

The Jersey Broadcaster

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW JERSEY ANTIQUE RADIO CLUB

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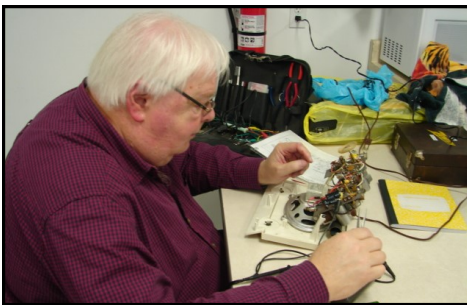
MEETING/ ACTIVITY NOTES

Reported by
Marv Beeferman

The ON-LINE Broadcaster

The *Jersey Broadcaster* is now on-line. Over 150 of your fellow NJARC members have already subscribed, saving the club a significant amount of money and your editor extra work. Interested? Send your e-mail address to mbeeferman@verizon.net. Be sure to include your full name.

Thanks again to member Charles Blanding and his in-depth examination at the September meeting of how New York radio re-invented itself and ultimately thrived when challenged by television in the late 40's. Charles's comprehensive knowledge and experience in the radio industry is a huge asset to the club.



Charles Blanding hard at work at one of his interests only second to the broadcast industry - transistor radios.

Charles noted that one way in which radio overcame the prediction that its days were numbered was the promotion of entertainment content that would appeal to the masses like the Beatles and Elvis Presley. The industry also developed catchy jingles to punctuate sports and news coverage and to let people know what type of programming was upcoming. Disc jockeys such as "Mad Daddy" also helped by cultivating their own personalities and followings. Charles punc-



MEETING NOTICE

The next NJARC meeting will take place on Friday, October 13th at 7:30 at Princeton's Bowen Hall (70 Prospect Ave.). Directions may be found at the club's website (<http://www.njarc.org>). This month, member Mike Molnar will present a talk titled "V. Zworykin - the Lost Interviews." Zworykin invented a television transmitting and receiving system employing CRT's and played a role in the practical development of television from the early thirties, including charge storage-type tubes, infrared image tubes and the electron microscope.

tuated his points with some interesting and amusing air clips.

Although even up to the early 60's, music programming was still controlled by cynical old white men, there were forces in play that could not be resisted;

- Rock and roll was getting more air play and selling records and performers were appearing on TV (the medium that almost killed radio).
- Baby boomers were becoming consumers with a lot of money to spend.
- It was noticed that baby boomers would play the same songs over and over again on the jukebox ("top 40" influence).
- Small, cheap transistor radios became available.

To get an early start on planning for our Holiday Party and 25th Anniversary celebration, a reservation response form is included in this month's *Broadcaster*. It cannot be stressed enough that you send in your response as early as possible since we expect a good turnout of members wanting to take part in all the planned activities associated with toasting our 25th year. Only 70 slots are available! It might also be a good time to start considering your entry in our Mystery Grab Bag instead of wrapping up whatever is lying around at the last minute. A good place to start might be our Fall swapmeet at the Parsippany PAL on October 28th.

In the "another one bites the dust" category, as posted by member Bill Zukowski, MCM Electronics Inc. has announced that it will close its corporate office and distribution center. MCM had an inventory of some 300,000 electronic items and was the source of parts for many of our members. With the loss of

Radio Shack, in my opinion, this can only portend the slow elimination of all sources of electronic components to support the hobbyists and collector. I can only wonder which dying breed will fall by the wayside first - the supplier or the user?

Based on a posting by member Dr. Alex Magoun (IEEE History Center Outreach Historian), Delaware's Hagley Library has announced that the contents of the David Sarnoff Library collection are now available to the public. The collection includes thousands of linear feet of documents, reports, photographs, films and publications detailing the rise and fall of RCA and David Sarnoff, its longtime leader. Prior to moving to Princeton, the David Sarnoff Library was the meeting location of the NJARC thanks to our gracious host, "Doctor Alex."

Sure to be a prime resource for both collectors and researchers, the collection is open to the public Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and on the second Saturday of every month from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Researchers are encouraged to contact reference staff ahead of arrival so they can be sure material is available upon arrival. Digital materials are available online anytime at:

digital.hagley.org

Upcoming Events

- October 28th - NJARC Fall Swapmeet at Parsippany PAL
- November 10th - Monthly meeting at InfoAge; Show & Tell, Hints & Kinks
- November 18th - Fall Repair Clinic at InfoAge
- December 16th - Holiday Party at West Lake Country Club; 25th Anniversary celebration

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 \$25 per year and meetings are held the second Friday of each month at InfoAge or Princeton University.

The Editor or NJARC is not liable for any other use of the contents of this publication.

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**GARY D'AMICO
 PASSES**

By
Tom Provost



The NJARC sadly announces the passing of founding member Gary D'Amico on September 9th. The club's and my personal condolences go out to his wife Shari, his daughters and his grandchildren.

A long time radio amateur, WB2ZAK, Gary pursued his interest of electronics as both a hobby and in his profession. He also enjoyed fishing and watching Nascar racing and Giants football games.

Gary was born in Somerville and was a lifelong resident of South Bound Brook. He graduated from Fort Lauderdale University with a BS Degree in Technical and Scientific Management.

In 1979, Gary became an employee at the Princeton Plasma Physics Lab (PPPL) as an electronics technician and held that position for some 37 years. In the early 1980s, I got to know him at PPPL since our labs were adjacent and we both worked on the lab's premier research device at the time - the Tokamak Fusion Test Reactor. Over coffee breaks and lunches, we spent time talking radio and got to be friends. His radio knowledge was vast and I learned a lot about radio through our discussions.

Through my work experiences with him, lunchtime talks and the numerous hamfests and radio meets that we car-pooled to, I became familiar with Gary's endless optimism and upbeat personality. We both became founding members of the NJARC and Gary became it's second "Tube Chaplain" (organizer and purveyor of the club's vacuum tube stock) when the job was passed on by Ludwell Sibley. I was always amazed at his ability to quote from memory almost any tube's pinout and its characteristics, applications and substitutions.

At the club's repair clinics, he was a regular "expert" repairman, helping anyone who needed it with his usual patience and skill. Those who knew Gary will describe him as friendly, modest, optimistic and encouraging and always

ready to contribute, at every opportunity, his trademark good humor.

Gary had the ability to make you feel more optimistic. When I returned to work at the lab after my wife's death, Gary called me every day at noon for a chat. He did this for weeks. That's a good and caring friend. I'll always remember Gary D'Amico and always will miss him.

We all will.



"I'll always remember Gary D'Amico and always will miss him."



"At the club's repair clinics, he was a regular 'expert' repairman, helping anyone who needed it with his usual patience and skill."



"I was always amazed at his ability to quote from memory almost any tube's pinout and its characteristics, applications and substitutions."



Gary "Tubeman" D'Amico being presented with one of Bernie Gindoff's famous caricatures.



Gary takes some notes evaluating a potential buy at one of our Hightstown swapmeets.

A VISIT TO SIGNAL HILL - A MARCONI SITE IN NEWFOUNDLAND

By
Harry Klancer

Signal Hill, on the outskirts of St. John's, Newfoundland, is the location where in December of 1901 Guglielmo Marconi conducted the first experiment to span the Atlantic Ocean by radio, then known as "wireless." I visited St. John's in July of 2017. This article provides a brief history of Marconi's 1901 event, along with my account of this historic location today. Newfoundland was then a separate Dominion, not becoming a part of Canada until 1949. It is a gorgeous place as well as an historic location, with whales by the dozens on full display in July.



By the way, the correct pronunciation of the name Newfoundland is as follows: just rhyme the words "under STAND Newfund LAND" and you'll sound (more or less) like a native. Geographically, Newfoundland and Labrador combined into a single Canadian Province in 2004.

Marconi's Experiment

Most people associated with InfoAge know that the InfoAge site, then known as the Marconi *Belmar Station*, was part of a network of Guglielmo Marconi's transatlantic wireless communications stations. Construction of the Belmar Station and its duplex station in New Brunswick, began in 1913. But in the early days of wireless, how did Marconi know that he could receive signals reliably from all the way across the Atlantic? After all, it was 3300 miles from Caernarvon in Wales (where Marconi's transmitter was located) to Belmar. However, Marconi's original experiments in Italy had spanned a distance of a mile or two. And the longest of his early experiments

in England had spanned only 200 miles. Ever practical (he wasn't much of a theorist), Marconi had begun experimenting with transatlantic wireless communication in 1901. He planned to try sending from Poldhu in Cornwall (England) to Wellfleet on Cape Cod. Windstorms in the autumn of 1901 destroyed his extensive antenna systems at both locations.

A Change of Plans

Marconi rebuilt the antenna at Poldhu, replacing it with a simpler antenna, and using less power than his original design. It is estimated that ultimately, Poldhu transmitted with a power of 13 kw, at a wavelength of 350 meters (approximately 850 kHz). This estimate is far different from the very long waves used in Marconi's later commercial stations. For example, Belmar received signals from Caernarvon at approximately 17 thousand meters and 400 kw. Concerned that the limited signal from Poldhu could not reach Cape Cod, he eventually chose to put his receiver at a place called *Signal Hill* in St. John's, Newfoundland. Signal Hill is within a few miles of Cape Spear, the easternmost point in North America, thus providing the shortest path across the Atlantic – approximately 2100 miles. If wireless transmission from Poldhu to Signal Hill worked, the idea of transatlantic wireless would be proven and he could go on to develop it. And, if the experiment didn't work...? But, by Marconi's account, it did.

Basing his experiments in an abandoned fever and diphtheria hospital (long gone) on Signal Hill, and using a kite-borne antenna system, Marconi and an assistant, George Kemp, succeeded on December 12, 1901 in receiving a series of the Morse code letter "s", sent from the Poldhu station. The concept had been demonstrated! Within days, he received congratulations or endorsements from Thomas Edison, Michael Pupin and Amos Dolbear.

Signal Hill - A Description

Signal Hill was named in the 18th Century, long before Marconi came. It stands on one side of "The Narrows," the opening from the North Atlantic to the magnificent harbor in St. John's. Signal Hill is capped by Cabot Tower, which was constructed between 1897 and 1900 in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of John Cabot's landing at the coast in 1497. In my photo of the site looking east, Signal Hill is on the left (northern) side of The Narrows, and Cabot Tower is the tiny

dot (almost invisible) at its peak. The North Atlantic is beyond, and the harbor and the city of St. John's is in the foreground.



Cabot Tower



Photo of the site looking east.

Originally called "The Lookout," the name "Signal Hill" was given to the site by the British when they took back St. John's from the French in 1762 during the Seven Years War (known in the US as the French and Indian War). As far back as the 1600s, these heights at the entrance to the harbor were used for hoisting flag signals to alert the local garrison located in St. John's that ships were approaching. In fact, flag signaling of this sort was used to identify merchant ships coming toward the harbor until 1958.

During the Second World War, Newfoundland permitted the US Military to use part of Cabot Tower as a "ready room" for US soldiers manning anti-aircraft guns at the entrance to St. John's harbor. At the time, Gander – less than 100 miles away – was the world's largest airport and was used for ferrying military aircraft between North America and Great Britain.

Signal Hill Today

Signal Hill is an easy 10 minute drive from downtown St. John's. This year, the first things you see are a large "Visitor Centre" and a 50 foot long sculpted "Canada 150" sign in front of a parking lot. (2017 is the 150th year since Canada became a dominion). In the background about a quarter mile away is Signal Hill topped by Cabot Tower.



A stop at the Visitor Centre is recommended. It contains a large and very well done museum describing the long history of Signal Hill. St. John's is one of the oldest cities in North America and Signal Hill has been in continuous use since the 17th Century.

Following your stop there, return to your car and make a right turn out of the parking lot, proceeding up the hill toward Cabot Tower (some people choose to hike this section – less than half a mile). At the top of the hill, there is a relatively small parking lot near the tower. Park (if you can) and walk up to the Tower. It is always windy here, as it was for Marconi, since the North Atlantic Ocean is directly on your left side. Enter the Tower from the mezzanine. The inevitable Gift Shop is on the first floor.

Go up the stairs and on the second and third floors there is a Marconi museum with displays of the history of this location and also an amateur radio station, VO1AA, which may be operated by visiting amateurs. All radio stations licensed by the Dominion of Newfoundland after 1912 and before the April 1st, 1949 confederation have call signs beginning with VO.

We visited on a sunny, summer day, so we thought to step outside to a large third floor stone balcony to view the flag masts and antennas. In addition, the tower overlooks the harbor and the city of St. John's. All of these are well worth going outside to see, although it took two hefty people to push open the door and let in some other wind-blown visitors so that we could go out.



St. John's Harbor from Cabot Tower.



Cape Spear from Cabot Tower.

The Marconi Museum and Further Marconi History

Marconi's successful Signal Hill experiment prompted him to state that he would establish a permanent wireless station a few miles away at Cape Spear. The Anglo-American Telegraph Company, which controlled the telegraph cable to Newfoundland and had a monopoly on communications there, threatened to sue and he abandoned this plan. Instead, in 1902, Marconi took up an invitation from Canada and formed the Canadian Marconi Company. After 1904, when the Anglo-American monopoly expired, it was Canadian Marconi which began operating 11 ship-to-shore wireless stations in Newfoundland for both Canada and Newfoundland.

By the 1930's, Canadian Marconi was given control of the coastal wireless system, and undertook to revamp and modernize the entire system of shore stations. On August 12, 1933, the Marconi Company established a powerful new station in Cabot Tower. This station continued in operation for many years, operated first by Canadian Marconi until 1949, and then by divisions of the Canadian government until 1960. Note that despite Marconi's original intent, neither Signal Hill nor the other locations were transatlantic stations. Lately, there seems to be renewed interest in Marconi and Signal Hill. A few weeks ago, the BBC published a brief article first

pointed out to me by Bruce Ingraham. It can be found at:

<http://www.bbc.com/travel/story/20170831-canadas-vital-role-in-the-communications-revolution>

As the travel sites say: "If you plan to go..." St. John's is a very friendly and interesting place and Marconi is part of the history here. However, if you plan to drive, be aware that St. John's is about the same distance from New Jersey as Mount Rushmore. Fly Air Canada.

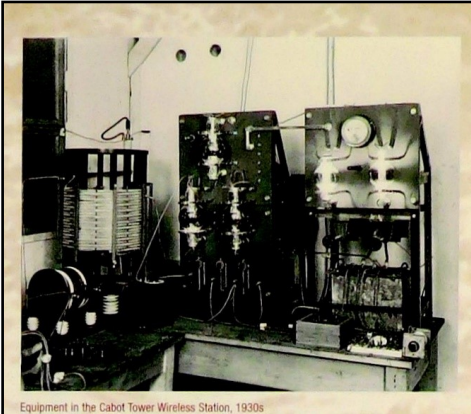


Photo of the 1933 station displayed in the Marconi Museum in Cabot Tower.

WWII WEEKEND FEATURES VIRTUAL RADIO

By
Marv Beeferman

The following article is based on a story by Kayla Marsh posted in the "Coast Star" on August 31st...Ed

On Saturday and Sunday, August 26th and 27th, InfoAge visitors had the opportunity to experience a diverse exhibition of miniature models, dioramas and other memorabilia honoring and remembering those who served in the armed forces. The ninth annual World War II Weekend brought learners of all ages together for a chance to go back in time and see what it was really like to live in the era that saw Pearl Harbor, D-Day and much more.

NJARC member and InfoAge volunteer Dave Sica noted the significance of the event when interviewed by a local reporter:

"We are making sure this isn't being forgotten. Most of the people who come to visit will not have experienced this per-

sonally. This is the next best thing we can do to give you that impression of what people were doing, what was important, what was topical back then and why it was important and still is [important] to remember."

A representative permanent display located adjacent to the NJARC Vintage Radio Workshop depicts a typical WWII Living Room. The room features period furniture and a "virtual" 1940's radio where visitors can travel back in time joining the many families who would gather around to listen to the news and speeches and be entertained by many of the programs broadcast during the war era. Dave said that the room "was designed to give people an idea of what a typical living room might look like during WWII. We display an actual radio of the era and feed it with programming so that people can try to get the feel for what it was like to be in their living room and hear the news and the programming in the era. Most people didn't have a television and this is where they got their information from. They huddled around it and listened very carefully."

The virtual radio was conceived and built by NJARC member Harry Klancer. Programming, ranging from 1941 to 1945, is made possible through special computer software and gives listeners a vivid imagination of what it was like to hear the declaration of war, to hear about the attack on Pearl Harbor, the D-Day invasion and other historic moments and battles.



Harry Klancer places finishing touches on cabinet that was used for the WWII Living Room "virtual radio."



Front panel of the "virtual radio."

Dave also noted that "although it is a computer-controlled display, it is rigged up so that the sound comes through the radio itself so you get the experience as authentically as you could. To sit in a room that is designed to look and feel like the 1940s, hopefully it gives an idea of how times were."

Also included in the WWII Weekend's exhibits were a display of military vehicles including a newly restored WWI "Jeb Stuart" light tank; a 25 X 17 foot illustration of Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7th, 1941; a National Archives WWII exhibit of posters paintings that depict scenes of battles; letters from government officials and soldiers to loved ones and dioramas featuring models and miniatures conveying the drama of WWII battle scenes.

InfoAge's mission is to preserve, honor and educate about scientific innovation and history in order to inspire new generations of thinkers, dreamers and visionaries. The NJARC makes a significant contribution to this effort. To support this effort, Dave noted that "we are constantly looking for new ideas for displays. When visitors come by, we want to have things that are interesting and unique. For repeat visitors, we like to keep the exhibits fresh...while respecting and honoring the history of this site, which was the U.S. Army's research base."

THEY'RE BACK!

By
Marv Beeferman

If you're a docent or just a casual observer at the NJARC's Radio Technology Museum, you'll probably notice that the exhibits that get a majority of interest are those that represent technologies that were quite common in the life of the visitor but are now basically extinct. One of the most common comments is "I remember when I (or my parents) had one of those!" However, over the years, many of those "extinct" technologies, like vinyl records, have returned to be enjoyed by a new generation of users. Thus, those round, flat discs with concentric grooves are no longer the oddity and focus of interest they may have been some fifteen years ago.

Based on an article that appeared in a recent *AARP Magazine* and a story on the *Today* show, the cassette tape is being resurrected as a music source. So get out a pencil and respool all that wayward audiotape and get some new batteries for

your Walkman: cassettes are cool again.



Why? In this digital age, some music fans still want a physical product and crave that "analog sound." Basically, it's the same impetus that has driven an upsurge in the vinyl record industry. Another factor may be the cassette's exposure to a new generation of music buffs. The official soundtrack for Marvel's movie *Guardians of the Galaxy* is still going strong, despite its 2014 release. The soundtrack, featured heavily in the movie as the personal mixtape (remember those?) "Awesome Mix" of Chris Pratt's character Peter Quill, sold 4,000 units last year, bringing its total to 11,000 units since its release. Finally, new LPs often cost around \$20 while cassettes can be had for about \$8.



A few manufacturers still make cassette decks and even portable players like the Walkman and like many of our club members know, vintage players are still quite available. (Is a new eBay money-maker waiting in the wings?)

According to Nielsen's year-end music report, in 2016, cassette sales rose 74 percent to 129,000 units. That's a paltry amount when compared to vinyl's 13.1 million unit sales and the declining CD market of 105 million units. Yet, similar to vinyl, a cassette sales bump still represents a healthier appetite for physical goods playable on now-vintage hardware.

To meet increased demand, many smaller labels are now releasing new cassettes and so have top acts such as Justin Bieber, Kanye West, Halsey and Metallica. You can also get reissued classics by Prince, Nirvana and Eminem in this "retro format." However, new pre-recorded tapes no longer use the Dolby noise reduction system as Dolby Laboratories no longer licenses nor produces the electronic components required to implement the

system for recording or playback.

Interestingly, a majority of cassette sales come from small batches being bought by hardcore fans online. As Billboard notes, 43 percent of all cassette sales in 2016 were through direct-to-consumer operations like bands' personal websites or the online shops of independent record levels. Often, cassettes and vinyl act as an outlet for a band's aesthetic tastes and product design prowess, giving consumers something physical to cherish at a time when unique album art and liner notes have been treated as non-essential by the smartphone crowd.

The cassette tape, audio cassette, or simply "tape" or "cassette" was released by Philips in 1962, having been developed in Hasselt, Belgium. The first cassette player (although mono) designed for use in car dashes was introduced in 1968. Between the early 1970s and early 2000s, the cassette became one of the two most common formats for prerecorded music, first alongside the LP record and later the CD.

The audio quality of early cassette players was not well suited for music and some had an unreliable mechanical design. In 1971, the Advent Corporation introduced their Model 201 tape deck that combined Dolby type B noise reduction and chromium dioxide (CrO₂) tape, with a commercial-grade tape transport mechanism supplied by the Wollensak camera division of the 3M Corporation. This resulted in the format being taken more seriously for musical use, and started the era of high fidelity cassettes and players.

The cassette's popularity grew during the 1970s and 1980s by being a more effective, convenient and portable way of listening to music via stereo tape decks, boom boxes and the Sony Walkman. However, one drawback to sales was shoplifting; compact cassettes were small enough that a thief could easily place one inside a pocket. The problem was eventually solved by oversized packaging and locked display cases.

The market for cassettes declined sharply in the late 1980s; the sales of pre-recorded cassettes were overtaken by CDs during the early 1990s. Sales further declined with few retailers stocking them because they were no longer issued by the major music labels. The last new car with an available cassette player was a 2010 Lexus SC 430. But with the return of cassette popularity, who knows where it might lead? Anyway, maybe it wasn't such a bad idea to go with the cassette player standard option when I purchased my '98 Cadillac Catera.

LAST CALL FOR TONY FLANAGAN MEMORIAL AWARD NOMINATIONS

By
Marv Beeferman

As part of the club's 25th anniversary celebration, we will be accepting nominations for the Tony Flanagan Memorial Award. Tony was the club's founder and first president and the award was established upon his passing to honor his contributions to the NJARC. The award consists of a plaque and a certificate with the club maintaining its own plaque (below) of past winners. The award is presented for outstanding 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.
- The promotion of the public awareness of radio development and history through books, articles and exhibitions.



It should be noted that the primary emphasis of the nomination should be given to the above considerations and not necessarily to the individual "who has done the most for the club." Previous winners have been John Dilks (1999), Ludwell Sibley (2001), Ray Chase (2009) and Phil Vourtsis (2012).

Nominations may be made by any NJARC member in good standing and must be presented in writing (or via email) to the Executive Board for voting no later than November 1st, 2017. You may send your nomination to your editor at mbeeferman@verizon.net and I will distribute it to the Board.

NJARC Holiday Party 25th Anniversary Celebration

Date: Saturday, December 16th, 2017
Time: 5:00 PM – Cocktail Hour
6:15 PM – Dinner
Place: West Lake Golf & Country Club
1 Pine Lake Circle, Jackson NJ 08527

Members \$25 each
Non-Member Adults and Children over 12: \$25 each
Children under 12: \$5 each

Cocktail Hour, Dinner Buffet, Mystery Grab Bag, Surprises
*****RESERVATIONS REQUIRED*****

If you plan to attend, please fill out the attached form, detach it and mail it with a check to:

Marvin Beeferman
2265 Emerald Park Drive
Forked River, NJ 08731
609-693-9430/mbeeferman@verizon.net

by December 9th. **Members who plan to attend must send back a response form with the full name(s) of additional attendees.** Reservations must be made via the form below; please refrain from telephone or email reservations unless absolutely necessary! Payment must accompany the form.

-----Cut here -----

Name(s): [Please indicate if member (m), non-member (nm) or child (c).]

Telephone or email: _____

Number of **Members:** _____ X \$25 = \$ _____
Number of **Children** under 12: _____ X \$5 = \$ _____
Number of **Non-Members:** _____ X \$25 = \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

Make checks out to **NJARC**, enclose with this form and **mail by 12/09/17.**



New Jersey Antique Radio Club's

Fall Swap Meet



Parsippany PAL Building

33 Baldwin Road

Parsippany, NJ 07054

Just off Route 46,

Adjacent to Smith Field



Saturday October 28th, 2017



Refreshments Available

(70) 8 Foot Tables

\$25.00 for members

\$30.00 for non-members

Reserve Additional Tables \$20.00

At the Door \$25.00

Open to the Public

8am to 12 noon

Vendor setup at 7:15 AM

\$5.00 ENTRANCE FEE

CLUB DONATION

For Directions

Visit our website: www.njarc.org

or Mapquest

33 Baldwin Rd Parsippany NJ 07054

Vendors Make Your Reservations Now!

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