

The

Call

Exchange

March, 2024
Volume 50 #3

Letter

**Change
the Date!**

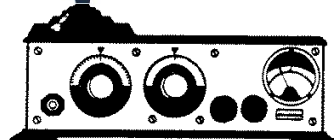
March meeting is March 2

(only 3 weeks after the February meeting)

Celebrating Our
First **50** Years

1974 -
2024

P.O.T.S. telephone
article included in
the PLUS Pages



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 is open to all. The dues are \$25.00 for domestic membership, due on January 1st of each year.

The Call Letter has been in print since 1974 and is a publication that informs members of the society's business and that supports the hobby of collecting, restoring and preserving vintage radios.

Society meetings are held the second Saturday of most months at the Abernethy Grange Hall at 15745 S. Harley Ave. in Oregon City, Oregon. They convene at or about 9:30 AM for the purpose of displaying radios, conducting Society business, and exchanging information. Contact a society officer to confirm the location of the next meeting. Guests are welcome at all public meetings and functions. Society functions include guest speakers, auctions, restoration classes, radio shows, and radio sales which are announced in the Call Letter and held in and around the Pacific Northwest.

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

President Pat Kagi (360) 909-7009

Vice President Franklin Ouchida

Treasurer Ed Tompkins (360) 635-2489

Recording Secretary Scott Thomas

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Radio Repair Mentors

Members willing to mentor small groups in Radio Restoration:

| | |
|--------------|------------------------|
| Blake Dietze | 360 944-7172 Vancouver |
| Ed Tompkins | 360 635-2489 Vancouver |
| Mike McCrow | 503 730-4639 Beaverton |

CHARTER MEMBERS

Men and women who were on the membership list in 1975

Those charter members who are still living are being inducted as Honorary Members in the NW Vintage Radio Society in celebration of the first 50 years of the society.

- Dick Howard Active for 50 years
- Dan Howard Active for 50 years
- Art Redman Active for 50 years
- Mark Moore Volunteers web site work
- Don Knotts Inactive but lives in the area
- Lou Stober Inactive but lives in the area
- Andy Bell Inactive but lives in the area
- Ron Moran Inactive for several years
- Joe Joncas (Being located)
- Ron Gonshorowski (Being located)

Our Roving Reporter *Cledis Estes Battery Set Auction*

From John Cushing

The Estes family in Burbank, Ohio has been running antique radio auctions for at least 40 years. Back in the Eighties I'd see the announcements of upcoming auctions in *Antique Radio Classified* magazine and wish I wasn't too far away to go. Today Cledis Estes holds radio auctions on-line using Auction Zip so anyone anywhere can watch and maybe bid. It's fun and a great way to learn about rare radios and radio prices even if you don't bid.

Estes' most recent radio auction was held on January 20th, 2024, and mostly consisted of early battery sets. In fact, this might be the largest group of such radios I've seen go up for sale anywhere – the auction included 205 items.

Auction Zip shows the number of registered bidders watching throughout the auction, and the highest number I saw was 91. (Estes auctions also have in-person bidding, but on-line bidders have no way to see how many people are actually in the auction hall.)

Sold prices for this auction excluding buyers' premiums and shipping ranged from \$20 for a Western Electric 540-AW cone speaker with a good driver to \$4,700 for an example of E.H. Scott's first superheterodyne, a 1925 World Record Super-9 portable radio (below).

Most 3-dial TRF battery radios and similar sets sold for less than \$100, many with tubes. Most superheterodyne battery radios sold for



\$200 to \$500. A very rare local boy, a 1924 Hallock and Watson 8-tube superhet made in Portland was runner-up for the most expensive radio: It sold for \$1,600 with tubes (below). I wonder how it ended up in Ohio???



Some very rare battery console radios in elaborate cabinets went for a song, including a Brunswick Radiola Superhet with phonograph for \$50, an Ozarka Senior S1 also for \$50, a Lyric 10-tube radio in an immaculate cabinet for \$30, and an Atwater Kent model 20 in a deluxe Pooley cabinet for \$70 (below).



The auction also included quite a few early speakers, most selling for prices between \$20 and \$100. Premium speakers included two uncommon Moon headphone amplifying horns at \$400 and \$425. But the most expensive speaker was a rare Italian Gesso *Voice From The Sky* (below) which sold for \$2,000, the 2nd most expensive item in the entire auction.



My overall impression is that common and unremarkable 3-dial battery-powered TRF radios and speakers were readily available at reasonable prices. Hard to find or unusual early battery radios and related items commanded more, sometimes a lot more, but may be more likely to hold their value. And if you happen to be in Ohio for an Estes auction in person and can haul your purchases back to the Northwest yourself you can expect to find some real bargains on very nice consoles and other hard-to-ship items.

An important caveat to keep in mind if you do decide to bid in an Estes auction (or in any auction that is too far away to pick up your purchases) is that shipping will add significantly to your cost. A nice Radiola II portable that I bought in an Estes auction last October cost \$115 to pack and ship from Ohio to Oregon by Fedex, more than half the cost of the radio itself.

The NWVRS 2024 Calendar

March 2 – Membership Meeting at the Abernethy Grange Hall, business begins at 9:30

March 9 – Mike & Key Ham radio swap Meet in Puyallup, WA

April 13 – Spring Swap Meet and Sale at the American Legion Hall in Aurora from 9 to 1

May 11 – Membership Meeting at the Abernethy Grange Hall, business begins at 9:30

June 8 – Membership Meeting at the Abernethy Grange Hall, business begins at 9:30

July 13 – Membership Meeting at the Abernethy Grange Hall, business begins at 9:30

July 20 – Picnic / Swap Meet in Chehalis, WA

August 10 – Membership Meeting at the Grange and the annual recycling Trash Bash.

August 18 – Shoreline Swap Meet in Shoreline, WA

September 14 – Fall Swap Meet and Sale at the American Legion Hall in Aurora from 9 to 1

October 12 – Membership Meeting at the Abernethy Grange Hall, business begins at 9:30

October 18-19 – Swaptoberfest, Ham Fair in Rickreall, OR

November 2 – Founder's 50th Banquet TBD

November 9 – Membership Meeting at the Abernethy Grange Hall, business begins at 9:30

December 14 – Christmas Party at the Abernethy Grange

An Update

From Mike Farabee

Kristi Barstead was extremely grateful for the cash donations that were collected. She wanted me to convey her thanks and she was very pleased that all of the stuff went to good homes.

Also, she said with the help from someone in the group, they were able to identify some of the stolen items on eBay. They were able to identify the thief and she was able to recover a few items. The police are involved.

President's Message

From President Pat Kagi

Remember that the next meeting is on March 2nd which is the 1st Saturday of the month. This was done so that members can attend the Mike and Key Ham fest on March 9th in Puyallup, WA. Members have complained about the date conflict in years past. If you have never been to the Puyallup gathering, it is worth the trip. Give me a call if you have room in your vehicle for others, and let me know if you'd like to car pool to make the trip more economical.

April 13 (our regular meeting date) is when we hold our Spring radio sale and show at the American Legion Hall in Aurora. To arrange for a table, contact Scott Thomas WST123@comcast.net. Note: There is no meeting at the Grange in April! WORC and KISN LPFM are doing some of the advertising for the sale. They have been extremely helpful in getting the word out.

At the meeting we discussed holding a radio contest at several of our monthly meetings, prompting folks to bring more sets to display and see. The officers will look into combining this idea with the Featured Radio displays and make it sort of a "beauty contest" for members to vote on.

Remember that February 13 was World Radio Day. Celebrate by reminding folks of the history of radio and heritage of the original technology. Don't let people tell you that it is World "Public" Radio Day. It celebrates commercial AM/FM and short-wave radio too.

We are looking to a great day on July 20 for our Picnic and open field swap meet in Chehalis, WA. We have invited members of the Puget Sound Antique Radio Association to join us and hopefully will entice local members of HAM clubs to stop by too.

Now that the weather is getting nicer, I'd like to revisit the idea of having open homes. This is where members meet at someone's home to look at their collection and visit. It's a great way to get to know all of the wonderful people we have in our club. Please volunteer if you would like to host this event and be sure to ask your spouse first!

Meeting Minutes

By Scott Thomas, Secretary

February 2024 NWVRS Meeting

President Pat Kagi called the meeting to order at 9:30 am. During the opening, the membership recited the Pledge of Allegiance and welcomed new member Jan Pierce. We also welcomed Honorary Member Ron Kramer, whom we don't see often (he had business with Sonny Clutter.)

Health & Welfare: Esteban Mendoza had a kidney transplant and is still recovering. Terry Collie is awaiting lung transplant in Seattle. Bill Weigel continues to recovery from cancer surgery. Brian Toon indicates we may see him at the April Swap meet, Dick Howard is recovering from COVID, and a broken arm.

January Meeting Minutes: No objections raised or modifications requested to the minutes printed in the Call Letter.

Treasurer Report: Ed Thompkins reports dues are continuing to come in. The Mason Fund remains unchanged; Savings are at \$500.00+ and Cash on Hand is a little over \$12,000.00.

Annual 2023 Internal Financial Review was performed by David Eaton and Marc Lacey. Copies of this report are available from any Board Member.

2024 DUES: DUE NOW! \$20.00 for online newsletter, \$25.00 for a mailed copy.

Leads and Needs:

Beseda Sale: On hold due to family wedding plans, look for future announcement in March.

SeaPac: \$40.00 Table Fee Registration opens March 1st. For more information: <https://seasideconvention.com/event/sea-pac-ham-convention-7/>

April 13th Swap meet: Tables available, contact Scott Thomas @ wscottt123@gmail.com for information.

Damon: Has tubes- some free to club members. Contact him by phone or text. He is looking for 12AX7, and 6BQ5/EL84 tubes.

Mike Farabee: Kristi Barstead has donated several free tables worth of items to the club. While undertaking a Garage Sale, she was burglarized. She is a mother of small children, and Mike

mentioned he is looking for donations from club members to help out. A collection was taken and we raise \$200.00 for her.

March 16: Repair Clinics are restarting in Clark County, if you are interested contact Mike Farabee.

Pittaway Auction: Moved see below

Pittaway Sale: The sale has been moved to the estate home and open to club members on Feb 15 from 4:30pm-6:30pm exclusive for club members, and from 2/16-2/17 for the general public.

Please follow the NWVRS Google News Groups for sale details and upcoming sales.

Old Business:

Radio Restoration Project for November - Free tubes are available for club members - contact Mike Farabee for more information.

New Business:

Please use the Zelle app if you want to pay dues or to pay for auction items. We no longer use PayPal.

July 20 Picnic in Chehalis, WA: Numerous issues exist between local radio, and ham radio clubs that are driving the Picnic starting time. The Chehalis Ham club has its picnic the same day and has asked us to adjust our starting time to one hour later. The date and time were made by motion and the motion passed. Christian also suggested a ride share for the Chehalis meet.

Memorabilia: Shirts and Hats with our 50th Logo are available now! \$16 for dark blue hats and \$22 for dark blue shirts

Summer Picnic/Pizza Party: 8/10/24 Annual local Picnic/Trash Bash/Tail gate sales event! Damon will recycle the metal.

NWVRS Flyer: Dick Karmann and Hue Miller produced a Flyer to advertise our club and membership. They target folks passing by at a Ham fair /swap meet. Members traveling to shows are encouraged to contact Pat Kagi and take the flyers along.

Honorary Members: As part of our 50th anniversary celebration we wish to honor those who helped the society get its start.

Charter Members (those on the rolls in 1975) will be invited to become Honorary Members. The honored members are being tracked down by Dan Howard and include: Andy Bell, Dick Howard, Dan Howard, Ron Gonshorowski, Joe Joncas, Don Knotts, Mark Moore, Ron Moran, Art Redman, and Lou Stober. Dan continues to move forward with this.

Radio Contest: Several competing ideas are circulating and this issue has been tabled and referred to the next board meeting.

NWVRS Museum: A physical Museum idea was brought to the floor by Art Redman and was referred to the board.

Monthly Feature: Home Brew:

Brian Toon brought several Heathkit Radios that ranged from regenerative sets, to a Heathkit Zenith Transoceanic copy.

George Kirkwood brought a homemade/Homebrew radio with soups cans used as tuning capacitors.

Tube of the Month:

Mike McCrow talked about Dual Purpose Tubes

Tech Talk:

Mike McCrow and Blake Dietze discussed the Detector section of an AA5 radio.

The NW Vintage Radio Society wants to thank and acknowledge Ken Seymour and the folks at the **Western Oregon Radio Club** for their support in publicizing NWVRS and its activities.

W.O.R.C. brings you



streaming at

<https://www.goodguyradio.com/>

and KQRZ-LP (100.7 LPFM) in Hillsboro,

a low-power FM station owned by the Oregon Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

Birthday Greetings for March



*Bruce Adlard
James Harper
Patrick Kagi
Kiduk Ki
Jon Tippin*

The First Time Picker Jim and The Tin Turtle

By Charter Member Dick and son Charter Member Dan Howard

James O.N. Randle, a World War II veteran, passed away August 24th, 2009. A memorial was held in Gresham. While this announcement in the April 18th Oregonian would have ordinarily gone right by, the reference to The Tin Turtle caught our attention and brought back a flood of radio memories.

Our first encounter with Jim was about 1974, when we first seriously started collecting. The NWVRS had formed but was still meeting in temporary locations around town. At that time Sellwood's "Antique Row" was located on the southerly end of 13th Avenue, blocks away of its later center. In the block anchored by the old Sellwood Bank, the cluttered windows of Jim's Tin Turtle antique shop beckoned. We had never been "junking" before, but had heard of Sellwood's reputation.

Jim's wonderful little shop had something for everyone. Collectible glass, postcards, little trinkets, and radios were perched on shelves and the floor and hung from the walls and ceiling. In the back room of the shop, we found a neat little 3-tube regenerative receiver. And Jim's \$35 price seemed pretty reasonable. However, our eyes were also drawn to the beer case on the floor with the mostly-unrecognizable junk radio parts. When asked, Jim didn't hesitate to let the parts go with the radio. Returning home, we discovered that the box, not the radio, was the real treasure.

First came the home-built crystal set; next, a rare Sodium S13 vacuum tube. Then there were the four WD-11's. And the early Edison pear-shaped Christmas lights. An assortment of tube sockets, grid leaks, and other useful parts rounded out the package. Needless to say, this wasn't the last Saturday we spent chatting with Jim and sorting through his offerings.

Later visits generated great finds like a Howe crystal set, head phones, horn and cone speakers, and more. This informal weekly routine lasted until the early 1980's when The Tin Turtle and many

of the other original Sellwood antique shops closed or moved away. We were never disappointed by a trip to Sellwood, as the least we would come away with was an enjoyable outing and some good conversations with folks like Jim.

No doubt other society members have recollections of Jim and The Tin Turtle and the other Sellwood antique shops. (Jim Randle's obituary appeared on [Oregonian] page B6 of the April 18, 2010.)

SE 13th Ave & Tacoma Street, 1960



There was hardly a radio collector alive in the 1980s who hadn't perused the shops and "junk stores" in the area known as Sellwood. History books tell us of the ups and downs of the community and in the 1950s there were mostly "downs." Vacant storefronts and boarded up windows were on 13th Ave, and Tacoma was pretty much just a route to the Sellwood Bridge.

It is documented that in 1965, Elizabeth Fowler opened "1874 house" in the old Sellwood Theater building at 13th Ave. and Tacoma St. Then there were only three shops categorized as Antique Stores in the area. In the next 10 years the "collectible" trade became popular, and 13th ave. became known as "Sellwood's Antique Row." [editor]

The Pentagrid Converter

A tube history by Mike McCrow

The pentagrid converter was invented by Philips Corporation in 1926. It was the final development of a successful mixer tube. In 1918 Edwin Howard Armstrong invented superheterodyne. At the time only triode tubes were suitable for the mixer and oscillator circuit. Armstrong used one triode in a conventional way as the oscillator, another triode was used as the mixer connecting the oscillator signal to the cathode, and the grid coupled to the received RF signal. The sum and difference frequencies were passed on to the anode. Shortly after this circuit design Armstrong developed a design using one triode as a mixer and oscillator, known as the autodyne mixer. This design had trouble oscillating across the frequency range, and the oscillator would also interact with the antenna circuit.

Sometime after Philips invented the pentagrid valve in Europe, an American, Donald Haines of RCA was developing a pentagrid converter in the United States. He then applied for a patent in March of 1933.

The pentagrid converter was a marvelous invention that made it possible to mix the local oscillator signal with the incoming RF signal. Since the oscillator circuit is now self-contained, good feedback across the frequency range for reliable oscillation was obtained. Grid 1 oscillator, grids 2 and 4 were tied together, grid 2 is the screen and oscillator anode. Grid 3 is the RF incoming signal. Grid 4 is the screen for the RF, and grid 5 is the suppressor. The mixer produces four frequencies at the plate. The RF, the IF, the RF minus the IF, and the RF plus the IF. Of these four frequencies, only the IF will be passed on to the tuned IF section, consisting of the first and second IF transformers and IF tube.

Several types of pentagrid converters have been in use since its invention 6A7,6A8, 6SA7, 12A8, 12SA7, 12BE6, 1R5, 1L6, 7B8,14B8 Just to name a few.



The Way We Were

1977: a resignation

Founding member Bob Bilbie offers his opinions (5/3/77)

In a move that probably hurts me worse than it does you, I am taking a step that I have been contemplating for a long time. This will be my last issue of the Call Letter and to complete the move, my resignation from the Northwest Vintage Radio Society as well. I wish to thank those who have offered their help on this paper over the years and to advise those who haven't to do so in the future for your NEW editor so he won't have to suffer the indignation of a thankless task.

There are many reasons why I am taking this move. I feel we have become a group of guys dedicated to the furthering of our own collections, (rather a "hardware faction") rather than planning toward the future and the development of the NWVRS.

Yes, I know I'm guilty of this too, but the overall record in my case will speak for itself since I have offered my heart and soul to a thankless job, while MOST of the other members were content to sit back and let the rest of the club carry the load.

I sincerely wish nothing but success to the NWVRS and I hope that in some small way I have contributed toward its continued growth and I will still hope that the members will rally to a greater cause than their own private collections. Devote more of their time to help those members willing to share the load and help eliminate the "battery set versus electric set syndrome" so that ALL MEMBERS, regardless of the type of radios they love, can enjoy mutual respect from one another.

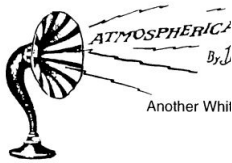
No matter how you slice it or do nit picking, old radio is what it is all about. Perhaps the NWVRS will mature like a good wine, but it will take an awful lot of soul searching on all our parts!

Thank you,
Bob Bilbie, Editor, '76 and '77



NW Vintage Radio Society

Atmospherics by Tom James



History: Fifty years ago, everyone remembered the scratchy reception of the 30's and 40's. It was blamed on atmospheric conditions, defined as the cause of breaks in serious reception.

Atmospheric conditions soon were referred to as "atmospherics." Charter member Tom James thought that our newsletter should have some breaks in serious reception and started to write poetry, titled first *Atmospherics*, and later as *Atmospherica*. Tom and his wife, Dorothy, are gone now, but the Call Letter continues to publish Tom's works as a break in serious reception.

Does It Play?

Twenty-one dials across the front;
 Three adjustments in the back.
 Five aerial posts in a row;
 Two big meters, white and black.

This was the Super Blitzendyne
 "Mark" Hohny was proud to own.
 He built the thing from kits of parts
 From the House of Markup and Doane.

Five bezels graced the jet-black front;
 Three brass jacks were there, do tell!
 There were 8 "A" cells on the floor;
 Three big Bright Star "Bs" as well."

Well, time makes relics of us all,
 And that set was soon passe.
 Only three years it did perform,
 Then was cruelly put away.

Though some collectors pride and joy
 This fine old set may be,
 It never will be used again
 To bring in old K Y Z !

There are some in our VRS
 With similar sets today,
 Which could not receive a broadcast
 Just a measly mile away!

Listen well you old radio buffs---
 And of yourself take stock:
 Even the man with a Briscoe car,
 Can drive it around the block !

By Tom James in 1984, 40 years ago

NWVRS Membership

Membership in the Northwest Vintage Radio Society is open to all. A member in good standing is invited to join in the Zoom meetings every Wednesday night, as well as the discussions on NWVRS group email forum. There is a “free table” at most monthly gatherings where spare parts can be acquired at no expense.

At least two radio-related swap meets are held in the Portland Metropolitan area each year. There is a monthly newsletter to inform and announce sales and outside acquisition opportunities. The society is often designated as the recipient of entire radio equipment collections, and spontaneous auctions are common.

Social gatherings, including a Christmas ‘party’ and a summer picnic, give members a time to meet and greet. The dues are \$25 each year and come due every January. They can be paid at meetings or online using Zelle inter-bank services. The NWVRS phone number identity is 360 635-2489. Membership lists are not used for commercial solicitation or unsolicited sales contacts.

Name _____

Street Address _____

City State Zip _____

Email Address _____

Radio/history Interest _____