



*Celebrating 90+ years of tubes!*

# OSCILLATOR

DELAWARE VALLEY HISTORIC RADIO

*The Official Newsletter of the DVHRC*

*Vol. 6, No. 8, August 1998*

## **TUBES, TUBES, TUBES!**

*Meeting Tuesday, August 11th*

This month's meeting will again be held at the Telford Community Building at 7:30 PM. The map to the new meeting place is reprinted in this issue. (They told us in the Army there were always 10% that did't get the word.)

The activity will be a vacuum-tube show and tell. Bring you strangest or most interesting thermionic relic to share with the club.

The theme for the auction is also tubes and tube related items. As always other auction items are also welcome.

## **JULY MEETING**

by Dave Snellman

The DVHRC held its first July meeting at the Telford Community Center with 30 plus members in attendance. Three new members were welcomed and introduced. Bill Overbeck introduced two new board members: Jim Amici and Al Klase. This meeting also saw Dave Snellman taking over the reins of club secretary from Mike Koste, who was also in attendance.

Lewis Newhard reported on the Lansing, Michigan meet. Sounded like a great meet with 100's of battery set and loads of Zenith console. Prices were reportedly about half of east coast prices.

Following a cry of "Go west, young radio collector," there was a discussion (and a lot of support for) on the club sponsoring a "road trip" to some of the larger, more distant radio swap meets, such as Elgin. The ideas thrown around included chartering a bus to "haul" members to the distant meet as long as there'd be enough room on the bus take items to sell and to haul treasures home. I'm sure there will be more discussion on this at future meetings.

As the AWA meet in Rochester isn't too far way, a suggestion was made to get a block of spaces at the event for DVHRC members. A vote was taken to purchase a block of flea market spaces for the event that runs September 2nd through 5<sup>th</sup>. A sign-up sheet was circulated for those interested.

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### **Coming Events**

- |                 |                                       |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Aug 9</b>    | Hamfest, matamoras, Pa.               |
| <b>Aug 14</b>   | NJARC meeting, Freehold, NJ, 7:30PM   |
| <b>Aug 15</b>   | Hamfest, Oakland, NJ                  |
| <b>Aug 22</b>   | Hamfest, Bridgewater, NJ              |
| <b>Aug 23</b>   | Hamfest, Mullica Hill, NJ             |
| <b>Sept 2-5</b> | AWA Conference, Rochester, NY         |
| <b>Sept 12</b>  | Hamfest, Schnecksville, Pa.           |
| <b>Sept 13</b>  | Hamfest, Gaithersburg, Md.            |
| <b>Sept 20</b>  | Hamfest, Hazlet, NJ                   |
| <b>Sept 26</b>  | Hamfest, Trenton (Tall Cedars), NJ ?? |

## THE OSCILLATOR

Newsletter of the  
Delaware Valley Historic Radio Club  
Post Office Box 41031,  
Philadelphia, PA 19127

The *Oscillator* is published monthly by members of the non-profit DVHRC. Its purpose is to provide a forum to educate, inform, entertain, and communicate with collectors and preservers 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 on-disc (3-1/2" DOS/Win95) is particularly welcome.

Unless copyrighted by the author, material in this publication is available for attributed reproduction for nonprofit purposes. (For convenience, the editor can supply copy on-disc.)

Personal views, opinions and technical advice offered in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the members, officers or Board of Directors of the DVHRC, nor is the organization responsible for any buying or selling transaction incurred.

To join: DVHRC dues is \$10 per year. The membership year runs January-through-December. Please mail to the club PO box above.

Meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 PM

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President Bill Overbeck (610) 789-8199  
Vice-President Dave Abramson (610) 827-9757  
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### OSCILLATOR EDITOR

Al Klase

### OSCILLATOR CONTRIBUTORS

John Dilks, K2TQN Alan Douglas  
Alton DuBois, Jr Mike Koste  
Bob Thomas, W3NE Ludwell Sibley  
Dave Snellman Ted Sowirka

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### ARTICLES & MEMBER ADS

may be sent to the editor at 22 Cherryville-Stanton Rd.,  
Flemington, NJ 08822 (908) 782-4829  
Fax: (908) 783-8361

E-mail: skywaves@bw.webex.net

**COPY DEADLINE:** The 20th of each month.

The evening's technical presentation was by Al Klase. The topic was Alexanderson alternators, including a working one located at SAQ in Grimeton in Sweden. Al used some high tech goodies (a notebook PC running PowerPoint and displaying on a high resolution video projector) to present the basics of how the Alexanderson alternator works, some background info on Alexanderson himself, and the makeup of the original Grimeton site. The real highlight was listening to the actual transmission Al received earlier this year at this home using a shielded loop antenna, a Watkins-Johnson receiver, and a Toshiba notebook running some special software. (See June Oscillator for more details.)

At the end of his talk, Al mentioned the idea of doing some type of special activity next year to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Marconi's first transmission during the Americas Cup in 1899. Attention all members: Send Al any ideas or suggestions you might have to help get this off the ground. We have some time and it sounds like a neat project.

Another first was the evening's theme auction. The idea was proposed last month. The theme was radio-related "paper." DVHRC members came forth with a plethora of paper in the form of books, magazines, catalogs, photofacts, and other items. Lots of Photofacts and other service literature, Radio Craft magazines, the Radio Physics Guide by Ghardi, Rockola 78 RPM "strobe" disks, catalogs from Allied, Lafayette, Newark and Radio Shack, as well as new and old ARRL Handbooks were added to peoples collections. Some lucky bidder even took home the "Guide to CB lingo" prepared by Miller Beer!

## - FOR SALE -

**Gene Katz** of Mt. Laurel, NJ is undertaking a major downsizing of his collection. "No room, no time, no money, usual reasons. I want to avoid the trouble of packing and shipping. It's an eclectic mix: 1924 to 1965 or so. German civilian and American with a few Brits and Italians thrown in. Zenith TOs, no catalins (I refuse), wood BC/SW, TO copies, consoles, early AC/batts, a few AKs, couple of horns and AK and other speakers, tubes (lot of 2 digits). A mix, sort of a Heinz 57 of radioland. Lot of books."

Give Gene a call at 609-866-1189 after 6PM and before 9PM

**Bill Overbeck** will have some interesting radios in tow for this month's auction including an Eveready MPC-2, two metal Atwater Kents, and an AK speaker.

# Some thoughts on solid-state collecting

By Marty Bunis

An amazing 50 years have passed since the invention of the transistor. Many of the products that now use transistors are taken for granted, but 50 years ago they were treated as unique. The transistor products that radio collectors are interested in are the radios, and TVs..

The incredulous part of the 50-year history is that the radios and TVs are now very collectable. Where some of the radios cost \$29.95 new, the price that some collectors are paying is in excess of \$200 and some are worth more. The Regency TR-1, which was the first commercially produced transistor radio released on December 14, 1954, sold new for a price of \$49.95. This same radio is fetching prices between \$300 and \$1000. The Toshiba 8TP-90 which was selling for \$80 a few years ago is now demanding an astronomical \$1200 in the box. The radios made in Japan are very much in demand and most values have risen accordingly. The Japanese

transistor radios were ahead of their time in styling and they were generally very well made, the exception being most of the "Boy's Radios" which were 2 transistor radios considered by consumers 50 years ago as toys or cheap radios for use by children.

Transistor TVs are also beginning to share the same spotlight as transistor radios. The Philco Safari, Panasonic Orbiel, Seiko Watch TV, Sony Watchman's, Panasonic Videosphere, JVC Video capsule, and many others are attribute to modern technology in design as well as performance and are commanding high prices.

I wish that I could have a crystal ball to see what happens 50 years from now as for the availability and values of these transistor radios and TVs as they become more valuable and harder to find.

## The first Oscillator Photo Contest....

Who is this young radio starlet, shown here in 1934 at the age of 22? Hint: you know her from the 1950's. Get your answers to the editor before August 20. I'll try to arrange a modest prize for the winner.



## RCA AND, er, CHILD-LABOR TUBES Ludwell Sibley

RCA had a major tube plant at Lancaster, PA, from 1942 to about 1988. It was devoted mainly to special-purpose tubes, but made some common receiving types from time to time. Here's a curious angle to its products, from an RCA "Merchandise Notice " of August 1946, courtesy of the AWA Museum.

To meet expanding production requirements, Lancaster production Planning has requested approval to use minors in the manufacture of types 6BG6-G and 807.

Minors may be used on the 6BG6-G and the 807 with the following approval and understanding:

1. Tubes made by minors must not be sold for use by the Government, directly or indirectly, as required by the Walsh-Healy Act.
2. Tubes made by minors shall be bulb etched as per Standardizing Notice 27-1-1A, P. 13-39 **807** and cartons will be marked Code M-29.

### M

3. Sales Orders and Inventory control must arrange to make available quantities of regular 6BG6-G's and 807's for servicing Government requirements as they arise. These quantities will probably be small, but must be made available promptly.
4. Production control will have to work closely with Sales Orders & Inventory Control Department and with Warehousing to avoid confusion on orders for Government use.

This is all a little ironic, considering that tubes were made mostly by roomfuls of women deftly assembling "mount" structures. The "minor" labor supply at rural Lancaster would have been heavily weighted toward farm girls who had probably spent their teen years milking cows at 6:00 AM in the winter and doing other rugged work, far more taxing than assembling small parts in a warm tube plant.

Anyway, next time you see an 807 or 6BG6, glance at the "etch" and see if the little "M" is present!



