

The **Call**
Letter

July, 2009
Vol. 35 — No.7



Almost **35** years in print!

The Northwest Vintage Radio Society

Post Office Box 82379
Portland, Oregon 97282-0379

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 \$25.00 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 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 shows, and radio sales which are advertised in the *Call Letter* and are held in and around Portland.

With each issue of the *Call Letter*, we remember Jim Mason, a charter member of the society who remained active until his death in 1998. A generous bequest from Jim's estate ensures the vitality of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society, and continued publication of the *Call Letter*.



Society Officers for 2009:

President	George Kirkwood	(503) 648-4809 radiogeo@hevanet.com
Vice-President	Dick Bixler	(503) 690-2557 rf2af@verizon.net
Treasurer	Cliff Tuttle	(503) 666-7005 kiptuttle@comcast.net
Recording Secretary	Liles Garcia	(503) 649-9288 landn2@verizon.net
Corresponding Secretary	Tony Hauser	(503) 397-0074 abhauser@aol.com
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On the cover: “ The beautiful, fiery Gypsy dancer twirls to haunting strains of... a radio! This W. H. Andrews painting adorns the cover of the July, 1924 issue of *Radio*.

The next meeting is July 11, 2009.

July Feature: Your Most Ambitious Project

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

Next Call Letter Deadline: July 30, 2009.

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 or services 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.

From the Editor

by Call Letter Editor, Rick Walton

It was a great vacation and I had a wonderful time visiting my new grandson and attending a reunion for my Navy ship. I didn't have any time, though, to look for radios.

This month's issue has the usual suspects plus the return of *Play it again, Sam!* in which Dave Wise describes his success at returning a Philco 111 to top playing condition. I want to thank Dave for being our most faithful contributor to PIAS, and I want to invite everyone to think about writing up a restoration success to submit.

Mike Parker selected his February, 1999 *In the Shack* article titled "Nellie Trego's Radio" for his July pick. This article is a great example of using a radio from his collection to present the history of the company that made it along with the history of that particular radio's addition to his collection and its restoration.

For the second month in a row, I won't be able to attend the society's monthly meeting. I want to thank Sonny Clutter for filling in at the camera for me last month. His results are available in our Photo Display. I'll be depending on someone again this month to provide me with photos of the display of most ambitious projects.

Always sunny & warm.

*For a refreshing change,
check it out!*



Sunny 1550 KKAD

	Herb Alpert - Tony Bennett - Michael Buble - Carpenters
	Nat King Cole - Perry Como - Neil Diamond - Diana Krall
	Barry Manilow - Johnny Mathis - Platters - Carly Simon
	Elvis - Frank Sinatra - Babara Streisand - Andy Williams

NWVRS Meeting Minutes

submitted by Liles Garcia, NWVRS Secretary

President George Kirkwood called the June 13, 2009 meeting of the NorthWest Vintage Radio Society to order at 10:00 AM; and he welcomed everyone to the meeting today. Liles Garcia read the minutes of the April meeting; the minutes were approved as published in the May Call Letter. Cliff Tuttle gave the Treasurer's report; and his report was approved by members present. Cliff said that our Society now has 128 members. Carol Johnston, Harold Thoeny, Ki Kiduk, and Nick Hannah attended today as guests. Bob Blessing, Joe Fielding, and Norman Trujillo joined our Society today. Members gave our guests and new members a round of applause. Pat Kagi's wife is home from the hospital recovering from back surgery. There were 55 people at our meeting today.

Old Business

Swap Meet--Brian Toon said that all swap meet tables were sold. Members thanked Brian and Kathleen Toon for all of their work to make our Swap Meet a success--members gave them a round of applause.

Library--John said that some books have been out for a long time; and he may contact members that have these books.

New Business

Summer Picnic--George asked everyone to think about a family picnic at one of our summer meetings.

Home Tours--Members discussed having an open house to display various members' collections.

Trash Bash--Members discussed having a "Trash Bash" event at our September meeting.

ACVA Meeting--Our Society is a member of the Aurora Colony Visitors Association. Liles informed the group about a recent ACVA meeting that he and Dick Bixler attended. He described some of the marketing ideas that the antique store owners are considering.

Leads and Needs

Dick Howard needs the front panel and a schematic for a Hallock and Watson RF22. Brian Nies needs some precision capacitors and some test equipment; see Brian for the details on his requirements. Damon Vandehay needs a schematic for a Zenith A35R and also some tube

caddies. Mike McCrow has a lead on a Zenith 7S363; call Mike for more information.

Program Topic

The program topic today was “Your Smallest Tube Radio”. Members showed and discussed 20 radios that they brought. The program topic for the July meeting is “Your Most Ambitious Project”.

The meeting was adjourned.

NWVRS Calendar of Events

Most of the hamfest and ham swap meet information comes from: PNW Hamfair web page at www.n7cfo.com/amradio/hf/hf.htm

- July 11** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- July 18** Coos County Radio Club Hamfest and Swapmeet. North Bend Middle School, North Bend, OR. Contact Marilyn Mansker, ke7oam@yahoo.com or Dave Granicy k7nbo@charter.net. www.coosradioclub.net/.
- July 18** CHRS “Live at KRE 2009” event. KRE radio station building, 601 Ashby Ave., Berkely, CA. \$5 donation. Auction, live music, more. Details at www.californiahistoricalradio.com/KRELive2009.html
- August 8** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- August 8** Radio Club of Tacoma Hamfest. Spanaway, WA. <http://www.w7dk.org/Hamfest@W7DK.org>
- August 16** Antique Radio Swap Meet. Puget Sound Antique Radio Association. 9 AM to 1 PM. N. 175th & Linden, Avenue, North Seattle. <http://www.eskimo.com/~hhagen/psara/swap.html> (See the flyer on the back page)
- September 12** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- September 12** The 3rd Annual Clark County ARC Tail-Gate Swapmeet. Vancouver, WA. <http://www.w7aia.org/> Rob, K7JAO at k7jao@arrl.net
- October 10** NWVRS Fall Swap/Sale at Aurora American Legion Hall, Aurora, Oregon.

November 14 NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
Nomination of officers for 2010.

December 12 NWVRS monthly meeting and annual Holiday Party 10
am. Election of officers for 2010.

2010

January 9 NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.

February 13 NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.

February 20 Salem Hamfair & Computer/Electronics Swapmeet.
Rickreall, Oregon at the Polk County Fairgrounds. [http://
www.w7sra.com](http://www.w7sra.com).

March 7 Burnaby ARC Flea Market. New Westminster, BC [http://
rac.eton.ca/events/detail.php?event_ID=1333](http://rac.eton.ca/events/detail.php?event_ID=1333)

March 13 NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.

March Mike & Key Swap Meet. Puyallup fairgrounds exhibition
hall, Puyallup, WA. Contact mwdink@eskimo.com.
<http://www.mikeandkey.org/flea.htm>.

April 10 NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.

May 8 NWVRS Spring Swap/Sale at Aurora American Legion
Hall, Aurora, Oregon.

10% DISCOUNT

To all members in good standing of the
Northwest Vintage Radio Society
for any purchase from



Please show your current
NWVRS membership card
to receive discount.

BEAVERTON (503) 644-1025
7940 SW Nimbus Ave.

SALEM (503) 583-9810
1545 Commercial St. NE

EUGENE (541) 345-2904
960 Conger St.

Photo Display

Photos by Sonny Clutter

Photos of "Your smallest tube radio" displayed by members at the June meeting.



Dewald clock radio, and Admiral AA5 - Sonny Clutter



Aircraft radio
WW-2 era -
Liles Garcia



German 1 tube,
Crosley Pup & Airphone 1 tube -



George Kirkwood



Rare RCA "Book Set"
(very small) - Jay Johnston



Emerson battery
"Lunchbox" portable
(1940's) - James Harper



Crosley "Book" radio
(Hybrid, 2 transistors,
3 Submini tubes) -
Tony Hauser



Two early
'50's RCA battery
portables - Jerry Hertel



Wards' Airline -
Alan Shaddock



Philco 41-220
AC-DC - Mike McCrow



Dan Howard-
Firestone, Silvertone & Arvin tiny sets



Arvin -
Bill Meloy

Unidentified

Wards' Airline -
Lloyd Harris



Dick Howard -
Tri-Cities 1 tube, Tom Thumb portable,

Philmore 2 tube

Play It Again, Sam!

by Dave Wise

Philco 111

I got it playing well, but it was more work than I expected.

First I borrowed a heat gun, took the chassis out on the patio, and had a condenser block party. One after another, the baked boxes disgorged their icky innards, to be replaced by nonleaky modern film caps. I left no survivors; every cap in this machine will cause some kind of trouble if it's leaky, whether it's distortion, no sound, or fireworks.

On the other hand, most resistors were fine, especially the "metallized" ones, which employ the same principle as today's metal-film resistors. I did find that the large power supply bleeder resistor was open, and someone had modified the oscillator decoupling.

Back when I was playing my 96 every day, I ran it with the original power pack caps. With 35 more years experience, I approached the 111's pack with more suspicion. It was justified. While nothing was shorted, the caps were passing about 30mA of leakage! Out came the heat gun again. It took a long time; next time I'll use a Goodwill toaster oven.

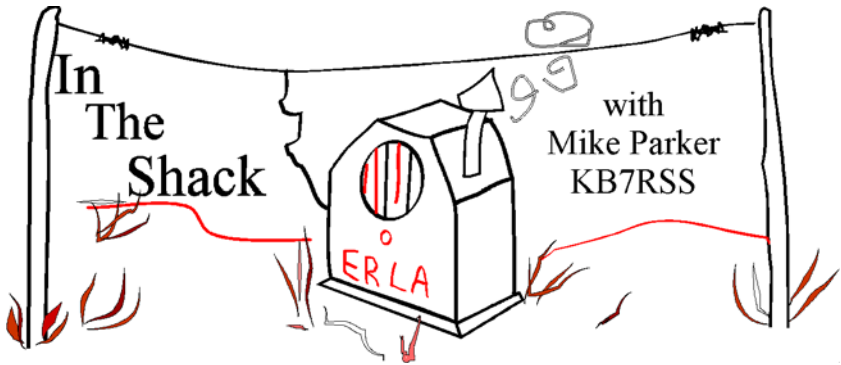
I didn't have a 2uF cap on hand to exactly replace the original input cap. I used a 4.7 instead, and as expected, this increased the B+ by about 20V. To bring it back down with the nonstandard cap, I added a 150-ohm resistor ahead of the input cap. This has the added benefit of reducing the peak current. This resistor dissipates a surprising amount of heat; you wouldn't guess by measuring the DC drop. It's because the current is so far from a sine wave.

I discovered that one side of the audio driver transformer secondary was open. Not having a spare, I modified the circuit to use the remaining half for one 45, and impedance coupled the primary to the other. This cut the gain in half but will get me by until I get a transformer. Anybody have one handy?

About this time I had it playing, but as I tuned across the dial, the darn dial cord snapped! This is the old .080" cord, not the usual. I ordered substitute material from Bill Turner and put the set aside. When the new stuff came, I was disappointed to find that it was not as thick as the real thing, but after coating it with rosin and lubing up the bearing surfaces, it does okay.

When I was aligning the set, I discovered two bad mica caps across the IF transformers. You can't trust them anymore.

With that taken care of, I'm ready to put this VERY sensitive and selective set into daily service.



Editor's note: This "In The Shack" article appeared initially in the February, 1999, Call Letter, and was reprinted at least once.

Nellie Trego's Radio

At the recent auction of the late James Mason's collection, I was a successful bidder on a rather interesting Battery Set. The radio is a TREGO, 3 tube regenerative set, circa 1923 or 24, made in Kansas City, MO.



I had never seen this radio during several of the times that I visited the wonderful Mr. Mason's Museum and if it was where I found it at the auction preview, it was on the floor, shoved under a table.

Not too long before that, I had been reading with fascination the story of Nellie Trego and her radio company, as outlined on page 195 of *Radio Manufacturers of the 1920's, Vol.3* by Alan Douglas. Trego Radio is mentioned in his section on TRI-CITY Radio Electric Supply Co. of Davenport, Iowa (TRESKO) because Trego was one of several companies that were using Tresco's Armstrong license for his patented regenerative radio circuit, which had been loaned illegally by Tresco. Douglas speculates that Westinghouse, that ubiquitous guardian of the "radio patents" during the '20's filed suit with Tresco to stop this illegal subcontracting in 1923. The ad for Trego shown on page 195 is in *Radio News*, dated April, 1923 and shows a 1 tube regenerative receiver using a WD-11 tube. Some photos of other Trego one tube sets are included, which all look very similar to the Tresco. The 3 tube set that I have, is not mentioned nor is it listed in McMahon's blue book, *RADIO COLLECTORS GUIDE*, who list Trego from 1923 and list only a 1-tube regen. that year and a 3-dial 5-tube TRF for '24, '25 and '26. McMahon's *VINTAGE RADIO* shows a picture of a Trego 3-dial set and I have seen one in a junk shop here in Oregon, in shabby condition and priced in orbit! I can only guess that Trego made my set right around the time of the Tresco lawsuit and did not advertise it nationally, therefore not making McMahon's listing. So Trego had to switch to a common TRF circuit, which was better anyway and did not radiate signals, and Tresco, after getting fined by the

folks at the “Patent Fort”, kept on making regenerative sets such as the TRESCOLA, until they sold their license and name to Steinite, Atchison, KS. later on. TRI-CITY/TRESCO was also noted for making many radios for Montgomery Ward & Co. and were sold through their store and catalog.

The story of Nellie Trego is even more interesting and is also presented in Douglas Vol. 3, p.195. An article in the New York TELEGRAM, dated Aug. 20, 1927 is headlined; “Young Woman Heads Large Radio Company” and “Started on Credit-----Business Now Said to be Million Dollars Annually” and describes how Nellie started into the radio business... very unusual in those times of male dominated manufacturers. A photo of a rather determined Mrs. Trego, accompanies the article.

The article describes how Nellie was left a widow when her husband, a hardware dealer in Humboldt, Kansas, died in 1915. Nellie, packed up her young daughter and a few belongings and headed for Kansas City, the nearest metropolis. She went to business college for a few weeks and then obtained employment with a rubber and tire manufacturer. Starting as a stenographer, she rose to success in the company and purchased company stock along the way, when a collapse of the market brought the concern to bankruptcy, (apparently the 1921 crash).

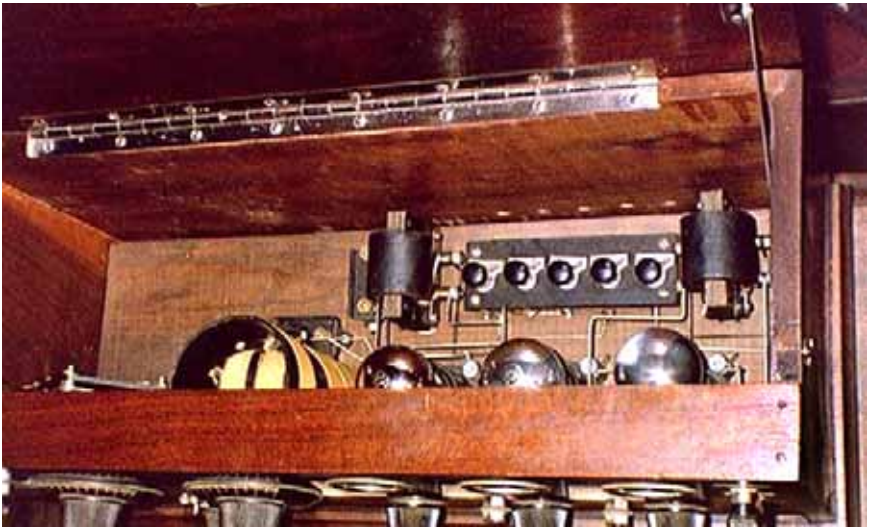
She then mortgaged her small home for \$3000, spent \$2500 on advertising and with the remaining \$500, purchased equipment and started a small radio company on credit, using men as helpers, formerly with the tire company. The article states that the orders just kept rolling in and Nellie was now a well recognized Kansas City businesswoman with the plant covering an entire block and bringing in a “Million Dollars Annually” (I have trouble swallowing that last part!). No radio company, as small and Midwestern as hers, could have possibly pulled in that kind of money!

Nellie Trego, small in stature and weighing 110 pounds, who had denied many marriage proposals, is quoted as saying, “It is not necessary that one be a physical giant to be a success in business. One merely must be able to look ahead and willing to risk his or her own judgement. That is what I did when I foresaw the future of the radio business.”

How true! I speculate that she was very lucky that she tried it in 1922 or 23 because by 1925 she would not have had a chance against the onslaught of new competition in THAT peak sales year. I also find it curious that the New York Telegram article was in August, 1927, yet McMahon’s guide shows Trego’s last production year as 1926. Perhaps some 1927 models were made but I would guess the company quit production by not being ready to gear up for production of AC plug-in radio sets.

I have named my Trego 3-tube set, “Nellie” after that very courageous young lady who had a vision and made a business out of it. Recently I have tried Nellie under D.C. power, using a 6 volt storage battery for the tube filaments and a 90 volt battery pack made out of series 9 volt batteries, with taps for 45 and 22.5 for the B+ for tube plate voltages. A 35 foot antenna, up here IN THE SHACK is connected to Ant. binding post on the front panel. The set has 2 dials, on the left, a variable condenser with a small knob in the center of the large knob turns a single blade on the rear of the condenser for fine tuning, causing the usual regenerative squealing. The right tuning knob controls a variometer with taps wired to a five point external tap switch below the tuning knobs. The far left point is KXL 750 all over most of the range. The tap switch is progressive up the AM dial with tap 4 swamped with blowtorch KEX 1190. So far, after a lot of

careful tuning, I have logged 7 stations, mostly mixed with other stations in the background. With the bandwidth of the modern day mega-power AM stations, I can excuse Nellie for not being very selective. I hope all those regen. “bloopers” are not disturbing the neighbors! They are all FM heads anyway!



On the right side of the front panel is the audio section with a rheostat for each of the 3 stages and an output phone jack for each stage, like the Westinghouse RC. What really stands out are the 3 large peephole bezels with screens to view the tube filaments. They are trimmed with very nice silver escutcheons. The wiring inside is square busbar and the tube sockets and the very small sub-panel are screwed to a base board, like a home-brew set. the transformers are very crude and are open frame with the winding around the top side of the square lamination frame. A small factory tag is attached under the lid that simply says Trego Radio manufactured by Trego Radio Mfg. Co. Kansas City Mo. The lift top has hook and eye lid locks on each side of the cabinet, like a Grebe CR-9.



I can only describe this radio, old Nellie, as... primitive, both in appearance and in performance, which is exactly the way I want her! My future plans for the Trego are... none at all! Since it works, I prefer to keep it the way Jim found it. By the way, if any of you know where in H.... Jim

found it, I would very much like to know. Maybe at a flea market in K.C.?

QSO you next time.....IN THE SHACK

Swap Shop

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

FOR SALE: *Tektronix type 191 constant amplitude signal generator 335 kc to 100 mc. Robert 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

Todd Olmert – (503) 246-4141

Tony Ranft – (360) 944-8489 or walterranft@hotmail.com – General repairs.

Dave Wise – (503) 648-0897, 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.

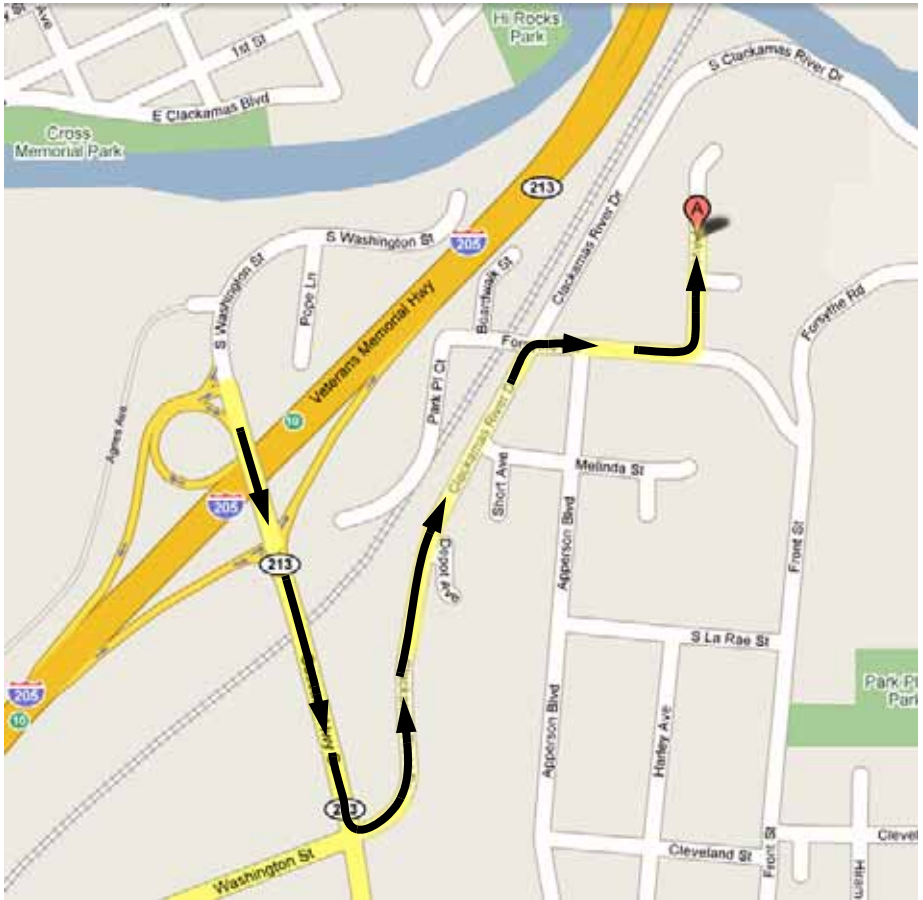
Leads and Needs

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://www.radiolaguy.com>

A lady in Cedar Hills has a Sparton 1040X (model number uncertain) that she'd like to sell. It belonged to her mother, and was working when last turned on about a month ago. She describes it as being in pristine condition. If interested, call Marion Waterman at 503-643-5821.

Meeting Location

Here is a map (thanks to Google Maps) to the Abernethy Grange Hall (the pointer marked “A”), where the Northwest Vintage Society meets the second Saturday of each month. Just follow the arrows on the map.



To get to the Abernethy Grange Hall:

1. Exit I-205 at SR-213 (Exit 10 to Molalla) and head south on 213.
2. At the first intersection (the traffic light), turn left onto Clackamas River Dr.
3. Turn right at Forsythe Rd.
4. Turn left onto Harley Ave. The Grange Hall is on the left about a block and a half.