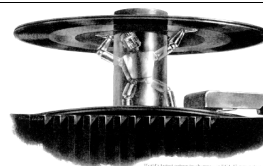


# The 45rpm Phono Gazette

Welcome new members Ed Crockett and Dan Campbell



## David Sarnoff Library and New Jersey Antique Radio Club host Hands on History of Radio



On July 19<sup>th</sup> the David Sarnoff Library in association with the New Jersey Antique Radio Club held a special hands on technology day showcasing antique radios, phonographs, televisions, and other related items. Many technological firsts were achieved at the RCA Labs, which is now known as Sarnoff Labs in Princeton, NJ. Technical presentations, demonstrations, including the first electronic musical instrument, the Theremin, hands on displays, and a radio repair clinic were all part of the fun. There are many wonderful pictures you can examine at

<http://mywebpages.comcast.net/kenw2dtc/visit-03-nj-antique-rc-page.htm>, and more pictures are planned to be added to the New Jersey Antique Radio page at <http://www.njarc.org>. It is hoped that this will be the first of many such "hands on" events featuring different technical innovations.

## The Workbench

### Idler Wheel Rebuilding



Back in the fifties a repairman could replace the rubber idler wheel on a 45 changer with a brand new wheel for the price of 80 cents! But when the idler manufacture was discontinued many years ago, repairmen have come up with interesting and sometimes bizarre ways of improving the wheel's grip and roundness. The rubber hardens with age and loses its gripping ability. Some of the magic potions are alcohol, lacquer thinner, brake fluid, rosin, and rubber revitalizer. All these things work initially but the rubber slowly hardens again causing the same problem. Enterprising individuals have tried different techniques to replace the rubber. Some tried cutting back some of the original rubber and placing a band of new rubber over the old. Others have removed all the rubber and installed new rubber. Many of these early attempts had quality and tolerance issues. One time the idler would work satisfactory and the next one would run too fast or too slow or be riddled with flutter.

But now it appears that some good quality rebuilds are available. After hearing some good things about the rebuilds I tested two of them for myself. Speed was right on the money and flutter was not perceptible to my ears. And I am quite particular about flutter and listen to piano music as a test. The rebuilds are priced at \$22 plus \$3 shipping costs and you must send in your old idler. Call Ed Crockett at 601.264.4755 for information.

# The 45rpm Phono Gazette

**What would the next generation of 45 changer been like?**



**Modified 6JY1B can handle 18 records**

As the 45-rpm changer evolved through the years, it could play 14 records in one sitting. Back in 1949 the maximum was only 10 records. If RCA Victor had decided to continue manufacturing and improving these machines what would we have seen next? I decided to try some improvements for myself and came up with this modified changer that can play 18 records in one sitting. The improvements start with the "lowrider" cartridge developed by Willie Bosco. This cartridge screws right in as a replacement and can handle 15 to 16 records in a stack. In order to do better I had to make adjustments to the shape of the tonearm so it would not interfere with the records. I modified the spring under the tonearm shaft so that the height adjustment could be further extended. Then I installed a spindle cap that is taller than the one used by the rp-190 changer. I used a cap from one of RCA Victor's removable 45 spindles used in their multi-speed players. I doubled up on the return spring inside the spindle since it was now handling a heavier stack of records. The reworked changer has been demonstrated twice, first at last year's Rochester Antique

Radio Meet and then at a phono collector get-together at my house on New Year's Day. Numerous stacks of 18 records were played without incident.

Another important addition in the next changer would be the upgrade to Stereo. For a player attachment this only means updating the cartridge to handle stereo 45's and changing the wiring to support two channels instead of one. The wiring attaches to a terminal strip on the underside of the changer. This terminal strip would have to be updated to handle the extra wiring. Finally, two rca plugs would be provided as output instead of the single one provided now.

**Fab Victrola '45' book reviewed by Goldmine magazine**

The January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2003 issue of Goldmine magazine reviewed the editor's new book, The Fabulous Victrola '45' See page 3 for what they had to say.

Fabulous Victrola '45' Books signed by Author still available.  
Send \$29.95 plus \$4.00 shipping to:  
Phil Vourtsis  
13 Cornell Place  
Manalapan, NJ 07726

***The 45-RPM Phono Gazette is a quarterly publication.***

***For subscription information call Phil Vourtsis at 732.446.2427***



# Book Reviews

**The Unknown Paul McCartney**  
by Ian Peel

Reynolds & Hearn (softcover, 192 pages, £14.99)

Following the death of John Lennon, Paul McCartney became the bad guy. He felt he was being demeaned in books such as Philip Norman's *Shout* and the stage play *Lennon*, and his demotion to second-class Beatle seemed to continue in films such as *Backbeat*.

*Many Years From Now* is an attempt to address the imbalance. Purportedly McCartney's autobiography, it was actually written by his friend Barry Miles and was to concentrate on McCartney's creative ventures such as his avant-garde movies and experimental music. Critics were tempered in their opinions by the fact that Miles isn't an entirely impartial observer — some balance from an outside arbiter would have been welcome.

Here it is, though, a genuine attempt to document the real story behind McCartney's flirtations with the avant-garde, with Peel interviewing a range of people who can add insight into McCartney's artistic experimentations, ranging from Youth to the Super Furry Animals.

It appears that McCartney was always reticent about his creative diversions, mainly using pseudonyms such as Percy Thrillington or The Fireman. Was this a lack of confidence in his search for new frontiers? A hint is given in a 1990 radio interview in which McCartney states, "I remember once saying to John that I was going to do an [avant-garde] album called *Paul McCartney Goes Too Far*. He was really tickled with that idea. That's great, man! You should do it." But I would calculate and think 'No, I'd better do "Hey Jude."'

Frankly, if one wants to open new frontiers one has to be bold; hiding behind pseudonyms can be construed as a lack of faith in one's own abilities.

However, the fact remains that McCartney's music, in all its aspects, appeals across the spectrum. The fact that the author, who is a journalist who specializes in dance music, new media and experimental music, has focused on McCartney's work, confirms this.

— Bill Harry

**Kiss Alive Forever: The Complete Touring History**  
by Curt Gooch and Jeff Suhs  
Billboard Books (Softcover, 250 pages, \$29.95)

Did you ever notice that whatever product Kiss is hawking is always "the next *Destroyer*" or "the Holy Grail" of Kiss items? The Kiss hyperbole machine is a thing of wonder, and despite Gene Simmons and Paul Stanley's knack for tune-writing, it sometimes gets in the way of remembering these guys are in a rock band. The new book, *Kiss Alive Forever: The Complete Touring History*, while not an official Kiss

release, really is the Holy Grail of Kiss items.

Clocking in at 280-plus pages in an oversized trade paperback, it lists just about everything one would want to know about every show Kiss has ever played. The authors, Curt Gooch and Jeff Suhs reportedly took six years researching and conducting interviews for this project. It goes a long way to show that before Gene Simmons was selling Kiss coffins on late-night TV, there was a hard-working, hard-touring true rock 'n' roll circus who, despite the odds, made it to the big time.

There are anecdotes from former and current Kiss members, managers, tour managers, opening acts, crew and fans. Each chapter follows a Kiss tour, starting with background information on the album they are touring behind (or, in rare cases, *ahead of*), what bands opened, average attendance figures and other miscellaneous information.

Then it breaks down show by show with information on who played where and when, what songs were performed, what songs were dropped, who missed a plane, who threw a fit before/during/after a show, which shows were canceled or put on temporary hold — just about anything you could ever ask about a rock 'n' roll show. In most cases, the book lists full set lists. Where no set list or partial set lists are available, every effort is made to re-create the set list from the shows around it. Heck, they even track down album release dates that Kiss have listed incorrectly over the years!

The last 10 or so pages are dedicated to all the info in the book, broken down in numbers, and the price of the book for that alone is worth it. Add to it the incredible wealth of information in the 270 pages before it and one has a must-have book for any Kiss fan.

— Brian Sherman

**The Fabulous Victrola "45"**

by Phil Vourtsis

Schiffer Books (Softcover, 176 pages, \$29.95)

While much has been written about RCA's attempt in the late 1940s to combat the Columbia 12-inch, 33 1/3 rpm long-playing disc by creating its own 7-inch 45 rpm disc, this new book chronicles the line of phonographs RCA created to help sell their new records.

In doing so, RCA resurrected their Victrola brand name for a series of drop-changer phonographs that, with their thick spindle, could play only RCA 45s. It was a gamble, to be sure, but because RCA produced their own phonographs as well as the records to play them on and since they had successful dealerships throughout America, they were able to successfully launch the new 45 rpm record — as well as a line of phonographs that are collectible today.

Phil Vourtsis' new *The Fabulous Victrola "45"* is filled with color photos of various

Victrola phonographs from the 1940s and early 1950s, as well as advertisements, schematic designs for the motor and tonearm assemblies and special demonstrator models used only at dealerships.

A rare photograph of the Victrola 15E, for example, had two turntables, one for 45s and one for LPs and 78s. However, according to Vourtsis, a rumor persisted that the 15E phonograph was gimmicked in such a way that the 45s sounded clearer from the one turntable than the other records sounded from the second turntable.

The book also chronicles RCA's creation of single-disc "Slide-O-Matic" phonographs, where the record is inserted as one would insert a CD into a car stereo. RCA coin-operated jukeboxes are featured as well; a single nickel could give the listener his or her choice of 12 different 45s.

As an added bonus, Vourtsis provides a chapter on repair and restoration of the 1950s-era players, including directions on how to replace the original ceramic cartridges with modern Sharp 146 styli.

This is a great book for a phonograph collector who wants to restore his or her old RCA 9-Y-510 or 45-J-2 turntable as well as for RCA "His Master's Voice" collectors who still have a fascination with the music created by the dog-and-gramophone company.

— Chuck Miller

**Seventy Nine Eighty**

Photographs by Richard D. Schoenberg

Thomson-Shore (Hardcover, 132 pages, \$25)

As a college student in Albany, N.Y., photographer Richard Schoenberg received a lucky break. A local club, JB Scott's, had just

opened, and Schoenberg made a deal with the owners to be the "house photographer" in exchange for free admission to the club. For Schoenberg, it was a dream come true. For two years, he photographed some of the most popular and unique artists of the late 1970s as they performed on stage.

Eventually Schoenberg plied his craft into a successful photography business, but he never forgot his starting point.

Those early photographs are part of a new hardcover art book, *Seventy Nine Eighty*. The book features striking photographs of in-concert performances by both up-and-coming and established artists such as John Mellencamp (still known as John Cougar at the time), Squeeze, The Jam, The Pretenders, and Wreckless Eric as well as veteran performers such as Johnny Winter, Edgar Winter, Leon Russell, Papa John Creach, and The Count Basie Orchestra.

The book even contains candid images of The Tourists (before Dave Stewart and Annie Lennox formed Eurythmics), as well as Bruce Wooley And The Camera Club (yes, that's Thomas Dolby in the background). The book also features liner notes from *Goldmine* contributing writer Carlo Wolff, featuring observations about the performers and their later successes.

The photographs are visually stunning. The cover of *Seventy Nine Eighty* features a sweaty Wreckless Eric powering himself through another performance; the back cover shows a cheeky Chrissie Hynde decked out in enough fur and leather (a total 180-degree change from her current enlightenment as a member of People For The Ethical Treatment Of Animals [PETA]). Other shots include concert footage of a tit-taped Wendy O. Williams And The Plasmatics; Roy Buchanan

