

All the Electrons that are fit to flow.



OSCILLATOR



The Official Newsletter of the DVHRC

Vol. 11, No. 7, August, 2003

Countdown to Kutztown

July Meeting Notes as reported by Dave Snellman

Well, July found us in the "dog days" of summer. In prior years we suspended the July meeting as our old meeting place did not have air conditioning. Our "home" in Telford does have A/C, so we hold meeting in July. Yes, you guessed it - our theme for July was an outside, tailgate auction! (Go figure.)

Anyway, a good time was had by all. We had a good crowd for the event. The normal meeting formalities were set aside and the entire focus was on the auction.

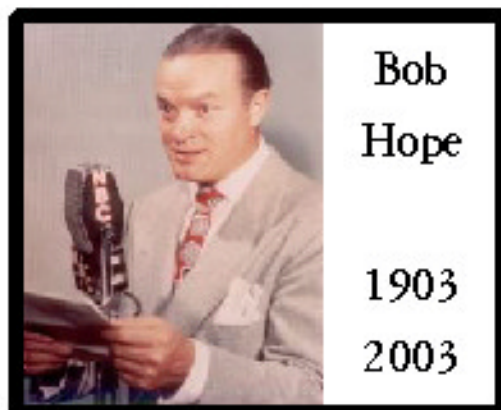
It's hard to describe this tailgate auction. When all was said and done, we took in about \$60.00 in auction commissions and proceeds from donation items. Pete Grave, our stalwart auctioneer worked the crowd till darkness fell. Hard to believe we sold about \$600 worth of merchandise.



Here are some examples: many transistor portable radios, almost 15 sold for between \$2.50 and \$5.00; an AK speaker sold for \$10; a Philco engineering manual went for \$16!; a Sansui stereo (tubes) went for \$65; and a National model 100 receiver went for \$27.50. On the table radio venue, we sold an Emerson for \$20, a Philco for \$45, a GE for \$42.50 and a Majestic for \$25. Also, in the hi-fi end, a Fisher tuner went for \$45.

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Bob
Hope

1903
2003



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A lot of people went home with bargains.

Our next meeting is scheduled for August 12th at the Telford Community Center. A definite topic will be the upcoming Kutztown Radio Swapmeet, scheduled for

September 12 and 13. A sign-up sheet will be there for members to sign-up for club table duty and other tasks.

Hope to see you on August 12th.

Just a quick aside...



You will find a list of upcoming events in this issue of the Oscillator. These events depend on attendance by individuals interested in radio and radio collecting. Some of these events are regular club meetings, some are swapmeets, some are hamfests. Antique radio collectors may stay away from hamfests as they think they won't find "their" kind of radio at these events. Recent postings to the NJARC reflector point to the fact that broadcast radios from the 20's through the 50's are showing up at these events. Many are at reasonable prices.



In my opinion, you just might find that "catch" you are looking for at a hamfest. So forget about eBay for a weekend, get some fresh air, take in a local (or not so local) hamfest, and perhaps find

*New sletter of the
Delaware Valley Historic Radio Club
P.O. Box 5053
New Britain, PA 18901*

The Oscillator is published monthly by members of the non-profit DVHRC. Its purpose is to provide a forum to discuss, inform, educate and communicate with collectors and practitioners of vintage radio technology.

We welcome and solicit information relating to radio history or collecting. Submissions should be carefully researched, typed and accompanied with clear photographs or diagrams. Material to date should be in Word and PDF formats.

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Personal views, opinions and editorial advice offered in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the members, officers or Board of Directors of the DVHRC, and is the responsibility of the author for any buying or selling transactions involved.

To join DVHRC dues are \$15 per year. The membership year runs January - December. Please mail to the club P.O. box above. Meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm in the Telford Community Building, Telford, PA.

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Material submitted is subject to acceptance and editing by the editor. A full page ad costs approximately 400 words. Printed photos may be submitted for scanning. JPG files should be under 100K.

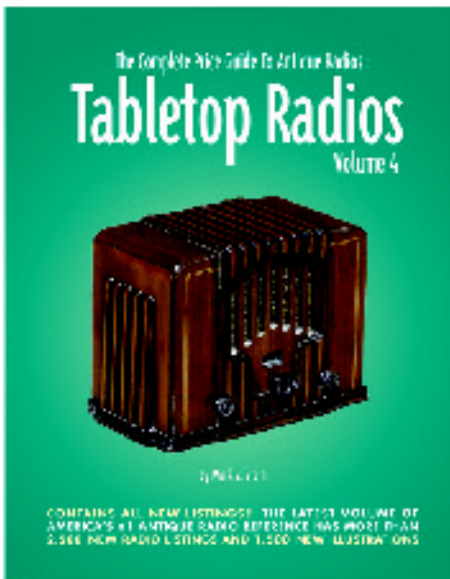
take in a local (or not so local) hamfest, and perhaps find that treasure you've been looking for. The worst thing that can happen at one of these events is you might meet some fellow collectors, make some new friends, and have a good time.



RADIOMANIA AUTHOR ADDED TO KUTZTOWN

Reported by Mike Koste

As if there wasn't enough excitement under the big top at the Kutztown Radio Meet, Saturday September 13th will be even more remarkable now that Mark Stein has planned to join us.



By special invitation from the DVHRC, Mark will be on hand to personally autograph copies of his latest collector's book, *"The Complete Price Guide to Antique Radios: Tabletop Radios, Volume 4"*. In addition to the new volume, the entire line of Radiomania's photo price guides will be available for sale.

Be aware that this may be one of your final opportunities to purchase Stein's *"Complete Price Guide to Antique Radios: Sears Silvertone Catalogs 1930-1942"*. (It's going out-of-print soon).

More information is available at www.radiomania.com.



Some other things of interest to our members...

On Saturday, July 19th, the NJARC held its regular "repair clinic" in conjunction with the David Saroff Library's "Hand's on History Day." Many NJARC members were available to examine and repair radios brought in by members and by the public. Appointments were taken and if the radio could be repaired in a reasonable time it was done for the cost of the parts. Other members were available to give advice on the value of older sets, too.

A number of members set up displays of radios from their collections. Phil Vourtsis, NJARC president and author of a book on the RCA 45 players had a great display of items from his collection. Marc Beeferman had a display of crystal, battery and early AC sets. Dave Snellman had a display of Zenith transistor radios and other early transistor sets. Dave Abramson brought along an RCA TK-31 camera and tripod that will be on display in the Saroff Library for an extended period of time. The camera was hooked up to one of the first RCA TV's and visitors could see themselves on vintage TV from a vintage camera. Dave even had a 1948 Presidential Convention pass on the camera!



Al Klase provided two sessions on the history of electronic communications. Through the use of "PowerPoint," Al took us from the stone-age to through the wireless era. Al also had a number of "hands-on" exhibits that anyone could play with. These exhibits ran the range from static electricity to a spark-gap transmitter. Many of the kids that attended really got a kick out of these. (Yes, children were encouraged to attend.)

Gerry and Marsha Simkin set up a display on radio related books, magazines, and other items from radio's "golden age."

Rob Flory of NJARC set up a ham station using vintage (read "boat-anchor") equipment and was in contact with a number of naval ships as part of a ham radio event running on the same day.

It was a real fun day and the word about antique radio and radio collecting made the Princeton and Trenton



For more info, and info about the David Sarnoff Library, check out the website at www.davidsarnoff.org.



UPCOMING EVENTS:*Regular meetings:*

DVHRC monthly meeting. August 12, 2003. Telford Community Center, Telford, PA. Meeting starts at 7:30 PM.

NJARC monthly meeting. August 8, 2003. Location – David Samoff Library at the Samoff Corporation, Princeton, NJ. Check their website at www.njarc.org for more details and directions

Mid-Atlantic Antique Radio Club (MAARC) monthly meeting. 2:00 PM, Sunday, August 17, 2003. 7th Day Adventist Church, Burtonsville, MD. Check their website at <http://www.maarc.org>

Swap meets and local hamfests:

August 10, 2003 – Jersey Shore ARC hamfest at Bayville, NJ

August 17, 2003 - Ramapo Mountain ARC hamfest at Oakland, NJ

August 17, 2004 – Gloucester County ARC at Mulica Hill, NJ

August 24, 2004 – Hanover Hamming Assn. Hamfest

September 6 and 7, 2003 – FARFEST (Foundation for Amateur Radio) hamfest at West Friendship, MD.

For information on these hamfests, please check out the ARRL website at www.arl.org.

Tube Collectors Association Member Meeting – August 19, 2003. Rochester, NY. Check www.tubecollectors.org for details.

AWA Annual Conference – August 20-23, 2003 Rochester, NY. Check www.anticuewireless.org for details.

Military Collectors Meet – September 5-6, 2003 – West End Fairgrounds, Gilbert, PA. Check www.milradio.org for details.

Kutztown Radio Meet – September 13, 2003. Remingers, 740 Noble St., Kutztown, PA For info, call 504-385-0104

New Jersey Antique Radio Club/Delaware Valley Radio Club hamfest and swap meet. September 14, 2003, Trenton Armory. Trenton, NJ. Fro information, check www.njarc.org

The "General" Is Coming!

David Sarnoff Visits the RCA Camden Plant

By Bob Thomas, W3NE

When the President and Chairman of the Board of a company says he intends to visit your facility, there is an immediate air of excitement and preparation, especially when it is 1952 and that top executive is the legendary David Sarnoff. Contrary to the views of various individuals outside the Corporation – especially among the "Edwin Armstrong-Could-Do-No-Wrong" fringe – the General was held in high esteem by RCA employees. After all, it was largely his foresight, business acumen and sheer determination that drove RCA to enormous success; this was reflected in our loyalty to him and his goals, and we did everything possible to make him happy.

Sarnoff made frequent trips to his playground, the Princeton Labs, but only occasionally traveled to the hinterlands of Camden. Thus when it was announced that we were to be blessed by his presence, a flurry of overdue activities was set in motion. Desk tops were cleared of months' worth of paper accumulations (which were usually stuffed, out of sight, in file drawers); haywire in development models was straightened out; tangles of coax were sorted out, resulting in things not working again for several hours; lab benches were purged of solder splashes, resistor lead cutoffs, blown-up electrolytics, and a residue of filth that constantly descended over the entire city of Camden; 'scopes were scrubbed clean of Coke and coffee splashes and greasy fingerprint smudges; elaborate exhibits were set up to demonstrate whatever phenomenal developments were in progress; and finally, everything that could be lifted was placed on top of lab benches so cleaning crews could come in overnight to scrub and wax the floors. The only problem was, now that everything was spic and span, no work could be carried out for fear of messing-up the place before the Grande Visit!

Labs and offices were not alone in receiving special treatment in anticipation of the General's visit; the building was meticulously inspected and brought up to first class condition wherever (but only where) it was thought Sarnoff might pass. The silly limits to which Building Maintenance fulfilled their obligation caused me considerable amusement one morning. I worked in 10 Building, which began its days in the early twenties as a pressing plant for the Victor Talking Machine Company. In fact, fire alarm boxes still had "VTMC" cast in their covers, and offices were more-or-less air conditioned by the cold water circulating system originally employed to rapidly cool record press platens after a record had been stamped from a molten doughnut of shellac and carbon compound.

To get back to my story, on the day before the General's scheduled visit, I entered 10 Building on the way to my office. The entrance consisted of a small lobby with a security guard on the right, a hallway straight ahead to elevators, and at the left, a fire escape stairway leading to upper floors. The stairway consisted a dozen or so steps leading to an intermediate landing where it reversed direction for another dozen steps to the second floor, and so on to the eighth floor. As I entered the lobby, a painter was standing at the bottom step, looking up the staircase and calling out instructions to his buddy, who was out of sight on the first landing: "A little farther, Pat." "Another foot, Pat." "Back this way two inches." "OK, that's it!" He was telling his pal where to begin painting downward on the stairs to make it appear to anyone in the lobby that the entire stairwell was freshly painted, but by no means going beyond a critical sight line where there was still old paint that couldn't be seen from the General's path.

Absolutely amazing, and it could only have happened at RCA! This vignette lends credence to the tale that Sarnoff once said to a ail while touring an RCA facility, "Why is it I smell fresh paint everywhere I go?"

When Sarnoff arrived in Camden, the first stop was 2 Building, Corporate Headquarters, where God only knows what went on. Then they all piled into limousines for the one-block ride to 10 Building. By now, all elevators had been out of service for an hour, as security guards stood by to whisk the General and his party to the technology delights above. As we waited in anticipation in our lab at the far end of the building, word would flash back that, "He's getting the color camera demo." Then, "They're showing film on the fast-pull-down projector." And, "The Master Monitor blew up in the middle of the film demo, so get ready, you're next." However, by then it was time for the rush back to New York, so he never did get to our lab, but at least we had the whole place cleaned-up.

In retrospect, maybe that's what it was all about.

<http://www.radioswapmeet.com>



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