

The Jersey Broadcaster

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW JERSEY ANTIQUE RADIO CLUB

September 2001

Volume 7 Issue 9



MEETING/ ACTIVITY NOTES

Reported by Marv Beeferman

I'm sad to report, although the word has probably been spread very quickly, that another radio collector's event has been marred by an unfortunate automobile accident. On their way to the AWA Rochester conference, NJARC honorary member Ludwell Sibley and his wife Marilyn were involved in a tragic collision that sent both of them to the intensive care unit of two Illinois hospitals. For new members and collectors, Ludwell is considered a major authority on vintage vacuum tubes, is author of the book *Tube Lore*, edits the *Tube Collector*, bulletin of the Tube Collectors Association and was former editor of the AWA's *OTB*. Lud, now living in Oregon, started and brought up to speed the NJARC tube program and was a major force in shaping the club into the successful organization it is today.

Fortunately, at this printing, both Ludwell and his wife are on the mend and in good spirits. It appears that, even after 12 hours of surgery, Lud is itching to get home. It was wonderful to see the response of the radio collector community, with NJARC member John Dilks keeping everyone up to date on the latest information. John said..."it is obvious that Ludwell has so many friends. It is a wonderful thing. We have a great common bond here, in radio. This is about as good as it gets."

Jerry Vanicek, a good friend of Lud, was able to recover all of the Sibley's belongings from the wrecked car and "surprisingly, little was broken." Jerry was also looking into several possibilities to house the Sibleys locally and West coast volunteers were at the ready to meet Lud and Marilyn at the airport if they decide to fly directly back home. We'll bring you up

MEETING NOTICE

The next meeting of the NJARC will take place on Friday, August 17th at the Grace Lutheran Church, corner of Route 33 and Main Street in Freehold. Contact Phil Vourtsis (732-446-2427) or Marv Beeferman (609-693-9430) for directions. A full evening is planned so the meeting will start promptly at 7:30. John Ruccollo is scheduled for a presentation on "Servicing 1940's Electrostatic TVs." We'll get updates on the Sibleys (see Meeting/Activity Notes) and reports on the AWA Rochester convention. We'll also hear about John Dilks proposed "New/Old Dilks Radio Auction Game" and, if time permits, we'll try to fit in another mini-auction of items from the Camden cleanup.

to date at Friday's meeting.

On a similar note, our collective prayers have been answered for member Al Klase who is up and running and plugging the Military Radio Collectors Association annual meet on the 13th to the 15th

plainers) were unavoidable, especially people arriving at noon and wondering why we couldn't prevent vendors from beginning to pack it in. Parking and unloading wasn't a big of a problem as expected and was made easier by a few of our members helping out vendors to speed up the process.

Special thanks goes to Ray Chase (and grandson), Joe Bentrovato and Richard Lee for making rental arrangements and helping with setting up the hall. Joe was also instrumental in securing a good turnout by advertising in the *Daily Record* and *Star-Ledger*; we also had a number of people showing up for appraisals. It was suggested that at future meets, a designated appraisal area be set up to make the process a little more formal. It was also suggested that we maintain a list of swapmeet attendees so that they can be notified directly of plans for future swapmeets.

Thanks also to Marsha Simkin and Sal Brisindi in applying their organizational skills to collecting table money and entrance fees, running the 50-50 and in welcoming potential members at the club table. Phil Vourtsis and I would also like to thank Lisa Starnes and her husband for offering the hospitality of their beautiful home so that we could get a good night's sleep (and wonderful breakfast) prior to the meet. Lisa also loaned us hubby to



Marsha Simkin greets visitors to our Dover swapmeet.

of September (<http://www.milradio.org/>). Al is recovering from a car accident that occurred at our Dover swapmeet and the recent loss of his wife.

Our Dover swapmeet went very well considering it was a first attempt at a new location; over 50 tables were sold and we registered over 100 buyers. We'll have a report on final totals at the September meeting. The usual complaints (and com-

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 other use of the contents of this publication.

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help out with getting things ready in the early morning hours.

On the August meeting front, Larry Scharmann provided a wonderful presentation on his work at the Electron Tube Division at Camp Evans. Larry started working at Evans one year after the Diana Project (bouncing radar signals off the moon) in the receiving tube division and was privileged to be a contemporary of Dr. Zuhl. Larry said he never used a tube tester..."they weren't accurate enough." During the Cold War, Larry became interested in subminiature tubes, especially those made by Raytheon, and did a lot of developmental and investigative work in this area.

Larry also told us that the transistor came between him and the history books. Competition for the first satellite transmitter was stiff between the Army and Navy with a requirement of 10 mW at 108 Mhz and less than a 40 mW drain and Larry was able to make a subminiature tube meet these requirements. With its ruggedness and reliability (as long as the leads were directly soldered), the subminiature seemed a perfect choice. But alas, after the Navy developed the transistor oscillator and the glitz surrounding its development, the transistor won out.

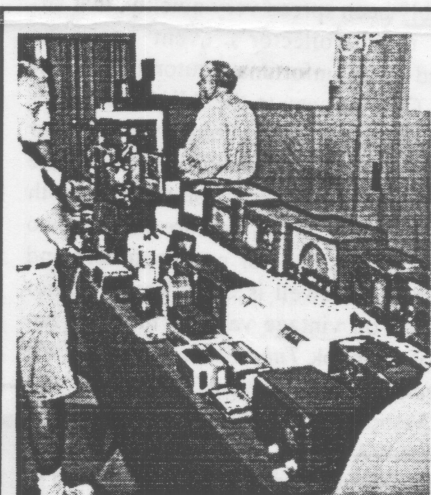
An auction of some items from the Camden cleanup rounded out the evening.

And finally, some short notes before closing. Jon Butz Fiscina would like everyone to keep in touch, and here's the vital information to do just that: 2418 Briarbrook Lane, Garland Texas, 75040 (972)-496-5082).

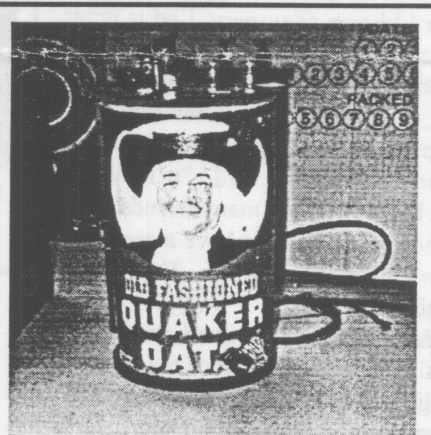
Additionally, September 30th is the last chance for submittals for the Tony Flanagan Memorial Award. As a reminder, nominees will be considered based on their contributions to the promotion of the antique radio hobby, the preservation of radio and electronic communication history and the history of their associated disciplines through artifacts and documentation, and the promotion of the public awareness of radio development and history through books, articles and exhibitions. Primary emphasis should be given to these considerations and not necessarily to the individual who has done the most for the club.



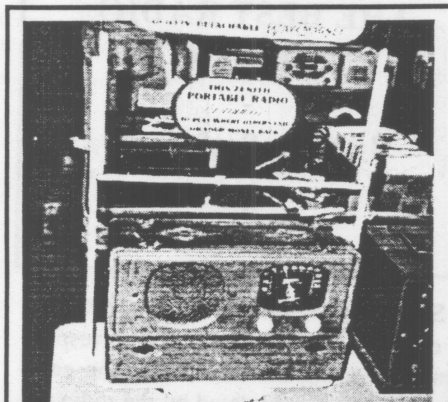
Joe Bentrovato discusses the day's events with Edith Chase.



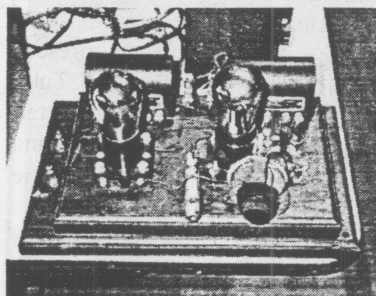
A nice collection of table radios.



Crystal sets keep you healthy.



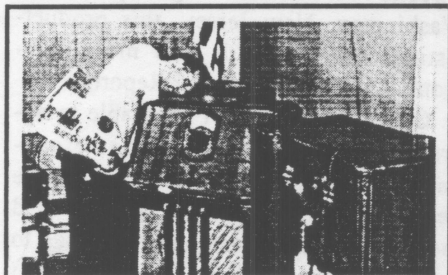
A Zenith portable complete with advertising.



A very nice homebrew.



Ray Chase attends to a customer



Its got potential!



A spacious and comfortable hall makes for a good meet.

THE CROSLY LOWAVE CONVERTER

By Marv Beeferman

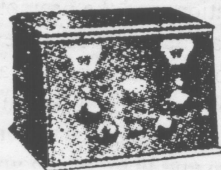
By late 1927, several of the larger broadcasting stations such as WGY, KDKA, WLW and WRNY were transmitting almost their entire daily programming on short-wave, thus making afternoon and evening Pacific Coast reception quite accessible. Locally, static was reduced and daylight reception was improved. At the same time, with the rapid increase in the short-wave bands for both broadcast and communication use, interest in reception below 100 meters had spread from its typical amateur base and caught the general public's fancy.

Short-wave sets covering the 20 to 80

meter range were available in both the form of regenerative and superheterodyne receivers, but each had its drawback. The regenerative set gave good results for code reception, but the receiver was not sensitive enough unless it was oscillating. As a result, voice reception was distorted almost beyond recognition. A good superheterodyne short-wave set solved this problem, but was quite an expense in 1927. Crosley decided to address both these problems with its Lowave "adapter."

My interest in this model was stirred by a successful bid at the Ralph Muchow auction. When I first saw the set, it appeared to be a standard two dial radio. When I

looked inside and saw the plug-in coils, it appeared that it might be a simple short-wave receiver. But after some research, I felt a little better that I wasn't the only one fooled. First, I learned from a one sentence web reference ("Everybody's Television and Radio Handbook" - a compilation of articles from *Popular Science* magazine published in 1951) that the converter was specifically designed to look like a table radio. Secondly, Crosley's own advertising is somewhat deceptive, stating that "This receiver (my emphasis) is designed so that by changing coils, wave lengths from 20 to 80 meters are covered." Thirdly, the "Restoring



\$40. Without Tubes or Batteries

Lowave adapts any Broadcast Receiver to bring in Short Wave Stations

WLW and other stations are already broadcasting simultaneously, their regular program on low wave lengths below 80 meters. As low wave reception is free from static, it affords great distance increases, improves daylight reception and opens a NEW FIELD for RECEIVING SETS. This receiver is designed so that by changing coils wave lengths from 20 to 80 meters are covered. Using three 201-A tubes or their equivalent it picks up short waves and translates their frequencies to one within the band of your present broadcasting receiver. Utilizes same "A" battery as is used on regular set.

Old Equipment" section of the *OTB* for December 1979 carried the following note:

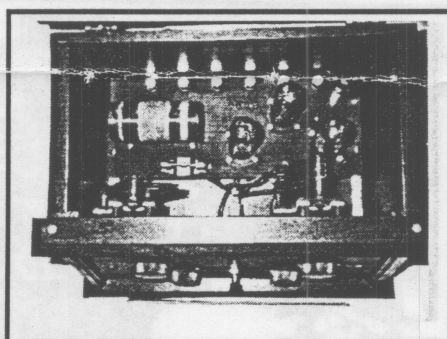
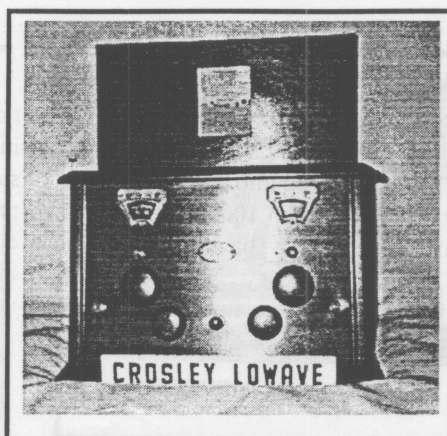
"Jack Bacon is the owner of a rare Crosley Lowave set. Note we say 'set' and not receiver since we feel it could be a short-wave converter. It uses (3) type 230 tubes and has sockets for two sets of plug-in coils. Any member have information on this set? Year? Range? Use?"

An answer came with the *OTB*'s September 1980 issue where Jerry Sears confirmed the set as a short-wave converter from information on p. 213 of the January 1928 issue of *Radio Broadcast*. Unfortunately, although this volume shows up on my magazine database, two hours of searching went unrewarded so I would appreciate a loaner copy from anyone who might have it.

Basically, the converter consists of a tunable oscillator and high-frequency detector connected between the broadcast receiver's antenna lead-in and antenna input posts. My set utilizes three low-filament-power Western Electric 231D tubes, similar to the RCA UX199. This conflicts with the *Crosley Broadcaster* ad which specifies three 201As, so further investigation is in order. Power comes from the broadcast receiver's A and B supplies.

Although "Muchow sets" are known for their completely restored condition, this one will require some minor work to get it operational. The set itself is clean, original and with working tubes, but a few of the resistors have deteriorated and require replacement. Without any shielding, it will be interesting to see how the converter works, especially with 231D tubes which, because of their smaller size, do not oscillate as readily as their 201A cousins at higher frequencies.

Not having the *Radio Broadcast* reference, I looked through *QST*, *Radio News*, etc. between 1927 and 1928 for Lowave ads but could find none, although the Crosley "box" series (Bandbox, etc.) with battery eliminator was advertised extensively. Based on the converter's serial number (105749), it appears that a few sets were sold but advertising seemed to be limited. The reason may come after the converter is placed in working condition.



TOP: LOWAVE front panel. Note the similar styling to other Crosley models of the era and the resemblance to a typical "two-dialer."

BOTTOM: LOWAVE interior showing the three 231Ds and the plug-in coil to the left. The adjustment in the upper right is still being researched.

THE BEST RADIO OF 1934

By Marv Beeferman

Some time ago, I was fortunate enough to obtain three file drawers of correspondence covering the late 20s to the early 50s that was accumulated by the radio department of Consumers' Research, Inc. During this period, the section was under the direction of President and Technical Director F. J. Schlink. Originally based in Washington, New Jersey, this product-testing organization is now more commonly known as Consumer Reports.

Only recently have I been able to aggressively pursue a page-by-page examination of each file's contents and have been more than presently surprised. Had the original owner been patient enough to perform even a cursory screening, I'm sure the asking price would have been significantly higher. Included in the contents was signed correspondence by such radio luminaries of the time as Powel Crosley and McMurdo Silver. In the future, I hope to make this original source information the basis for some interesting articles. But what I found even more enjoyable were

Your Set Can Now Get Short Waves

Sent anywhere in the U. S. postpaid upon receipt of price. Canada and Foreign 60c additional. Money order only. Also sent C. O. D. plus postage in U. S. if \$1.00 accompanies order to insure carrying charges. In ordering be sure to name set and tubes used, such as UV199, UX199, WD11, 201A UX226 or UY227. Price \$15.00 or \$17.50 for A.C. Sets.

The SUBMARINER

will convert your regular set into a short wave receiver by simply inserting a plug in place of one of the tubes. This takes but a few seconds. With "Submariner" it will enable you to tune between 26 and 48 meters.

This device operates with all sets, such as T.R.F., Neutrodyne, Super-Heterodyne and others. A.C. or D.C. operated. No additional tubes, batteries or coils required. Comes ready to operate, and no chances to the wiring of set. If set operates a speaker it will do so with "Submariner" attached. Operates as a wave changer with Super-Heterodyne and as detector unit with others.

SHORT WAVE

reception is practical, and especially in summer, as they penetrate better and there is less static. The "Submariner" waveband includes practically All Powerful Stations Which Broadcast Programs. You may also listen to amateurs from all parts of the world who transmit radio messages. You will have one of the most efficient short wave receivers when the "Submariner" is attached to your set. Nothing else like it on the market. Get a "Submariner" so you may have command of the short wave activities, as well as the broadcast band. If your Dealer does not carry

ORDER TODAY DIRECT

This device has been nationally advertised, and sold in all parts of the world for the past two years

Address J-M-P MANUFACTURING COMPANY, Inc.

Department S2

Milwaukee, Wis., U. S. A.



Another converter of the era.

the unpublished letters from subscribers, many of whom were very opinionated and had a strong technical background in the radio developments of the day. The letters provide a "flavor" of what was on the minds of the radio buyers of this period.

One correspondence in particular caught my eye and I'd like to share it with you. It was written by a Mr. J.R. Wenrich of Denver Colorado in October, 1934. In his letter to Mr. Schlink, Mr. Wenrich said that he had written to 13 of the major radio manufacturers of the time stating that "I do not at present own a radio set, but if it is possible to secure the kind of set that I want, at a reasonable price, I will purchase one." He listed the specifications that the receiver must meet and concluded with the challenge that "If you manufacture such a set, please quote me a price, stating that the set meets the attached specifications in all particulars or specifying what items the set does not meet and giving the characteristics of the set in these particulars."

Here are Mr. Wenrich's specifications; they provide an indication of what the more discriminating radio buyers were looking for at the time. For those members with a technical leaning, you might want to evaluate some of these requirements in terms of a "reasonable price." You'll notice that some can immediately be recognized as unreasonable. For example, by late 1934, all major radio receiving set manufacturers had discontinued TRF sets for superheterodynes and the tight sensitivity and selectivity standards could only be found on the higher priced Scott and McMurdo Silver lines. Try not to fast forward to the end of the article, where I'll provide a sampling of some of the interesting responses that Mr. Wenrich received.

1. The cabinet shall be of pleasing appearance and good workmanship. Natural walnut in a hand rubbed oil finish seems most desirable. It should be of a sturdy construction, capable of outliving the obsolescence of several chassis.
2. The chassis of the set itself must show first class workmanship and engineering. It must be of solid construction, capable of being shipped without damage due to heavy parts tearing loose, etc. The tubes used must be of standard types, easily available at reasonable prices. All controls must be easily operated and clearly designed.

nated.

3. The radio frequency circuit must be of the tuned radio frequency type, employing bandpass filters as the tuning elements.
4. It must employ diode detection.
5. The gain of the radio frequency circuit must be not less than 100 dB at any point through the broadcast band.
6. The radio frequency circuit must transmit a band flat within plus or minus 2 dB, using the 1000 cycle gain as a base, from 50 to 6000 cycles.
7. If the set be an all-wave model the tuning dial must clearly indicate which band is in use. In general, the tuning dial must be large and easily visible and calibrated in kilo-cycles. A visual tuning method of some sort must be included.
8. The automatic volume control must hold the electrical output constant within 5 dB for a 50 dB change in input.
9. A carrier 30 KC away from the carrier tuned for must be down at least 80 dB from the carrier desired, assuming equal carrier strengths.
10. A ready and convenient means of reducing the upper limits of the transmitted band from 6000 to 4000 cycles must be provided.
11. The audio frequency circuit must have not less than 40 dB gain at 1000 cycles.
12. The equalization of the audio frequency system must be flat within plus or minus one dB from 50 to 6000 cycles, using the 1000 cycle gain as a base.
13. The speaker must be full dynamic, baffled to give negligible distortion at 50 cycles and giving essentially flat response to 6000 cycles.
14. The electrical output of the last tubes, immediately preceding the speaker, must not be less than three watts, with not more than 1% harmonic distortion.
15. The hum level must be at least 55 dB down from the signal level, with a signal input of 1.5 watts into the speaker.
16. The company manufacturing the set must show ample servicing facilities in the city of the customers residence.
17. The set must be covered by a guarantee (see Webster, I don't mean an adjustment contract) covering all parts of the set and the set as a whole (except tubes) for a period of at least 18 months from the date of purchase. This must include replacement of defective parts, without charge to the customer for either parts, material or

labor.

Do most of Mr. Wenrich's specifications sound reasonable? Was anything being produced in 1934 that came close to satisfy his requirements in a "reasonable" price range? Well, it all depends on whose doing the selling. Let's look at a few of the responses that Mr. Wenrich received that were forwarded to Mr. Schlink.

From General Electric came the following (emphasis is mine):

"Our reply has been somewhat delayed as we wished to talk with several of our engineers who are thoroughly capable of passing upon such specifications, not only as regards our own product, but that of the competition. The net result is our finding that a radio receiver which would meet these specifications does not exist today. It is, however, entirely possible for us to build such a radio receiver so that it would entirely meet the specifications outlined by you, but our knowledge of the market for such instruments shows beyond a shadow of a doubt that the sales would be extremely limited in number, prohibiting quantity production, and therefore placing the instrument in the custom-built class. This factor alone would place the resale price of the instrument at not less than \$1,000 per set and probably considerably more."

Zenith seems to have agreed, referring Mr. Wenrich's specifications to their Engineering Department. But, unlike General Electric, Zenith did not pass up the opportunity to subtly plug its own line:

"It appears from their {Engineering Department} report that at the present time it is almost impossible to design a receiver that would meet every specification you have set forth. Although, we believe that a Zenith comes as close to these requirements as any competitive make."

Crosely was similarly honest, but did recommend a specific model. As with most manufacturers, the company questioned the 18-month guarantee:

"We do not have any set to meet the specifications of the one you outline in your letter of October 14th. Most manu-

facturers today guarantee their sets for ninety days and we do not believe you will find any of them guaranteeing eighteen months."

"...we can particularly recommend the Dual Seventy-Two model. This set is one of the finest and we believe you will find that it will do everything in the way of performance that any of the most critical radio fans could demand."

Philco seems to have disagreed with General Electric's conclusion, suggesting that their new line of so-called "high-fidelity" radios came close to filling the bill:

"Most of the requirements enumerated can be met and in many cases exceeded by the De Luxe Models of Philco Radio... It must be remembered that channel width in a radio receiver is very closely associated with fidelity of reproduction, and that a gain in one characteristic is usually accompanied by a slight sacrifice in the other. In the Philco Model 200-X High Fidelity Radio these two characteristics are controllable by means of what is known as a Selectivity-Fidelity Control. This control permits high fidelity reproduction when there is no station on an adjacent channel and also facilitates a gradual increase in selectivity to a point where overlapping of stations is totally eliminated at any point in the tuning range of the set."

But the most positive response came from Stromberg-Carlson, with a price less than one-half of GE's \$1,000 quote for a custom set (but probably quite out of Mr. Wenrich's reasonable price range):

"In about seven weeks Stromberg-Carlson will have ready for sale a radio receiver which we believe will closely approach the specifications you have outlined...It will be what is known as a Stromberg-Carlson No. 70 listing at \$485. This receiver is known as Stromberg-Carlson's High-Fidelity All-Wave, utilizing 13 tubes and 2 speakers, one known as a "woofer" type and one as the "tweeter" type. The frequency range will approximate from 40 to 7500 cycles; an output wattage delivered to the speaker of 15 watts."

"We can meet all the requirements as

outlined in your specifications excepting that the set must be covered by a guarantee for a period of 18 months from the date of purchase. The standard warranty guarantee of all radio manufacturers is 90 days. We formerly operated under a guarantee of one year, but pressure by other manufacturers caused us to reduce our period of time to 90 days so as to conform with their guarantee. They felt it was an unfair advantage on our part to guarantee a year's time instead of the 90 days that they did."

LAST DANCE IN HIGHTSTOWN

By Marv Beeferman

The following article is based on a piece by Karen DeMasters in the "Up Front" section of the New York Times for August 19th, 2001...Ed

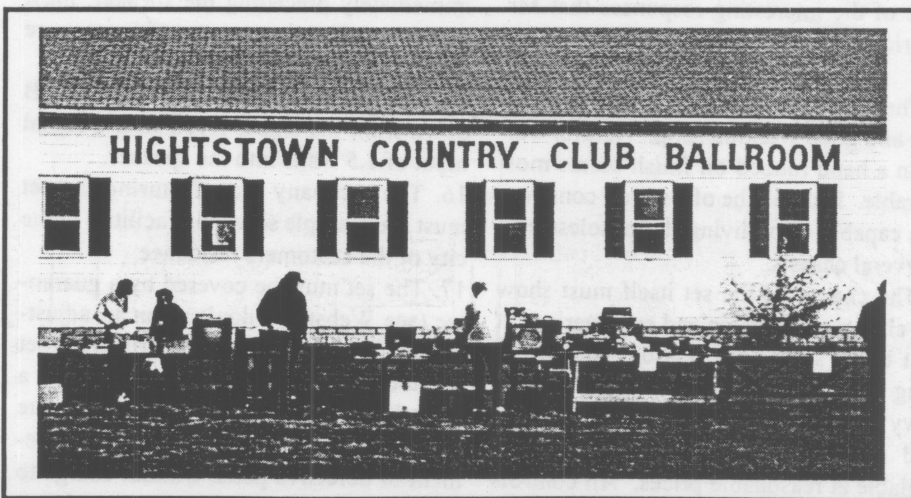
For some seven years, the Hightstown Country Club Ballroom served as the location for the majority of our club's swap-meets and auctions. What was once the center of the social calendar for a generation of ballroom, and later, swing and country dancers, will soon face the wrecking ball to make way for a hotel. The last dance - a country dance - was held on August 29th.

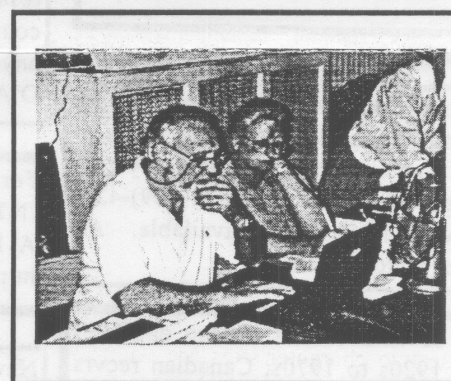
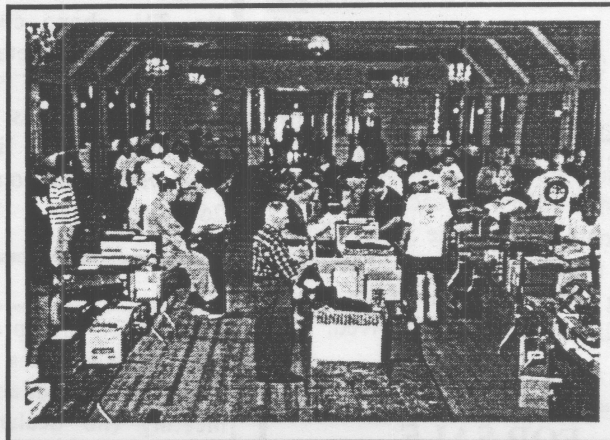
Although the ballroom had some problems, it served us well throughout the years, primarily because of its accessibility to the New Jersey Turnpike and its capability to offer both indoor and outdoor meets at a relatively modest cost. But, as many of you might not know, the old girl did have some class.

The building dates back to the turn of the century as a warehouse for local potato farms. It was converted to a dance hall in the 1920's and, except for a few brief periods as a roller skating rink, was used as that ever since. Up until the 70's, the dances were formal with the men required to wear jackets and ties and the women dressed "to the nines." During the week, a big band might draw some 200 people and on weekends two bands could draw up to 400. Dance cards and dance lessons were part of the routine. Liquor was never served with coffee being the biggest stimulant; a juice bar and snacks quenched thirst and appetites.

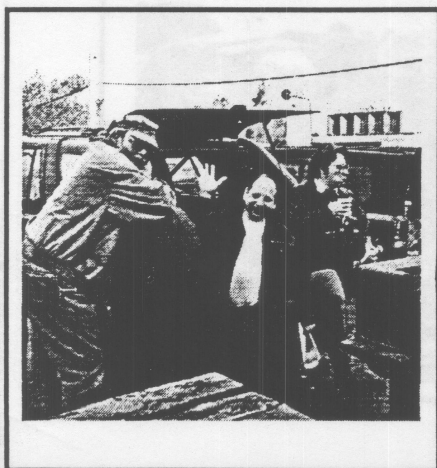
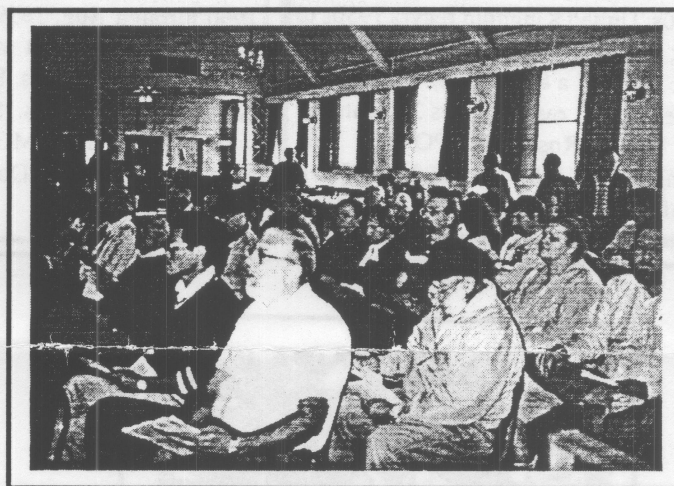
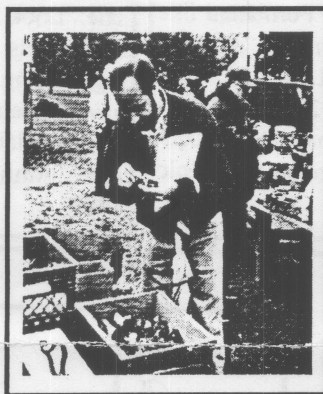
The present 40 feet by 80 feet dance floor is hardwood on top of cork and considered one of the best in the state. After formal dances were stopped in the mid 1970's (when the average age of dancers reached 65 to 70), it vibrated to the sounds of disco, country and Latin. Toward the end, attendance dropped to 50 or 60 a night.

Hopefully, a temporary location will be available for our Fall swapmeet, but it will take some scrambling to come up with something that offers the minimum number of headaches at the cost that Hightstown did. Quite frankly, I'll miss the place...it holds some nice memories.





HIGHTSTOWN SCRAPBOOK



CONNECTIONS

Free exposure for buyers and sellers! Unless requested otherwise, each ad will run for two months in both the *Jersey Broadcaster* and the *Delaware Valley Oscillator*. All buying and selling transactions are the responsibility of the parties involved.

FOR SALE

Check out NJARC's capacitor program for those most commonly needed replacements. 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.

Radio schematics and service data, US recvrs 1920s to 1970s; Canadian recvrs 1920s to 1970s; Australian recvrs 1930s to 1950s; United Kingdom recvrs 1930s to 1970s; European recvrs 1930s to early 1940s. \$2.50 + a #10 SASE, 1-5 pages of data per model; over 5 pages 20 cents per page. Steve Rosenfeld, PO Box 418, Manahawkin, NJ 08050. 609-978-0331, srosenfeld@ems.att.com

Need a new home for a 1950 Admiral radio, TV, phono combination, model 32X36A. Complete, cabinet in good condition, has 12" round picture tube. Make an offer...must go. Local delivery possible. Aaron Hunter, 23 Lenape Trail, Southhampton, NJ, 08088, 609-267-3065.

The NJARC tube program offers clean, tested, boxed tubes at very reasonable prices with availability at any club meeting (no dealers, please...not for resale). Proceeds go to the club. Of course, donations of radio-type tubes in any condition are welcome. See Gary D'Amico at the next meeting.

For sale by non-member: RCA model 9 INT1, 1957, with manual, \$150. Richard A. Decker, WA2TUM, 732-505-1082, <http://www.geocities.com/gypsy/fever/>

New index to AWA publications (*Old Timer's Bulletin*, *AWA Review*, 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.

Scott console, circa 1940, needs repairs; Philco console, circa 1945, needs minor repairs. Will take best offer. Tom Musocchio, 609-448-1688.

Free to anyone who will make good use of it: RCA A-106 console AM/FM phono. A fixer-upper/parts unit, missing the 45 RPM turntable. Pair of 6V6s in the output stage and good-sized 10-12" speaker. Rob Flory, 609-466-4217, robandpj@compuserve.com.

WANTED

Looking for 1500V @ 400-500mA, 350V @ 200mA plate transformers; 15VCT @ 3A filament transformer. Also black wrinkle rack panels, esp. 1-1/2" and 6" high but other sizes useful. Rob Flory, 609-466-4217, e-mail address: robandpj@compuserve.com

Your surplus radio knobs. Buying bulk stock of pulls for matching service and resale. Look for Gobs of Knobs at regional swapmeets and monthly DVHRC meetings. Bring your orphans and I just might have its relatives in stock. Dial pointers also available. Mike Koste, 57 Tennis Ave., Ambler, PA 19002. (215)-646-6488

