

The 45rpm Phono Gazette



All the news that fits, we print

17 YEARS TO GET TO THE MARKET!



PROMOTING THE 45EY IN 1950.
Courtesy of Bob Havalack Collection

Advertising was an all important key element in the success of RCA's new line of records and phonographs. When they were first introduced in January of 1949, the public stayed away because Columbia had also introduced the new LP record. There were too many choices. People with collections of 78 RPM records did not like the idea of having to purchase another phonograph which would only play the new 45 RPM records.

It was only after RCA cut the price of the phono in half and started an advertising blitz in September of 1949 that the public started buying the new product. Sales soared to 50,000 phonos a month at it's height.

Much of the advertising was aimed at first time record buyers like the young lady in the photo. Sales of yellow colored juvenile records was an important part of the overall marketing strategy.

Would you believe it took 9 years of design and experimentation, and 8 years of testing and refinement to bring the RP-168 record changer and 45 RPM record to fruition? Yes it started in 1932 with a "clean slate", and the following objectives;

- lower cost
- convenience
- long record life
- freedom from distortion
- suitable playing time

First they looked at what was wrong with the present record changer. It had to handle two size records, 10 and 12 inch. This made them more complicated because the changer must "figure out" which size record is to be played. Secondly, because the hole was so small and the record so big, it needed to be supported at another point, namely at its edge, otherwise the hole would be damaged and the dropping mechanism would not work. Lastly, the speed of the turntable (78 RPM) necessitated gearing down the reject mechanism.

So starting with a "clean slate", the new design would be one record size (6 3/4 in), with a large hole so no additional support would be necessary, and the record speed would be below 50 RPM to allow the reject mechanism to cycle within one revolution of the turntable, thereby removing the need for additional gearing.

Now how could the record be further improved? The design of improved lighter pickups and the use of vinyl allowed the designers to reduce the speed of the record. They tested at 33 RPM and 45 RPM. Unfortunately, they did not get good results at 33 RPM fidelitywise and felt they would have to increase the space between grooves. This and the 33RPM failure that RCA had marketing old style disks in the early 30's with the heavy pickup, may have helped tip the scales to choose the 45RPM speed. Ironic, because Columbia had perfected the 33 RPM record right before the introduction of RCA's system and even offered RCA the rights to use it.

If you look at the thickness of a 45 RPM record, you will observe one of the nicest improvements in record design. The label area bulges so the grooves from one record won't touch another record. Also the area closest to the large hole is thinned out, so the separating knives don't have to touch the records in order to separate them. The bulged area also provides the traction needed to keep one record from slipping against another. And the large hole makes handling of the record so much easier than other record types with the small hole.

Next issue we'll discuss the improvements made after introduction and two other changers which came into play.

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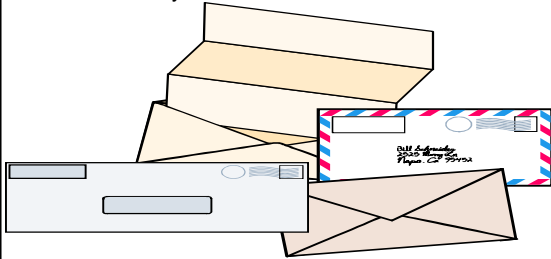
THE REPAIR BENCH



OK, you just picked up a nice unit with an RP-190 record changer. What's the first thing you notice when you take the bottom cover off? The motor is about to fall in your lap because the rubber bushings have disintegrated. Well, fellow collector Ray Tyner of Columbus Ohio has given me the good news, 219-484-1812! That's the number for PEMBLETON ELECTRONICS located at 1222 Progress Road in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Brand new motorboard bushings are 8 for 50 cents. With some prodding, I was able to get 100 for 5 dollars.

No more ripping apart changers from the 70's and 80's to get those 3 motor bushings! And Radio Shack will have to do without ne buying their rubber grommets that didn't quite fit right anyway!

I wonder what makes the original bushings go bad. Could it be the ozone generated by the motor? If this is true, then units that were used more often would have the worst bushings. Anybody out there have any ideas?



LETTERS

Your article in the July 1995 issue discussed the older cartoon players, one of which was the 9-EY-35 with Disney characters. I have advertisements of this player showing the Disney characters in a certain order with Pinocchio on the top. But my player has the same characters in different positions, namely pinocchio on the front pointing at the reject button! Also the model number on the bottom says 9EY35 but the 5 has been written in with a pen!

Sounds suspicious with the model number played with like that. Anyone out there have this model with Pinocchio on the front instead of the top? Please send a picture, I would love to do a followup article on this.

WHERE ARE WE?

Well, two years ago I met another person like myself who collected 45 players. Now there are 13 of us across the country and I'm sure that will be growing in the future. Starting next issue, we will be doing a profile of a fellow collector. This will include a breakdown of their collection, how they got started, what models are they still looking for, and maybe some pictures if they are willing to send them to me.



The collectors I have gotten in touch with are interested in the restoration and preservation of these devices. Making a profit is NOT the main objective. This way we can help each other out finding paticular models for our collections, trading or charging fair prices between ourselves. If 10 years from now they are worth a fortune, thats fine and dandy for us all.

Next issue I would like to start a "wanted" column. If you would like items listed in this column, mail, email, or phone me before Thanksgiving so that it will make the next issue.

45 RPM Phono Gazette is a non profit publication.

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