



OSCILLATOR

DELAWARE VALLEY HISTORIC RADIO CLUB

The Official Newsletter of the DVHRC

Editor: Ludwell Sibley

Vol. 3 No. 7, August 1995

THE MONTHLY PREZ

Mike Koste

First, a hearty welcome to new faces in the place: Richard Evans of Souderton, A. J. Kovelski of Scranton, Alice Wolf of Bethlehem, and Richard Hazel of Oxford, NJ. DVHRC membership is now approaching 150!

As you've surely heard by now, the Ford Museum auction will be hosting a virtual "who's who" of vintage radiophiles. Hope to see you in Dearborn in October! Take it from a native Motor City madman, even if you come with empty pockets and are unable to bid, the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village tours will be well worth the trip. Sibley has more dirt on this once-in-a-lifetime radio auction in this month's *Oscillator*.

You probably noticed the new-look *Oscillator* masthead in last month's issue. It's only fair to give credit where same is due. The new artwork was designed and donated by my good friends at The Berry Company in Ambler. Should you ever be in need of advertising, PR, promotions, or graphic design, call Jefferson Berry at (215) 628-3909 and tell him the Prez sent you.

VCR ALERT! Mike Adams, producer and host of the "The Radio Collector" video that we've viewed at past meetings, dropped us a note asking the organization to make a plea for his new video project, BROADCASTING'S FORGOTTEN FATHER: THE CHARLES HERROLD STORY. You'll be happy to hear that, thanks in part to a DVHRC push, WLVT Channel 39 in Bethlehem will televise this fascinating piece of history on Sunday, September 10, at 7 PM. Based on advance previews, this hour-long program is a "must see."

Major rumblings in the broadcast industry this month surround the planned merger of Westinghouse and CBS. In our immediate area, the inevitable changes in FCC ownership rules could put KYW (1060), WMMR (93.3), WGMP (1210), and WOGL (98.1) all under one corporate banner. Not to mention the Disney-ABC acquisition. Stay tuned! Market legend Jerry Blavat has resurfaced with his "Geator Gold Radio" at WSSJ (1310) in Camden. Coincidentally, that's the same spot on the dial where Blavat got his start in the early '60s. It was WCAM in those days. Fans of the old WFIL will remember "Banana Joe," who's returned to Philly, outseating John "Harvey in the Morning" at '70s station WMGK (102.9). It's great to hear WWJZ (640) out of Mt. Holly, NJ back on the air with a new tower, transmitter, and greatly improved signal. As their call letters imply, WWJZ is serving up Big Bands and adult standards that sound very logical emanating from your prized old radio. Sadly, controlling interest in the last bastion of American-made picture tubes has been assumed by the Korean company LG Electronics (formerly Lucky - Gold Star). Rest in peace, Zenith . . .

Finally: back in September of 1994, we made mention of the book The Radio Collector's Directory and Price Guide by Robert Grinder and George Fathauer. Heavy on text and light on pictures (short of a handful of line drawings, there aren't any), Grinder's now published a Second Edition, weighing in at 500+ pages, listing over 20,000 models manufactured from 1921 to 1965. This new volume uses a "price" scale of one to six stars, as opposed to dollars and cents, and includes a number of brands not included in other publications. Preceding the price guide, there're interesting chapters on the beginnings of broadcasting and how radio programming promoted the radio-manufacturing industry. Plus, the regulation of broadcasting, technical advancements in receiver cir-

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Tuesday, August 8 and Sept. 12, 7:30 PM, at North Penn Amusements, 113 Main St. (PA Rte. 113), Souderton.

JOINING THE CLUB

Just send \$10 to DVHRC, Box 41031, Philadelphia, PA 19127-0031.

ADS & SUCH

Please send ads, articles, etc., to Ludwell Sibley, 44 E. Main St., Flemington, NJ 08822, (908) 782-4894.

ON THE HORIZON

- Aug. 12** NFWA Amherst Museum meet/auction, near Buffalo. Contact: Larry Babcock, 716-741-3082.
Aug. 19 ARCO meet, Dayton (see below)
Sept. 6-9 AWA Conference, Rochester
Sept. 22-23 Liquidation auction, Bridgeton, NJ (see below)
Oct. 1 Finkel auction, Kulpville. See ad on p. 86 of August *Antique Radio Classified*
Oct. 6 NJARC meet, Hightstown
Oct. 7-8 Ford Museum auction, Dearborn MI (preview, Oct. 6).

cultry, and design innovations in broadcast receivers.

As the forementioned "Volumes of Volumes" article pointed out, perhaps the most valuable asset of the RC-DAPG Second Edition is The Trade Directory. Here, Grinder has cross-referenced brand names to the actual manufacturers and vice versa. Unless you're a collector with an encyclopedic knowledge of such little known facts, how would you know that Doraphone radios were actually made by Setchell-Carlson? That Endurance was a house brand at Western Auto stores, Jumbo and Airtone were actually pilot products, and Montgomery Ward offered not only Airline radios, but Balboa and Fantasy sets as well? It was due only to the first edition that I learned the cute little Merrimac radio I've had on my shelf for years was actually a Crosley.

As with some other books on the subject, Grinder II isn't for every collector. But if you want to keep your reference library, complete, up to date, and generally but every book available on the subject anyway, don't pass it up. The Radio Collector's Directory and Price Guide 1921-65, Second Ed., by Robert Grinder (Sonoran Publishing, 1995) is available through A. R. C. and numerous other mail-order sources.

NFWA MEET & ESTATE AUCTION, AUG. 12

The Niagara Frontier Wireless Association will lay on its annual outdoor meet at the Amherst Museum (outside Buffalo) on Saturday the 12th. Features include a five-category equipment contest, two auctions (one including estate material), a talk by AWA's Bruce Kelley, and NFWA's 1995 radio exhibit in the museum. Refreshments will be available. Entrance fee: \$3 (spouses \$2); no extra fee to sell. To get there: from Exit 49 of the NY State Thruway, take Rte. 78 (Transit Rd.) north nine miles. (Transit Rd. is the local "motel row.") Turn west onto Tonawanda Creek Rd. and go west two miles to New Road. Stay on the south side of Tonawanda Creek in Erie County. This is a relaxed event in a spacious park setting, with the gates opening at 8:30 AM. - Larry Babcock

ARCO MEET, AUG. 19

The Antique Radio Club of Ohio will present its annual main meet on Saturday the 19th. It's in Dayton, at the Holiday Inn on 2455 Dryden Rd., Exit 50A from I-75. Free admission; tables \$10. Indoor-outdoor flea market is 8 AM - 1 PM, followed by an auction featuring the estate of Jim Di Ruzza - a catalogued assembly of wireless and early radio gear, the "newest" being a Radiola 18. There's a raffle of three restored prewar sets. There will be displays of Motorola and Van Horne radio products (you may have seen in the article on rare Van Horne tubes by ARCO's Jim Cross in the May 1994 *Old Timer's Bulletin*.) There's no preregistration. Information contacts are Stan Kleen on 513-293-3194 or Randy Frazure on 513-253-4330. Good opportunity to visit the Air Force Museum nearby too.

RADIO-TV SHOP AUCTION, SEPT. 22-23

There will be an auction on Friday the 22nd, and Saturday the 23rd if needed, of an old-time radio-TV repair shop at 90 Cohansey St., Bridgeton, NJ. Classic Liquidation & Auction Service of Belle Plaine, NJ is the party in charge. The owner apparently packratted parts, tubes, military radios, and sets for 60+ years before his death. The stock of new tubes is said to include 10,000 pieces. There's the usual test equipment, and a fair amount of advertising material. A partial catalog has been prepared, amounting to 14 pages. We'll have more details next month, as will A. R. C.

DEACCESSION SALE - FORD MUSEUM

We have further information on the deaccession auction planned by the Ford Museum of Dearborn, Michigan, and recently announced in the collector press. The dates are: preview, Friday, Oct. 6, 3-6 PM; auction, Saturday-Sunday, Oct. 7-8 (start at 10 AM). The auctioneer is Estes Auction Service of Medina, OH, whose sale results appear frequently in A. R. C. A catalog has been produced for distribution at major summer radio events. The catalog lists, as a sample of the 1800 items to be sold, 226 lots. Some of the gear it lists is:

- For the collector of early military and naval gear: BC-14, BC-45, BC-116, BC-152, CF-122, CN-113, CN-239, CN-240, CM-764; CW-926A, CW-933, CW-1312, SCR-57A, SCR-59, SCR-68, SE-143 (two), SE-183A (two), SE-1071, SE-1419, SE-1420 (two), SE-1599A, SE-3570, etc.

- For those interested in civilian communications equipment: Adams-Morgan RA-6; De Forest OT-10, De Forest Interpanel (two, count 'em, two!), SP-3, and SB-4, Grebe CR-18, Kilbourne & Clark Type E, Marconi Magnetic Detector, 101 tuner, and 106D tuner; RCA AR-1286, AR-1296 and AR-1378 (two); WSA IP-202.

- For enthusiasts of entertainment receivers: Aeriola Grand ("incomplete"), Atwater Kent 10, De Forest Type 2 Reflex; Eagle Neutrodyne, Ethophone, Federal DX-58, Freed-Eisemann NR-5; Garod RAF (two), Grebe CR-9 (two) and MU-1, Kennedy 110 (two), Magnavox MR1, MR3, and MR4 speakers and Model 5 receiver; Radiolas (II, IIIA, VII, VIIB, X, 20, 25, 66, AR-812 [two], AA-1400), (Scott) World's Record Super Nine, SFR Type 500W (French); and Westinghouse RA-DA.

- For telegraph-key collectors: a dozen or so interesting telegraph keys, apparently 20th Century types, including a rare Mecograph.

- For those passionate about tubes: lots of relatively common ones (WD-11, UX-199, UX-201A, 50, De Forest DV-series, Myers RAC3, and "modern") and some scarcer types (De Forest spherical audions, Donle-Bristol B-6, Audiotron, VT-11, VT-14, UV-218, UV-219, Marconi S-23, other foreign types, and a wide selection of Western Electric tennis-ball tubes).

This gear isn't necessarily in restored condition; it's the back-office stuff that every good museum keeps in reserve. Some of it is reported to be missing cabinets, etc. Still, this will probably be the most important auction sale in this generation of radio collecting. At least three DVHRC members have made travel plans so far. I expect to have a copy of the catalog for inspection at the August club meeting - LAS

MEET REPORT - NJARC MEET/AUCTION - JULY 15

NJARC's Summer meet coincided with 102° weather, yet the event was well attended and 75 tables were active in the flea market. A few vendors, mainly those who didn't bring umbrellas, gave up as early as 9 AM, but reports were that sales were generally brisk.

Fortunately, the auction building is air-conditioned. An interested audience of 99 buyers were presented with 500 lots of goods. Half of the lots were detailed in a catalog distributed in advance and listing material from two estates, plus members' and club-donation offerings. There wasn't much for transistor-radio or literature collectors, but most other collecting specialties were covered. Sales totaled \$9800, a club record. One estate contained some exquisite early tubes, so the total from tubes alone was \$1900. The "hottest" single item was a Paragon RA-10 tuner at \$410. Three '20s ring-mount broadcast microphones fetched \$340 as a group. An appealing Deco-styled Majestic 440 table radio reached \$300, as did a pair of W. E. 205D tubes. Yet bidders got bargains: a rare UX-225 tube - a variant "not in Tyne" - went for only \$20, and an Army J-36 telegraph key made by Bunnell (not Lionel-made like most J-36s), in fine shape in-the-box, drew \$45.

NJARC's first equipment contest attracted only a few entries, but of high quality. The club's next Hightstown event (flea market only) is scheduled for October 6.

MEET REPORT - WILLIAMSPORT, JULY 29

The Central PA Radio Collectors outdoor swapmeet last weekend drew a smallish attendance on a hot day, with thirteen vendors in operation. There was some "important" merchandise for sale, so those who appeared had a generally good time. Organizers Frank Hagenbuch and Mike Heffner are considering a third 1995 event for the Fall. For purposes of DVHRC members, traffic on I-80 moves unimpeded early in the morning, so it's feasible to avoid going out the night before.

WANT ADS

Free exposure for your desired or unwanted stuff! Unless requested otherwise, we'll run each ad for two months, and will send ads to the *NJARC News* for double coverage.

FOR SALE OR TRADE: (Priced individually, or will swap entire group for an extra-nice high-style prewar wood or plastic table set): Golden Shield 90 Wave Band Transworld, six bands, 17 xtor, works great, \$35; RCA 54B3 miniature AM portable, red snakeskin plastic w/ chrome front and copper dial, as-found, displays well, \$35; Gray Spica ST600 xtor w/ leather case, as-found, \$35; turquoise Olympic 450, very cute, looks xtor but is a Japanese tube portable, small crack, as-found, \$30; Green leather Dumont 354 AM portable, works, strap missing, \$25; Sunmark SM-8AT, 8-xtor AM w/ auto-tuning, strap missing, works, VGC, \$25; Arvin 547 "leftie," black plastic, white knobs, as-found, \$25. Mike Koste, (215) 646-6488. (8-95)

WANTED: Old, obsolete video equipment such as cameras, video recorders, and other television studio equipment, working or non-working. Particularly seeking Sanyo V-Cord video recorder and EIAJ ½" open-reel

video recorders. Dave Sica, 1459 St. Georges Ave., Rahway, NJ (908) 382-0618. (8/9-95)

FOR SALE: Edison Victor console, ca. 1930, and Philco chairside, ca. 1937. Ulrich, (908) 782-2665. (7/8-95)

WANTED: Transformers: Amertran 72CB, 151CB, 678; Ferranti AF3, AF5, AF5C, OPM5; Kenyon T215, K601; Stancor P4004; Thordarson 5822, 6793, 7431, 8334, T15R05, T90A04, T90S13, 22R14, 74A31, 75R50; Peerless G212Q, G252Q; Samson W, Y, Z; Silver-Marshall 230; UTC LS-19, LS-21, LS-35, LS-40, LS-65, LS-6L4, A-18, H-20, S-4, PA-422, R-5, R-8; Sansui H30-5; WE 233D. Tubes also needed: Radiotron 801; any VT-52. Thanks for helping. I have \$\$ or trades waiting. Larry Rubins, 2614 Old Stone Mill Dr., Cranbury, NJ 08512, (609) 426-9744 before 10 PM please. (8/9-95)

FOR SALE/TRADE: Metz 1211, \$65. Grundigs: 1088, \$125; 997, \$100, 3090, \$75; 1070, \$100; 2043W, \$100; 2035W/3D, \$100; 5060A, \$170; 2065, \$50. Emud T7, \$125. Nordmende Elektra 58, \$75. Blaupunkt Verona, \$50. Wega 809-1, \$20. English Pilot Jack, \$100. Nordmende Turandot, \$125. GE J62, \$35. RCA Stratoworld 3BX671, \$75. Fada, wood, '30s, \$30. Philco 54, \$75. Airline 1939 lowboy, \$60. RCA 56X3, \$50. RCA 95T5, \$50. Admiral, wood, battery, \$20. RCA 68R3, \$20. Garod 930 chassis, multiband, \$20. Hallicrafters SX-130, \$100. GE FB52, \$50. RCA 6RF9, \$25. Motorola 62T2, \$15. RCA RC1064, \$25. Philco 46-427, \$25. Philco 46-200, \$20. Philco 38-3, \$25. Majestic 7 Grigsby-Grunow chassis, \$20. Emerson bakelite, \$20. Firestone S7403-3, \$25. New "Empire of the Air," \$10. Gene Katz, KC6BLD, 212 Burnamwood, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08085, (609) 866-1189. (8/9-95)

WANTED: Help - I need a good-looking split-second robot dial face and shutters for Zenith 12S265. My black paint is peeling. Also looking for original-type grille cloth and wooden knobs for the same radio. Does anyone know what other models I could use a dial face from? Mark W. Hilliard, 523 N. Law St, Allentown, PA 18102, (610) 432-8089. (8/9-95)

FOR SALE: RCA TV Service Data, 1949-66. A 12" stack of 8-½ x 11" fixit scoop, exc. cond., \$5. Includes CT-100, etc. Can bring to club meeting. Ludwell Sibley, (908) 782-4894. (8/9-95)

WANTED: BC-312, BC-314, BC-342, or BC-344 receiver - junker with good case. Alan Klase, N3FRQ, 22 Cherryville-Stanton Rd., Flemington, NJ 08822, (908) 782-4829. (8/9-95)

FOR SALE: Three CW transmitters, 3 kW each, Federal Telegraph & Radio Corp. for Bureau of Ships: NAVSHIPS TDN-2, -3, and -4 with 450TH tubes, cabinets 72" H x 10-½ W x 23" D, on wheels and about 270 lb. each; 2-5.2, 5.2-13.3, and 13.3-20 MHz. Good cond. Power supply, photos, and diagrams available. Asking \$1000 for the three units and prefer to sell all three at once. **WANTED:** Complete manual for the above equipment. Gene Reynolds, W3EAN, 53 Marple Rd., Haverford, PA 19041, (610) 649-1447. (7/8-95)

FOOD & DRINK: a good place to join fellow collectors for dinner before meetings is the Hillside Tavern, half a block uphill from the meeting site.

READER COMMENTS

Frank Hagenbuch

On "Radio Manufacturers of Eastern Pennsylvania," back in the September issue: A fellow in town [Williamsport] has a Claratone and that caused me to try to find out more about the company. I talked to the Hughesville public library, but got little information. Apparently a Jesse Morgan founded the Equitable Radio Corporation [of Hughesville] with a New York manufacturer. The cabinets were made in Hughesville. Surprisingly, when I talked to the librarian, she had recently received a request for information on this company from a Claratone owner out West.

The Equitable Radio Corporation is listed in the 1924 and 1925 issues of the "Radio Trade Directory." Its two 1924-25 Claratone models (three-dialer five-tube table battery sets) appear in the first edition of the Grinder-Fathauer directory (see p. 1). However, its products are obscure enough not to be mentioned in the Langley/McMahon Radio Collector's Guide, nor in Douglas' Radio Manufacturers of the 1920s, nor in the 1926 Everyman's Guide to Radio. Here today, down

the tubes tomorrow. But these tiny manufacturers provide great material for today's equipment contests - like the Herbert and Recepton receivers recently seen in the "Made in Philadelphia" display at the Buckingham meet.

SMALL WORLD DEPT.

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This is surely the Moog of later Synthesizer fame!
 From Radio & Television News, Jan. 1954, by
 courtesy of Alan Douglas.

COLLECTING RADIO LAPEL BUTTONS

Ludwell Sibley

Every collecting hobby seems to offer "go-withs": paralleling, related areas of collecting that add interest to one's main collection. In the case of radio collecting, the rich variety of collateral areas of interest includes radio-oriented sheet music, advertising material, radio-theme Valentine cards, QSL cards, radio games, literature of the "Radio Boys" genre, the "Ekko" radio-station DX-verification stamps from the '20s, the little printed promotional stickers called "Cinderellas," and radio-related postage stamps from around the world. Yet another area is lapel buttons. Here are a few examples (enlarged 20% for easier reading) that have "drifted in" almost without active searching.



"Uncle WIP Kiddie Klub - Gimbel's." Now here's a Philadelphia-oriented button! WIP, in the '20s, ran a children's program weekday evenings in the studios at Gimbel Bros.' department store. The host, a staff announcer titled "Uncle Wip," became popular enough to appear with Santa Claus in the yearly Christmas parade.

"United." This one's not identified further (aside from an 1894 patent date on the reverse), but may be from the United Wireless Telegraph Co. This company existed from 1906 to 1911, when American Marconi took over its assets in the wake of a lawsuit over infringement of Marconi's patents. United's shipboard operators wore a sleeve insigne featuring a fan of lightning-flash symbols like the ones on the button. Locally, UW had a station "PW" at the Philadelphia School of Wireless Telegraphy at Ridge Ave. and Green St. It also had two manufacturing plants in Jersey City, NJ, and shore stations nearby at Wilmington, Atlantic City, Galilee (NJ), Long Beach (NJ), and New York.

"I Support Philco Strikers." Apparently lots of Philadelphians did: the 1938 strike shut the place down for four months, forcing the company to contract with Wells-Gardner in Chicago for production of some of its sets.

"Executive Radio Council Convention New York 1921" (reduced to 80% of normal size). This was a puzzler: the words suggest a meeting of commercial broadcasters, at a time when commercial broadcasting was essentially nonexistent. However, a full-page ad in *Wireless Age* for March 1921 shows it to have been a convention and exhibition for *amateur* operators, held at the Pennsylvania Hotel on March 16-19. The sponsoring organization was, sure enough, the Second District Executive Radio Council, an umbrella group for all radio clubs in the area.

"Visitor - KFNF - Henry Field Seed Co., Shenandoah, Ia." KFNF went on the air in 1924. It is shown on a station list of 1926, operating on 650 kHz (461.3 meters, if you prefer) at 1 kW - high power for the time. It was later listed as sharing time on 650 with KMA in the same town. By 1931 it had reduced power to 500 watts and gone to 890 kHz, whereas KMA had moved to 930 kHz to end time-sharing. It was still in operation in 1936 under the Henry Field name, at 407 Sycamore St. By 1942 the North American Regional Broadcasting Agreement had caused it to move to 920 kHz; the owner was now KFNF, Inc.. In 1976 KFNF was acquired by Family Stations; in recent times it operated as KFYZ, having raised power to 5 kW daytime, 2.5 kW at night.

SOME INTERNET CHATTER

One of the livelier antique-radio discussion outlets on the Internet is "boatanchors." Here's an example of material to be found there, by courtesy of John Dilks of NJARC.

>From boatanchors@theporch.com Sat Jan 14 20:27:03 1995

Date: Sat, 14 Jan 1995 18:00:26 -0600

Message-Id: <9501142243.AA28256@uvs1.orl.mmc.com>

>From: padgett@tccslr.dnet.mmc.com (A. Padgett Peterson, P.E. Information Security)

Subject: "Condition is Everything"

After looking through a few days' post here and seeing a number of advertisements of the kind: "sorta kinda alright condition," as an authority on the subject (at least having invented "Class 6" for the "Old Cars Price Guide"), I present for your reading enjoyment "The Six Classes of Boat Anchors":

Class 1: The is the Ultimate from which all comparison is made, the perfect example of whatever it is. If it were a Trans-Oceanic this would be the first hand-crafted prototype of the 600-series, built to stand as a mon-

ument of perfection for display at the corporate headquarters, each part hand-selected for perfection. No $\pm 10\%$ here, each resistor is spot-on and tested.

For a collection, the only fitting term is "over-restored" and something many have attempted, once, and sworn never to do again. This is the BA that, if you open the back cover (reverently), every clip for a spare tube has the proper tube in it, they are new, in the right order, and the "1U4" or "1U5" label is aligned precisely with the clip opening. Of course, you would have to break the seal on the hermetic case to do so.

Class 2: "New in the Showroom." All pieces work as new (and probably are) but this is a "production" piece. Everything is correct but the fit may vary a bit and placement of the decals or silkscreen may show the result of being the 143rd applied by a minimum-wage worker that day. Is beautiful in its own right but not something you would be concerned about actually plugging in and turning on - just not very often.

Class 3: "Nice." Something to be admired, to anyone but a fanatic. Everything works and looks good but there may be a scrape here and there, the dial cord may need tightening, and there could be some substituted parts beneath. No butchering, but the original fabric wires have been replaced by modern rubber ones.

Class 4: "Workhorse." This is the unit that is found at an estate sale and shows the effect of 40 years of use every night. The wood may shine but you are not surprised to find drink rings and maybe a cigarette burn or two. Inside, you can trace the age of the repairs by the increasing size of the solder connections, like the rings on a tree, and the vintages of the substituted/superceding parts used.

Class 5: "Last Legs." This is the Class 4 that was used in a doctor's waiting room for the first 40 years and the back room of a garage for the last ten. It works, in that it can receive two stations on one of the bands, but the tuning knob is missing, so it doesn't really matter.

Class 6: This is the unit that has two prices: one to strip parts off and one to take the whole thing. If you take the whole thing, the price is less. It may have some usable parts but probably not for what it originally was.

For classes 1 - 4, failure to work properly results in immediate demotion of a class. Smoke drops another.

To put this in perspective using, say, a missing selenium rectifier, for a class 1 BA you would find the original manufacturer and pay them to reopen the line using the original blueprints. For a Class 2 you would find a Slovakian manufacturer who was still making an exact duplicate and hand-paint it the proper color. For Class 3 you might find a working rectifier that was close to the same size. Alternately you might hollow out a non-working one, fit new solid-state devices into the hollow, and mount it so the hole was not visible. Class 4 would get repaired by a professional with whatever was handy. Class 5 would get fixed if it took less than ten minutes with something from the Rat Shack on the corner. Class 6 would become a real boat anchor.

Another rule of thumb would be the requirement for upgrading. For this, use the swimming-pool criterion: Upgrading from one class to the next will cost twice what one in the next class is worth. Upgrading two classes must be a labor of love. Upgrading three classes is impossible.

Finally, "book value." It is a proven fact that books which place a higher value on things will enjoy a longer shelf life than those which are too low. This is partly due to inflation and partly because dealers buy the bulk of such books - to them it is a professional expense, not just something that would be nice to have. This fact is not lost on publishers. Next, sellers find it handy to wave in a prospective buyer's face when the haggling starts. When a professional buys, he/she does not need a book, they have anything they are interested in memorized. (Want to find out what the "real deals" are? Go to a flea market the night before and watch dealers case things out. Often items will move from one table to the next with only a change in price).

Aside - Swapmeets. Best time to buy: 4 pm Sunday when the vendors start to load up. You can never put as much into a truck on Sunday as you took out Friday night unless you are just starting out. Also, if their prices were too high or they found too many collectibles they may need gas money home. Can get great bargains but only if what you want is still there. From a buyer's point of view, rainy-day bargains are worth the price of an umbrella. End of aside.

Another way to look at price guides is as an accurate guide for what you would expect to pay if you **had** to buy one of this exact model TODAY with no more than three phone calls. If you would like one but it does not matter if you find one this year or next, half that is about right. The only time such values are really handy other than as relative values ("This is a \$10,000 dog." "How do you know?" "Traded two \$5,000 cats for him.") is in dealing with an insurance company if there is a loss.

Over the last few years this concept has proven handy in the old-car hobby; there's no reason why it cannot be of value here (invented class 6 when a friend and I bought a GTO that resembled the Titanic - it had bow and stern separation. Even the radio was rusty. After removing what we wanted, we swept up the rest and deposited it in two 55-gallon drums).

Warmly, Padgett - "Totally Obsessed . . ."