



# The Oscillator



*"ALL THE ELECTRONS THAT ARE FIT TO FLOW . . . "*

The Official Newsletter of the DVHRC

Volume 17, No. 6 June 2009

## Kutztown Radio Show XX in the books...

### MAY 2009 CLUB MEETING NOTES AND MINUTES

Just a few days after Kutztown Radio Show XX, the club met for its regular meeting. The major topic for the business meeting was the recent swapmeet. While it was very successful, they were some issues. The "quality" auction needs more help to make it work more smoothly. The Saturday club auction needs to be re-focused.

There were a number of suggestions made that could improve the meet. One is the quality auction needs promotion (PA announcements on Friday before the auction) and signage (showing location and times.) We need to charge for bidder tickets for the quality auction to defray the cost we have to pay for the auction hall. The start time for the Saturday auction should be moved to 1 PM to allow vendors more time for sales at their tables. We should also run 50/50 auctions during the meet.

On the Saturday auction, we need to reorganize it. The debris field works well. We need to re-locate it in order to make better use of

the space for the regular auction items. The auction gets "out of hand" - nothing unusual - it happens all the time. The problem is we run out of bidders before we run out of stuff to auction! Quality items become "give-a-ways" by the time the auction winds down.

Well, enough about what was wrong - now on to the positive. The food vendor was great. Great breakfast sandwiches and coffee early Friday and Saturday, followed by great hotdogs and hamburgers all day. There was a steak dinner Friday evening, complete with all the trimmings that was a big hit. After the auction Friday evening, they had food still cooking. They even provided pizza at the bonfire.

The bonfire was successful - everyone enjoying the sight of a Philco console cabinet burning. Adult beverages were flowing and everyone enjoyed the ideal evening weather.

The club table was busy both days. Tubes sales totaled \$271.00. Tubes sales were "under control" for the first time. Tubes price changes from \$2/tube to a new pricing scale based on

web prices. Capacitor sales totaled \$271.00 also. The raffle radio sales totaled \$246.00. Friday's "buy-it-now" totaled \$239.00. (Saturday "buy-it-now" totaled \$248.00.)

We did have higher expenses: auction hall rental fee - \$200.00 and \$500 for the magnets that we gave out to the vendors. There will be a full accounting available at the June meeting.

We did have a preview of the radio clinic that Lewie Newhard started last month. Lewie is planning to take all interested through the classic "All-American-Fiver" style set. He plans to start with the power supply, then progress looking at signal as they go through the set from antenna to speaker and how they are processed. Stay tuned for more. Be there at the June meeting for the first session.

Mark Thierback gave some examples of re-stuffing old capacitors (condensers) in old radios.

The meeting ended with the usual auction. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 10, at 7:30 PM, at the Telford Community

# **The Oscillator**

**Delaware Valley Historic Radio Club**  
**PO Box 5053**  
**New Britain, PA 18901**  
**[www.dvhrc.info](http://www.dvhrc.info)**

*The Oscillator* is the monthly newsletter of the Delaware Valley Historic Radio Club. We welcome information relating to radio and television history and collecting. Submissions should be emailed to [saegers@ptd.net](mailto:saegers@ptd.net) by the 25th of the prior month.

Personal views, opinions and technical advice do not necessarily reflect those of the members, officers or Board of Directors of the DVHRC, not is the DVHRC responsible for any buying or selling transactions.

Dues are \$20 per year and can be paid at a meeting or mailed to the above address.

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Center. - *Dave Snellman*

## **NORTH PENN DVHRC OUT-REACH**

This effort began as an idea to bring our club to the communities we live in and use their summer community days to showcase our club. North Penn, PA was the test on May 16 and those of us there were surprised at the attention we received.

We were set up under our new tent by the tracks and surrounded by sellers of all stripes. If you needed a new purse made from

recycled plastic grocery bags, she was right next to us. We were the only non-seller on display



and did a very good walk-up business as a living museum.



Our display had a Radiola 60, a few AA5's, a 1959 Philco Safari TV, and a few transistor radio and TV displays. My very Moderne 1958 Radiola (Philips) from France (which has a new story behind it that I just found) was wanted by a woman who is decorating her house in 50's décor and was willing to write a check for whatever I wanted. It went home with me. All powered by the mighty flame-throwing Radio DJ and a MP3 player full o' tunes for all to listen to at the table. We kept changing the radios running on display to rest them and change the look/listen of table.

The public that was not looking for hot dogs and stopped by to see us was very impressed with the display. Small kids were asked to poke there heads in the Safari and see B&W tv. Something they had never seen. There

were endless declarations that our old radios were just what they grew up with. We smiled and agreed with them.

We did have some folks that had grandma's old radio and were looking for repair. And some folks that wanted to just donate something to us. We gave them our emails, but nothing has come in so far. We did give out many club brochures and hope they contact us. That is what this is all about.

There was a parade of old Philco employees from the area that stopped by to tell their stories. I am hoping to keep in contact with them and their monthly meetings and arrange a meeting swap with them.

We will try again in Lansdale on June 6 with the help from the volunteers from N. Penn. You are invited to stop by if you are in the area and bring a prize radio to display. You do have to pick it up later in the day though. If you know of a similar event in your area this summer, let us know.

My thanks to the volunteers that made this possible and urge you to sign up for future show. It is a lot of fun. - *Dave Abramson*

## **ADDITION TO A-K PLANT**

A. Atwater Kent has just added another important unit to his thirty-two acre radio plant at Philadelphia. This is a new and up-to-date power plant with boilers running seven stories high, necessitated by the enlargements last year which doubled the floor space of what was already the largest radio factory in the world.

The new plant, of brick, steel

and concrete construction, completes the stage of expansion undertaken when the floor space of the factory was doubled. Designed primarily as a steam heating unit, arrangements were included whereby a considerable portion of the electric current required for factory purposes will be generated on the premises. The plant will also supply steam for the moulding department.

The object of the builder has been to produce a thoroughly modern plant. Its apparatus represents the last work in scientific equipment.

The basic equipment of the plant consists of three 750 horse-power boilers equipped with water-walls and air preheaters, each capable of generating steam at 200 pounds pressure and 200 degrees superheat. The average appetite of each boiler is between 7 and 8 carloads of coal per week. The building itself corresponds to a seven-story structure and that represents also the height of the boilers. Each of these boilers is operated from a central control board, two boilers serving maximum demands with a third always in reserve.

A 750-kilowatt turbine generator, which acts as a reducing valve for the heating system and at the same time furnishes, at minimum cost, a considerable part of the electric current required in the radio plant, is a unique and interesting piece of apparatus. An unusual feature of the control equipment is that it is tied with the operations of the utility company which furnishes the factory with the remainder of its current.

Pulverized coal is used for fuel. The coal, having undergone a preliminary crushing process, is raised on conveyors to a huge steel bunker under the roof, with a capacity of more than 500 tons. It is then

fed by gravity through automatic weighing scales to unit pulverizers which reduce the coal to the consistency of flour. The powdered coal is combined with the proper amount of air and blown into the furnaces so that it burns like gas or oil.

The products of combustion pass through special dust collectors, which remove the heavy particles of ash that have not settled into the ordinary ash pits and would otherwise be carried out through the stacks. These collectors, the first of their kind installed in Philadelphia, home of a great number of the world's largest industrial plants, do yeoman work in reducing air pollution. - *contributed by Ludwell Sibley from "Radio Industries," May, 1930, p. 38*

### **CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS**

How can you help to make *The Oscillator* a better newsletter for the club? The answer is simple - submit an article, old advertising or photos. Submissions can be emailed to saegers@ptd.net.

### **THANKS . . .**

. . .to all the club members who helped out at the Kutztown Radio Show last month. In the interests of space and not missing anyone, individual names will not be listed. However, be assured that your club and the board appreciates your efforts.

### **OSCILLATOR ON THE WEB**

All back issues have been scanned to Adobe Acrobat .pdf format and loaded to the club's website at [www.dvhrc.info](http://www.dvhrc.info). If any errors are found, please let the editor know

at [ssaegers@ptd.net](mailto:ssaegers@ptd.net).

### **DIRECTORY UPDATES**

Mike Koste's new email address is [gokmike@gmail.com](mailto:gokmike@gmail.com).

Al Klase's mailing address is 19 Bentley Ave., Jersey City, NJ 07304

### **KUTZTOWN RADIO SHOW XX REVIEW**

Kutztown Radio Show XX, the 20th radio show hosted by the Delaware Valley Historic Radio club, was held May 8th and 9th 2009 at Renninger's Antiques and Farmer's Market in Kutztown, PA.

The two-day show started early Friday morning, and by the time I arrived at 10am, two-thirds of the dealer spaces were occupied.

Richard Estes of Estes Auctions, Burbank, Ohio again contributed his time for a Friday night auction. Approximately eighty lots were put up for auction, including a Sparton Bluebird, a number of catalin radios, and an E H Scott. Prices for the higher-end items held their own, while some of the lesser items went quite reasonable.

After the auction, many in attendance stayed for the unofficial bonfire, which includes burning wooden items, including junk radio cabinets. Snacks, drinks and friendly conversation made for a great end to the first day.

Saturday started bright and early with a few more dealers pulling in and quite a bit more traffic from the general public. The Saturday auction, run by the DVHRC, started

at Noon and continued until nearly 3pm.

This was the twentieth show held by the DVHRC. The first shows were held in a number of different venues in suburban Philadelphia.

Soon, the DVHRC and Renninger's of Kutztown joined forces to hold the Kutztown Radio Show. From fairly modest beginnings, the show has grown into one of the premier events in the country.

What makes the Kutztown event so successful? There is not one reason, but rather a combination of factors.

- Location-location-location – The Renninger's site is ideal: large, plenty of parking, easy to get to, outdoors in a rural setting, yet under roof in case of rain
- Nearby amenities – The adjacent farmer's market offers a myriad of things to see and buy. At what other radio show can you stock up on produce, get a haircut and purchase a gravestone without leaving the area?
- No official starting time – a bit confusing at first, but setup and sales begin whenever dealers arrive
- Free admission, free parking and free overnight camping
- A friendly, laid back atmosphere

We look forward to our next meet - Kutztown Radio Show XXI - September 18 and 19, 2009. -Stan Saeger, DVHRC, special to *The Oscillator* and *Antique Radio Classified*

## LOOKING BACK . . .

From the June 1994 Oscillator . . .

42 members attended our May gathering, including our old friends Arnold and

Florence Finkel. (For the benefit of those who tuned in late, the Finkel's are two of the dozen or so original members of the DVHRC who were instrumental in establishing our auction program). We also welcomed our two newest members, Bob Bendesky of North Wales and Tom Jardine of Perkasio. The Oscillator would also like to acknowledge Harvey Faulkner of Newark Delaware who joined our midst in November '93. (Yes, he's the same Harvey Faulkner who wrote recommending shoe polish to rejuvenate the leather case on a Transoceanic in the May edition of ARC.) The DVHRC was also represented in last month's ARC through John Okolowicz's splendid article on Philco designers. (It's worth reading . . . John really did his homework on this one!)

From the June 1998 Oscillator . . .

## Old Indian tricks

Ted Sowrika's excellent presentation on RCA VOM's and VTVM's at the May meeting dredged up several almost forgotten pearls of wisdom regarding instruments using D'Arsonval meter movements.

High-end instruments often had mirrored scales to eliminate parallax error when making readings. You position your eye so the needle covers up its reflection in the mirror. You can accomplish the same effect with a non-mirrored scale by arranging for the reflec-

tion of the center of your eye in the meter glass to fall directly over the needle.

Precision meters of the sort that are used lying face up on the table were routinely transported face down to preclude damage to the crucial rear bearing.

A fresh D cell can be used as a 1.56 volt reference for "shade tree" calibration purposes. (I think this needs to be a "plain" carbon-zinc cell, not the "alkaline" or "heavy-duty" variety. - Ed.)

When assembling an instrument it was standard practice to place a small blob of grease on the inside bottom of the case to catch loose debris before it found its way into the meter movement.

A drop of dish-washing liquid applied to a meter face will eliminate static buildup.

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# Scenes from Kutztown . . .





