004**

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By Tony Hauser. NWVRS Secretary

President Cliff Tuttle called the meeting to order at 10:03 am.

There were 48 members and guests in attendance including charter member Alan Shadduck. The November meeting minutes, as written in the December, 2004, Call Letter were accepted as written.

There were no reports, no good & welfare, and no old business to report.

### **New Business**

Nominations for the 2005 officers were reopened. They included: Charlie Kent, George Kirkwood, and Sonny Clutter for President, and Liles Garcia for Secretary. Dave Brown and Ed Charman were nominated for Vice-president and Treasurer, respectively, at the November meeting.

For the unopposed offices of Vice-president, Treasurer, and Secretary, Dave, Ed, and Liles were elected by a show of hands. Written ballots were used for determining President with George winning the election.

Cliff reminded members to consider important topics for the Annual Meeting in January. The Monthly Feature topic was "Best of your Collection." Thirteen members brought fifteen radios for display and discussion.

Dick Karman announced that the new Society history booklet will soon be published. Dick also had the opportunity to interview Harley Perkins this week and will publish a story about the interview in an upcoming Call Letter.

### Leads & Needs

Larry Beaver is selling an Airline wire recorder model 94-GCD-3652A and several rolls of wire. 503-669-0358.

David Wise wants a Sony AM101 antenna. He also wants to sell a Sony AM100 antenna and would consider a trade.

John Otterstedt is selling an Airline radio in a custom cabinet.

Cliff thanked members for their support during his tenure as President.

Next month's feature at the January meeting will be the pre-war AC/DC radios.

Cliff adjourned the meeting at 11:04am. Attendees then enjoyed the holiday party.



# Photo Display

Photos by Rick Walton

Here are the favorites that members brought to display at the Christmas Party.



**Blake Dietze - 3 Airlines**



**Larry Tobkin -1931 Brunswick**



**Jerry Talbott - 1929 Grebe**



**George Kirkwood - Kennedy 20**



**Liles Garcia - 1960's Hallicrafters**



**Rudy Zvarich - 1936RCA**



Mike Parker - 1926  
Masterphone Illustrated Panel



Lloyd Harris - Freshman Masterpiece  
w/ Magnavox Horn



Alan Shadduck - Remler Scotty



Sonny Clutter - Zenith "Glassrod"



Wendy Johnson-Kent - Silvertone  
"Hopalong Cassidy"



John Bucholtz - Unknown w/  
Abalone Inlay



Dick Bixler-Radiola 48



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## Looking Back: More history of the NW Vintage Radio Society.

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*Sources:* Phone interview with Harley Perkins, our first President, and a correspondence file provided by charter member Alan Shadduck.

Harley Perkins, who was there when it started, spoke to me in December 2004 about the beginnings of the Society. He remembers a newspaper ad in the Oregonian which has been referred to by many of the charter members. It was, as he remembers, to advertise a sale of vintage radio sets in an Oregon City home on Polk street.

Harley recollects that the house was “chock-a-block” from floor to ceiling in old radio gear. He found some radios that he liked and many that he didn't. He bought a few of them that day, but of more interest to us, he met others who were willing to pursue the idea of a collector's club. The most interested, according all reports, were Jerry Irving, Ron Moran (first membership chairman), Bob and Sandy Bilbie and Harley himself. It was Harley who moved the idea along and perhaps persuaded the ever pleasant Sandy Bilbie to be secretary.

Within a few weeks Harley had drafted a rough constitution for the Historic Radio Club of America. (This name only appeared in the draft constitution.) All those who said they were interested received a letter from Sandra Bilbie, dated December 4th, 1974, urging them to attend the organizational meeting on December 14. Within this first 45 day period, Harley had drafted a constitution, which, more likely than not, resulted in him being elected the first president.

According to correspondence mailed by the club the next meeting was January 11, 1975. Twenty-five folks attended, selected the name (which we still use today), gave a nod to the first constitution (later to be modified), set a precedent for meetings at 10 AM on the second Saturday morning, and began the tradition of SHOW and TELL. This meeting answered the question which was posed the previous year: “Should we have monthly meetings, or a newsletter?” The answer was, “Both!”

Harley, when asked how he became the first president instead of Bob Bilbie, reported that folks just thought he would make a better president. He remembered, as have others, that Bob had a lot of ideas and always like to talk, but he was also somewhat “volatile” when it came to interpersonal relationships. Thus Harley was the President, Pete Young was the Vice President (replaced by Don Hunker after only 4 months), Sandy Bilbie was the Secretary, Bob Bilbie was Treasurer, Joey Tompkins was equipment swap coordinator (what would later become the Swap Shop in the newsletter), and Ron Moran was in charge of membership.

As Harley reminisced about the early years he noted that from the beginning there was a desire to have at least two swap meets each year. Some of these early meets were just between members and many radios changed hands, none-the-less. He also warmly remembers how in just a few months the membership had doubled to over 50. He attributed this to news stories and public exposure. "There was a lot of latent interest in radio collecting in the Northwest. We just sort of tapped into it." Another aspect that benefited from the public exposure was displays.

The display opportunities were unique in those years. According to club correspondence, the famous Mall 205 display was a result of the Mall 205 management seeing a write up in the paper and asking us if we would place a display! (Oh that it would be so simple today.)

Harley recalled the rapid growth of the Jim Mason collection. Jim it seems, had become interested in radios after his retirement. In a matter of eight to ten months he had a larger collection than Harley who had been collecting for years.

Society correspondence began to include a monthly newsletter which indicated that it was written and edited by Bob Bilbie. (After reading several editions, one can be sure that it was written, but very little editing was being done.) They did include several nationally known names who heard about our new international organization (we signed up a few collectors from Canada to make it official) Folks like author Morgan McMahon, and Altec Lansing founder Jim Lansing were carried on the roles as members or honorary members for many years.

Why did Bilbie leave? Harley can't tell you. "It was a mystery" he said "I often wondered if it was something I said, but I don't think so." Tom and Dorothy James and Chuck and Bobbie Kibbler all were puzzled about the Bilbie's sudden departure. Bilbies had moved to a new house and gotten quite a bit of public exposure. Harley remembers that Sandy had a chronic illness (perhaps muscular dystrophy) and was not able to help out as time went on, but it was more likely the way that member Dick Howard remembers it: "they just were in over their heads."

It was great to talk to Harley (for more information on our first president see insert) and look back on members like Joe Tompkins, Bill Baker, Don Hunker, Tom James, John Wood, Pete Young, and Don Knotts. For more information and reproductions of some of the early correspondence be sure to come to meetings and pick up a copy of the booklet, The NW Vintage Radio Society: Looking Back 30 Years.



Our first president was Harley Perkins. Harley was interested in radio since the age of 11. He had his First Class Radio Telephone FCC License at the age of 17. He says that he couldn't get into the college of his choice because all of the WWII veterans using their GI-bill. He settled for second choice, University of Pittsburgh. When he was done with College he owed the ROTC people a hitch and went into the Air Force. Instead of ending up in Korea, Harley found himself in New Mexico where he became an instructor. From the Air Force he went on to work for Westinghouse. Through one turn or another he found himself at OSU in 1966, and by 1973 had become the Electrical Engineering Department Assistant Department Head. In 1973 he moved to the Tektronix campus. In 1982 his wife Harriet got a job in Boston, and Harley resigned from Tektronix and got a job with Northrop in Massachusetts. Northrop merged with Grumman Aircraft, so Harley retired from Northrop Grumman in 1993.

Harley and his wife live near the inner harbor in Boston but he still shares a common interest with member Charles "Ed" Charman, in that both men are organists and enjoy the vintage "tracker-style" pipe organs. Harley still plays at a Methodist church not far from his home.

Harley has been active in the Mid Atlantic Antique Radio Club, the American Wireless Association, and the Radio History Society over the last twenty years. You can contact him at [handhbalt@aol.com](mailto:handhbalt@aol.com), or write to him at Harley Perkins, 625 S Hanover St., Baltimore, MD 21230.

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# Play It Again, Sam!

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by David Wise

## **Airline (unknown model)**

Pretty wood table model from the 40s. 12SK7-12SA7-12SK7-12SQ7-35L6-35Z5. 2-gang tuning cap. Electrodynamic speaker. Two knobs, pillow-shaped lighted foil dial.

It worked okay after the usual replacement of electrolytic filter caps, 1st and 2nd audio coupling caps, and AVC smoothing cap. (That last one is often overlooked, resulting in distortion on strong signals.) However, I believe the set was mis-assembled. Here's why. The RF amp is R-C coupled to the converter. Normally, on sets like this, the RF amp plate load resistor is on the order of 100K. This set is 3K. It's not a failed resistor, the part is marked orange-black-red.

Also, if you add up the filaments you get 120V, but there's a 60-ohm series resistor which adds an additional 9V drop and runs the filaments about 8% below normal. I suppose the set could have been made for areas with high line voltage, but 120 was considered "high" in those days.

The result of these two is a set that on its best day is way below par. I'll get back into it sometime and see if correcting these apparent defects will perk it up.

I actually did a bit of cosmetic work on this set! The foil dial's center hole for the pointer has become raggedly enlarged over the years. I soaked it with a drop of white glue and pressed it between two blocks overnight. To keep everything from sticking together, I taped a sheet of plastic food wrap to each block and coated them lightly with Vaseline. The back cover had lost its corners (essential, since this is where it's fastened down), so I built them up with scraps of cardboard and more white glue and clamps. Not the prettiest thing in the world, but it's holding together which is more than I could say for it before.

Aligning this set, I noticed an effect you should keep in mind. This set has an air-core loop antenna, and the spacing between the antenna and the chassis has a profound effect on the low-end tuning. You must position the antenna in its normal relationship to the chassis before aligning! Since the oscillator coil is not adjustable on this model, I had three choices: (1) remove or add turns to the antenna, (2) insert a slug into the oscillator coil, or (3) change the intermediate frequency. I elected to do (2), gluing a junk box iron slug inside the coil form, but I noticed that although this allowed me to peak the response at the bottom and top, tracking was poor in the middle. I may revisit this, especially since without service data, I'm

only guessing that the IF is 455kHz. It ain't necessarily so! At the top end, I got to "trim" the set in the original sense of the word. Rather than the usual mica compression trimmer, the antenna had a twisted-wire "gimmick" across it, which adds capacitance. To adjust the capacitance, you literally trim the gimmick down with diagonal cutters. That's where the term came from. I know, I've said it before, but the next guy won't have read that article.

Finally, if anyone wants to help me identify the model, let me know. Wiring-wise, it's not any of the dozen-odd Airlines or Belmonts of the same tube lineup in Rider's.

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## Tech Tips

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by Sonny Clutter

### **Shock hazards and safety tips when working on AC/DC radio chassis.**

**Caution!** One should always work on this type chassis with the set plugged into an isolation transformer!

You can get a minor shock on most series-string tube sets if the hot side of the chassis is grounded via a capacitor. The shock is normal and not deadly unless the capacitor is shorted. You can get a deadly shock if the "HOT" side of the line cord is connected to the chassis. Check the wiring — that's the best way to tell which side of the line cord goes to ground. You can still get a shock because the on/off switch will determine which way the chassis comes to the line cord potential (on, one side; off, the other). Some of those sets were deadly as one side of the cord was tied directly to the chassis. The only safe way to prevent a shock is to rewire the set so the neutral side of the line cord is connected (with a polarized plug) directly to the chassis (or common if it's floating above chassis potential) and the "hot" side is wired to the switch. This way the neutral or ground is always at the chassis or "common" potential and you won't get shocked as long as the polarized plug is plugged into a correctly wired socket. You will have to alter the chassis wiring a little so you are switching the "hot" side of the AC line into the set and not the chassis or "common".

Note - when using an isolation transformer, be sure that any test equipment you are using such as a "scope", AC operated VTVM or Signal Generator is not plugged into the same transformer. These pieces of test equipment should already be isolated from the AC line as all I have seen are power transformer operated. However many of them have a 3-

prong AC plug and the case and ground lead will be common to ground. If you have both the radio under test and your test equipment plugged in to the isolation transformer, you're likely to get an unpleasant surprise.

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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, 9770 S.E. Stanley Ave., Milwaukie, OR 97222, (503)513-0410

*WANTED:* \*\*Older tube oscilloscope for learning how to use one. Preferably free or trade. Working if possible. Damon Vandehy

*FOR SALE:* 1937 Stromberg-Carlson 250 console, 13 tube-5 band. \$450. In excellent original condition. 1949 RCA T-120 12" TV - \$200. Jerry Talbott, E-mail ([vinradio@easystreet.com](mailto:vinradio@easystreet.com)) or phone (503-538-4041)

*WANTED:* Manuals for a Heath VT1 and Mallory 12VT1D vibrator testers.  
THANX — R Campbell

## Radio Service

These members have indicated they are willing to perform radio repairs:

Roger Brown - (503) 693-6089

Blake Dietze - (360) 944-7172, [wb6jhj@ix.netcom.com](mailto:wb6jhj@ix.netcom.com)

Tony Ranft - (360) 944-8489 or [ranft@saw.net](mailto:ranft@saw.net) - General repairs.

Dave Wise - (503) 293-7835, [david\\_wise@phoenix.com](mailto:david_wise@phoenix.com)

If you are willing to repair radios, give your name, phone and/or e-mail, and any comments to the *Call Letter* editor.

The Northwest Vintage Radio Society is not responsible in any disputes arising from services provided by members listed here. By common agreement of the board of directors, the buyer assumes all responsibility for the satisfaction of any transaction.

## Leads and Needs

See the meeting minutes.

Questions about restoration of vintage radio? Visit radiolaguy's web site often for this information plus lots of other interesting displays, photo's, virtual museum plus lots of other information on vintage radio and television. Oh, yes, there are items for sale as well and NVRS members get a substantial discount on most of these items. Thank You, Sonny the Radiola Guy  
Visit my vintage radio web site: <http://wvww.radiolaguy.com>.

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# Member Information

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Just in case we don't have your most current member information, please take the time to send the information requested on this form.

**Name\*:**

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**Mailing Address\*:**

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**City, State, ZIP\*:**

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**Ham Call Sign:**

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**E-mail:**

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**Phone:**

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**Collecting Interest** (e.g. Battery sets, consoles, clock radios, etc.):

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\*Information we must have to be able to send you your Call Letter. The rest is optional, but we hope you'll share it with other club members.

Mail this sheet (or something like it) to Rick Walton at the society's mailing address:

The Northwest Vintage Radio Society

Post Office Box 82379

Portland, Oregon 97282-0379

or e-mail the information to [rwalton@easystreet.com](mailto:rwalton@easystreet.com).