

The Jersey Broadcaster

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW JERSEY ANTIQUE RADIO CLUB



April 2000



Reported by Marv Beeferman

The roar of the March lion did not discourage a fine turnout for last month's meeting. With the days warming up, May can slip up on us quite quickly so don't forget to submit your reservation for our outdoor swapmeet at the Hightstown Country Club on May 20th...early reservations get the best tables.

John Dilks presented an interesting concept to the club. As you probably know, the federal government is planning to approve rules to allow educational, religious and community groups to run inexpensive low-power FM radio stations with broadcasting circles as much as several miles in

diameter. At present, the definition of low power (1,000, 100 or 10 watts) is still being debated, but the basis of license awards would be the group's ties to the local community the station would serve. Since an antenna tower, the most costly item for a high-power radio station, is not required for broadcasting at 10 or 100 wat's, a station could conceivably be established for as little as \$1,000. Does the future hold a vision of WNJARC broadcasting from the Marconi hotel? Think about...the concept fits like a glove over the club's charter.

The club received a very nice letter from Mary Ann Ryer, the User Education Librarian from Raritan Valley Community College, with regard to the February's display:

I would like to thank the members of the New Jersey Antique Radio Club for a varied, attractive, and informative display of radios during the month of February in the Evelyn S. Field Library at Raritan Valley Community College. Special thanks to

MEETING NOTICE

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The next meeting of the NJARC will take place on Friday, April 14th at 7:30 PM in the Grace Lutheran Church, corner of Route 33 and Main Street in Freehold. Contact Marv Beeferman at 609-693-9430 or Phil Vourtsis at 732-446-2427 for directions. This month's meeting will feature displays of the broadcast DX contest entries and the creations of members entering the one-tube BC radio contest. If you are planning to host the twJARC display at the Trenton Computerfest, make sure that your name has been put on the list for volunteer passes. Also, if you desire to remain a member of NJARC and have not yet paid this year's dues, please ensure to return Marsha Simkin's renewal notice prior to the <u>May</u> meeting.

John Butz Fiscina for coordinating the gathering, displaying, and labeling of the radios and other items for the display. He visited the library to size up the display area and then selected items to maximize the use of our space.

Also worthy of special thanks is Ray



(L to R) Sal Brisindi, Marv Beeferman, Phil Vourtsis and Richard Lee display the club colors at a recent Rutger's University Open House. We're working hard to get Sal to splurge for a sweat shirt.

Chase who brought additional radios to his talk on "The History of Radio as a Medium of Communication." He is very knowledgeable on this topic and his straightforward, organized lecture made it possible for all in attendance to learn a great deal about the subject. He achieved just the right balance between the technical and historical aspects of the topic. Students took notes throughout his talk while community members who attended were reminded of past memories.

I would also like to extend my thanks to you, Gary D'Amico, Bob Apgar and John Dilks for sharing your radios with

us. And thanks to Joe Bentrovato for his assistance on the evening of the lecture. While enjoying your hobby your are performing a valuable educational service. Thank you for sharing your collection and your knowledge with us.

On Saturday, April 1st, Richard Lee, Phil Vourtsis, Sal Brisindi and Marv Beeferman (with a show of support by Ray and Edith Chase) spent the day in the Electrical Engineering building of Rutgers University (Busch Campus) displaying an assortment of classic radios from 1920 through 1940. Also included was a working Crosley 51 SD offering a rebroadcast

of "War of the Worlds" and other assorted vintage radio programs. The club was invited on campus by the director of Rutger's engineeering department after being so impressed with the Monmouth Library display. Amid demonstrations of the preparation of silicon wafers for photo-etching to the actual design and testing of large scale integrated circuits,

THE JERSEY BROADCASTER is the newsletter of the New Jersey Antique Radio Club (NJARC) which is dedicated to preserving the history and enhancing the knowledge of radio and related disciplines. Dues are \$15 per year and meetings are held the second Friday of each month at the Grace Lutheran Church, corner of Route 33 and Main Street in Freehold N.J. The Editor or NJARC is not liable for any buying and selling transactions or for any other use of the contents of this publication.

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these tube-driven "oldies but goodies" offered quite a contrast in both scale and technology. It was a little embarassing that the club's demonstration generated more interest to visitors than the college's exhibit. The club was rewarded with a box of tubes that the department "had nolonger any use for"....the group didn't know whether to take this as a thank you or snub.

From your editor's mailbox, a note from past President Jim Whartenby:

The Whartenby's are on the move again! Arkansas here we come. The house is under a contract closing date of May 26th, the storage business closing is set for May 8th and we have a ton of stuff to pack and get ready. It's kinda scary and exciting at the same time...give us a call if you want more details. All volunteers are welcome for moving day; its only a 2 to 40 hour drive depending on where you're coming from. Love to hear from you...Ruth and Jim (919-662-7369, antgradio@aol.com).

Our television orientated show-and-tell session served as a form for over 15 constributors including Al Klase, Phil Vourtsis, Walter Heskes, Garrett Walsh, Leonid Assur, Dave Snellman, Marv Beeferman, Rick Weingarten, George Shields, Marty Friedman, John Dilks, Leo, Frank Feczko, Edith and Ray Chase, Jerry and Marsha Simkin and John Ruccolo. Some of the items that caught the camera's eye are included in the photos that follow.

IMPORTANT NOTES and CORRECTION:

The club needs the names of members who are definitely planning to support the NJARC display at the Trenton Computer Festival at the Edison Expo Center on May 6th and 7th so that we can be provided with volunteer badges. If you are a volunteer but do not plan to attend the April meeting, please contact Marv Beeferman no later than April 14th or you will have to pay an entry fee to attend.

The club is considering changing the monthly meeting day to the second Wednesday of each month for the <u>Sum-</u> <u>mer only</u> (June, July and August) to avoid Friday night traffic. Please make your desires known at the next meeting or via email or by phone to one of our club officers.

Membership Secretary Marsha Simkin has sent out final renewal notices; if a response is not received prior to the May meeting, you will be dropped from the membership roster. Renewals received after April 7th will not be posted until May so there is no need to contact Marsha if your address label does not indicate a "1/01".

The items offered at the February mini-auction originally noted as a donation from Ray Chase were actually contributed by former Somerset resident and NJARC member John Holme. John now resides in Florida and a note of belated thanks goes out for remembering the club. Thanks again Ray for doing the schlepping.

NJARCs Rutgers Display





TELEVISION DAYS



Al Klase anticipates Easter by providing "ears" to an unsuspecting bunny with a Channel King (by Marjo) pop-up antenna.



John Dilks related a story on how his dad invented the first automated roll adjustment for a Motorola 7" TV - using a dowel and surgical tubing. Here John gives a lesson on the treasures that can be found if you take the time to dig through those cheap box lots.



Phil Vourtsis recovered this "incredible" TV from an abandoned boat found adrift in a mysterious fog.



An all-bakelite encased Emerson provided by Marv Beeferman.



Ray Chase's 1920-1930 TV advertising and book display. The display included the plans and instructions for making a 1949 CBS color TV using a color wheel.



Why does Marty Friedman still have this lovingly preserved Zenith 1960 TV with original instruction book (including the schematic) and warranty card? Would you believe a Bar Mitzvah present from 40 years ago! Marty noted that this TV provided one of the best pictures available at the time.



George Shield's beautifully restored 1946 RCA 621TS. First introduced at the 1939 World's Fair using a 440 lines/AM standard, it was the first TV introduced in the US using present transmission standards and a 13channel tuner. Cost was \$450 (about the price of a Chevy).



Rick Weingarten's working Predicta.



displayed by Garrett Walsh.

NOTED RADIO HISTORIAN DR. RALPH MUCHOW PASSES

Edited by Marv Beeferman

The following article is based on a news report appearing in the Chicago Tribune. Photos are courtesy of Alan Douglas, which appeared in the Old Timer's Bulletin (Vol. 20, No. 3, December 1979) Based on reports of an individual who was recently in touch with Mrs. Muchow, the notion of an early auction (July?) is making the rounds with Estes Auction Service being cited as the auctioneer. Ludwell Sibley, editor of The Tube Collector, journal of the Tube Collectors Association, promises a list of some of the more rare tubes in the Muchow collection. Membership information is available at www.tubecollectors.org.

Dr. Ralph Muchow, better known to collectors as a radio authority and owner and curator of the not-for-profit Historical Radio Museum in Elgin, Illinois, died Saturday, March 4, at the age of 83. Dr. Muchow's collection of close to 3,400 antique radios, 95% of which are working, was featured in the February 1997 issue of *Smithsonian* magazine.

Over the previous 30 years, Dr. Muchow had accumulated what is said to be the largest and finest private collection of antique radios in the world. Tastefully laid out with each item properly labeled, Ralph showed the development of the radio receiver from 1895. The collection represents over 2800 different receivers, 300 speakers and 300 different crystal sets in addition to numerous other radio items of interest such as a display of over 30 different types of Geissler tubes including rotary, automatically fired and rotating. The collection was often opened to Radiofest attendees for private tours.

The 54-year Elgin resident, who was inducted into the city's Sports Hall of Fame in 1988, was the top-ranked table-tennis player in Illinois and second nationwide in open play from 1937 to 1939. Dr. Muchow retired in 1999 as a dentist after more than

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50 years in private practice. He received his dental degree from Northwestern University Dental School, Chicago, in 1940. He served in the Army as head of the dental survey office at Camp Ellis in Illinois and at Percy Jones Hospital in Battle Creek, Mich., during World War II.

"He got me interested in my profession, electronics," said his son Stephen, an electronics engineer. "He was always interested in radio. He got me and my brother Dave involved. He involved the family in his activities. The museum was a family affair. We all got involved in maintaining it. He enjoyed that."

In addition to his sons, survivors include his wife, a sister, two brothers and three grandchildren.



A small portion of the Muchow museum taken in 1979. Grebe sets are to the left and commercial receivers are at the upper right.



One of the largest collections of Atwater Kent breadboards in the world.



A view of some of the rarer receivers including a Westinghouse R9, a BC 131, a Grebe CR6 and CR7, a German submarine receiver, a Pickerill receiver, a BC-98-A and early Crosleys.

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BROADCAST DX fro

CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED

By Marv Beeferman

Tom Provost and Al Klase have announced this year's Broadcast DX Contest winners. The number of entries was a little disappointing so the club is considering awarding prizes to spur interest in next year's contest. As you can see from the results below, it doesn't take much of a "rig" to pull in some really distant stations. This reminded Tom of a piece he came across in Marc Ellis' "Antique Radio" column in the November 1992 issue of Popular Electronics concerning DX'ing with a Radiola III.

The Radiola III was a diminutive but sensitive set housed in an 8 x 6 x 5-inch box which used two WD-11's. One served as a regenerative detector and the other as an audio amplifier. The set provided only earphone volume but an accessory "balanced amplifier," using another pair of WD-11's, could be added to drive a speaker. Instead of variable capacitors, the set used variometers to control tuning and regeneration.

Back in the 1920's, a young highschool student named Walter Pierce owned a Radiola III and used this simple receiver to set numerous long-wave DX receiving records. For example, when *Radio Index* magazine ran a DX'ing contest, Walter won it with 656 verified foreign stations. Eventually, he accumulated verifications from more than 2600 stations in every country in the world.

At one point, Hugo Gernsback, then editor of *Radio News*, sent a writer, Armstrong Perry, to visit the Pierce home and document these feats. When Perry arrived, Pierce was listening to LR9 in Buenos Aires and Perry was amazed at the quality of the reception. Perry stayed overnight and next morning listened in on JOAK, Tokyo; 1YA, Aukland, N.Z.; 2BL, Sydney, Australia, and many others. All doubts were dispelled that a farm boy in Saunderstown, Rhode Island could receive stations Volume 6 Issue

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from all over the world.

The secret of Pierce's success seemed to be an unorthodox and highly efficient grounding system. The ground wire was connected to a leaky old Ford radiator buried up to its filler cap. The radiator was kept full of water so that the soil around it was constantly being moistened. Additional grounding pipes were driven all around the radiator and connected to the main ground lead with heavy copper wire. There were suggestions that reception might be further improved if Pierce substituted some of his dad's hard cider for the water in the radiator.

Walter usually began his listening sessions by checking for station KOA in Denver. If it was coming in well, he knew conditions were favorable and settled in for some serious DX'ing. Sometimes the session lasted all night. By 2 AM, most American, Canadian, and Mexican stations were shutting down, leaving the airwaves clear for the European stations which were just beginning their broadcast days. Then, by 4 or 5 AM, the Japanese, Australian, and New Zealand stations would begin to come through.

Walter Pierce's DX'ing activities ended in the late 1930's when the American stations had become much more numerous and powerful and had begun to stay on all night. That made it much more difficult to hear the foreign stations but, because of the difference in channel spacing (10 kHz for America and 9kHz for Europe), it was still possible to hear DX between the stateside signals.

Category A: Crystal Sets No entrants

Category B: Primitive Tube Receivers (1 or 2 Tubes)

Winner: Tom Provost, 1- tube homebrew 6SL7 Twinplex regen., 25' basement random wire antenna, most distant station = Radio Vision Cristiana, Turks and Caicos Islands, 1309 miles. Score: 8,525 miles

Al Klase, 1- tube Skyflex homebrew reflex, 3-wire 65' flat top antenna, most distant station = Radio Vision Cristiana, Turks and Caicos Islands, 1309 miles. Score: 7,492 miles Marv Beeferman, 2- tube Crosley 51-SD, 50' longwire antenna, most distant station = WHO, Des Moines, Iowa, 1,014 miles. Score: 5,334 miles.



Category C: 1920's Battery Sets

Winner: Gary D'Amico, 4-tube (3 tubes used) Browning Drake Regenoformer, longwire antenna, most distant station = CMBC Arroyo Arena, Cuba, 1302 miles. Score: 7,961 miles

Category D: Receivers Up to 8 Tubes (Pre-1959)

Winner: Tom Provost, 6-tube 1938 Philco 38-620 9, homebrew tunable air loop antenna, most distant station = Radio Vision Cristiana, Turks and Caicos Islands, 1309 miles. Score: 8,825 miles.

Frank Feczko, Zenith 6G001Y, "Wave Magnet" antenna, most distant station = WLAC Nashville, Tennesee, 736 miles. Score: 6,696 miles.

Frank Feczko, Hallicrafters S-38, longwire antenna, most distant station = WLS Chicago, Ill., 708 miles. Score: 4,668 miles.

Jon Butz Fiscina, Zenith 6D2620, internal loop antenna, most distant station = KMOX St. Louis, Mo., 860 miles. Score: 4,195 miles.

Category E: Open (Any Other Pre-1950 Radio) No entrants

RADIO HITS THE ROAD PART II

By Michael Lamm

This article is the second in a three-part series that started in the March issue. It originally appeared in the Spring 2000 (Vol. 15/No. 4) issue of **Invention & Tech**nology and is being reprinted with permission...Ed.

The American car-radio industry claims 1929 as the year of its birth. That was also the year home radio took off. Before 1929 radio had been a crazy quilt of widely assorted musical fare interspersed with religious and inspirational programming, advertisements for goat-gland extracts, and

other programs of modest audience appeal. Then, in 1929, "Amos 'n' Andy" got a national hookup on NBC. The immediate and overwhelming popularity of that one show was credited with boosting home-radio sales by 23 percent in 1930 despite the stock market crash. Its success encouraged radio's development as a mass entertainment medium.

Sales of car radios also shot up, because car owners didn't want to miss the shows they had gotten hooked on at home, and as sets became less expensive, sales continued to increase. When prices didn't fall fast enough for many Depressionstrapped Americans, though, the public found out that cheap automobile radios could be worse than none at all.

The infamous Ajax radio of 1931 was marketed with a pyramid scheme. Ajax offered a "free" radio and installation in exchange for a \$150 mortgage on the recipient's car. If the car owner could talk six friends into installing \$25 Ajax radios in their own cars, Ajax would tear up the first driver's contract. It even paid commissions for bringing in more customers.

Unfortunately, most people could sell only one or two Ajax radios to

friends, so no one was getting out from under his mortgage contract. Pretty soon Ajax owned the titles to thousands of cars. The scheme finally went to court and was declared a fraud.

As they became more common, car radios continued to improve. By 1932 most automakers included as standard equipment a "pigtail," or antenna lead, hung from the wire mesh in the roof. That year also saw the arrival of a device that replaced the pesky B and C batteries. It was known by several names-dynamotor, Beliminator, Magmotor, Genemotor - and was powered by the car's A battery, which was recharged during operation by the car's generator. The dynamotor usually lived under the floor or the hood of the car and consisted of a 6-volt electric motor that drove a generator that created DC at the required 90 to 135 volts.

While it greatly simplified and shrank car-radio systems, the dynamotor also



drew an extra few amps from the car's A battery. Muntz always warned drivers not to use freewheeling while playing their dynamotor-driven radios. With no recharging on deceleration, the A battery could soon lose its charge and cause the engine to stall. Playing the radio with the car parked was another quick way to end up with a dead battery.

By 1933, the dynamotor began to be replaced by a less expensive, much smaller device called a vibrator. Most vibrators were about the size and shape of a radio tube, so they fit inside the receiver case. Early ones were hard wired in place, but later vibrators plugged in with pins, like tubes. They came in two types, interrupter and synchronous. The interrupter - first developed by Bill Lear, who later became famous as the manufacturer of the Learjet - used a vibrating component to create alternating current, which was stepped up to a higher voltage and then rectified to yield high-voltage

DC.

The synchronous vibrator used a second set of points that vibrated in sync with the first set and transformed the high-voltage AC back to DC, eliminating the need for a rectifier. This arrangement yielded pulsating DC, which was filtered to a constant level by a network of capacitors. The synchronous vibrator was more expensive than the interrupter type, but it could deliver more power to the radio, so it was used in upmarket cars like Buicks and Cadillacs. It created a trap for unwary installers because while battery polarity didn't matter with interrupter vibrators, miswiring a synchronous vibrator would fry it.

Otto Weil, the chief engineer of Philco-Ford's automotive entertainment division, considered the vibrator a great blessing, but a mixed one. On the negative side, he said, it produced "hash," a term coined to describe the interference generated by the abrupt wave fronts produced as the vibrator contacts opened and closed. "Getting rid of the hash was tough because it was present in ground currents throughout the set, and until these could be tracked down and controlled, you got that

sound: hash-sh-sh-sh!"

Another problem in the early days of car radio was that whenever you drove under telephone wires or through an iron bridge, you lost your radio signal. Distant stations also had a habit of fading, while nearby ones could blast you right out of your car. To remedy these variations in loudness, automatic volume control, made possible with multi-element tubes, was incorporated in the better sets in 1932.

The early 1930s also saw big-city police departments begin to install radio receivers in their patrol cars. Bill Balderston, who later became president of Philco, had a Transitone franchise in Chicago in 1930 and did a nice business installing sets in

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private and police vehicles. "The police would tune to station WGN in Chicago," he re-called, "and whenever a police call would come up, it was broadcast over WGN. Often you'd be listening to music or a soap opera, and all of a sudden they'd cut in with an emergency message. So people had the added thrill of listening to real, live police calls. Trouble was, the crooks would also keep their car radios tuned to WGN, so they always knew everything the police knew." In 1931 the Chicago police started getting two-way radios that operated on special frequencies.

Yet another problem in the early days was that car radios were not wired

through the ignition switch, as they are now, and owners tended to leave their parked cars with the windows down, especially in the summer. So passersby would often stop, reach through the open window, and help themselves. They wouldn't steal the radio; they would just play it. Kids, especially, thought nothing of turning on the radio in a parked car, listening to a couple of afternoon thrillers, and then simply leaving, not bothering to turn the radio off again. Owners of open cars were even more vulnerable. Many a motorist came back to find the battery or batteries drained and the radio still on. Manufacturers soon began to install locks so that car radios could be played only with the owner's key.



| CONNECTIONS | FREE but you must pick up at my residence: Dumont model 303 5" scope, 20" x 12" x15.5", may have manual, good condition, haven't turned it on for years. AN/SGC-1 Teletype Terminal Unit by Remler Co., rack size, no cabinet, fair condition, Ham modified to change freq. shift, 7x9x15, about 40#. Pulse generator, Colonial Radio model 700-A, sophisticated unit, 30s or 40s, fair to good, good for parts, 14x19x15, about 40#. Pulse generator, AEL model 138, large and high power, 50s or 60s, fair. All of the above good for parts and tubes - if they don't go, the curb gets them. Ray Chase, 1350 Malborough Ave., Plainfield NJ, Phone: (908)757-9741 e-mail: enrpnr@erols.com | The May 1966 issue of <i>Electronics</i> <i>Illustrated.</i> Richard C. Yingling, 2 S. Locke Ave., Yeagertown, Pa. 17099 (717)-242-1882 |
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| Free exposure for buyers and sellers! Un- less requested otherwise, each ad will run for two months in both the <i>Jersey Broad-</i> <i>caster</i> and the Delaware Valley <i>Oscillator</i> . All buying and selling transactions are the | | Information on "Lang" radios: literature, pictures, pricing, etc. Charles J Dreitleio, 515 Elizabeth St., New Milford, NJ 07646 (201)-384-3862 |
| responsibility of the parties involved. | | Gernsback's Official Radio Service Manuals: 5,7,8. RCA Victor Service Data: '47, '48, '49, '51. Mike Tannenbaum, PO Box 386, Ambler PA 19002. (215)-540-8055 Fax (215)-540- 8327 or k2bn@agtannenbaum.com |
| Check out NJARC's capacitor program for those most commonly needed replace- ments. Contact John Ruccolo at any club meeting or call him at home (609)-426- 4568 to find out what's available. All proceeds go to the club. | | Emerson AU-190 chassis; FADA 659 dial glass; Chelsea ZR-4 audio transformer; Sentinel 400 Television; Plastic CRT cover (front) for 17" Philco Predicta; Pilot TV-37 tuning knob (wood). Frank Johnson, 530 Elford Rd., Fairless Hills, PA 19030-3624. (215)- 943-8295 |
| 7JP4 CRT, good filament, screen looks OK, make offer. Alton Dubois Jr., 67 Peggy Ann Road, Queensbury, NY 12804 (518)-792-3130. | | |
| Radio schematics and service data, US and Canadian receivers, 1920s to 1960s. #10 S.A.S.E. + \$2.50 for 1 to 5 pages of data per model; a copy charge of 20 cents per page is added for copies over 5 pages. (Questions/quotes answered by e-mail or a S.A.S.E.) Steve Rosenfeld, PO Box 387, Ocean Gate, NJ, 08740. Phone: 609-597- 2201; srosenfeld@ems.att | Rider's Perpetual Troubleshooter's Manuals: Vol. 1-5 (2 each), Vol. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22 (1 each). 18 volumes plus Master Rider Indexes. \$650 cash, no shipping (pick up only). Contact Bob at (732)-671-2809 | Sales literature, service manuals, and equipment for theatre sound/broadcast use by RCA Photophone, Century Sound, Motiograph, Altec, Western Electric, etc. Theatre catalogs by Jay Emmanual Publications, Philadelphia. Scott Stillwell, 2328 Cambridge Circle, Hatfield, PA 19440. (215)-393-1833 Pager (800)-717-9306 |
| | WANTED | |
| New index to AWA publications (<i>Old Timer's Bulletin</i> , <u>AWA Review</u> , misc.), 1960 through Aug. 1999. Formatted like the earlier version but with new "Author" section. Has 63 pages, 8-1/2" X 11" size. Gives 7000+ citations. \$12 postpaid anywhere. Make check/MO payable to: Ludwell Sibley, 102 McDonough Rd., Gold Hill, OR 97525. | Cast aluminum lid for Eveready #2 radio, circa 1928. Good photo would help if lid is not available. Need two, four-inch black No. 488 dial knobs for Fried Eisemann NR-6. Alton Dubois, Jr., 67 Peggy Ann Road, Queensbury, NY., 12804. (518)-792-3130. | Chassis and speaker for Sparton 517B (Machine Age to Jet Age, pg. 187) or Sparton 527-2 (Machine Age to Jet Age II pg. 283). Joe Bentrovato, 84 E. Munson Ave., Dover, NJ 07801. (973)- 361-7392 |
| FINAL CALL FOR THIS YEAR'S DUES! | WWII military television receiver, camera and dynamotor with numbers CRV, AXT, ATJ, ATK, purchased from Denson Electronics. WWII Navy transmitters and receivers. Maurice Schechter, 590 Willis Ave., Williston Pk., NY 11596 Phone/fax: (516-294-4416) | Repairs wanted: Have wind-up floor model Victrola. Winds and turns but stops when needle is lowered to record. Mildred Coleman, 5038 Gainer Rd., Phila. 19131. 215-879-3047 Ans. Machine:215-477-8151 |