



The Jersey Broadcaster

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW JERSEY ANTIQUE RADIO CLUB

July 2025

Volume 31 Issue 7



The *Jersey Broadcaster* is distributed to members of the New Jersey Antique Radio Club via email as a PDF file. Back issues of many of our newsletters are available on the club's website:

www.njarc.org/broadcaster/

Meeting Notice

Our July meeting will be held on Friday, 7/11 at Princeton University in Bowen Hall. Meeting topic will be "Show & Tell" and "Hints & Kinks."

Directions can be found on Google Maps at <https://bit.ly/4jZe8XI>. We plan to live stream the meeting on YouTube at youtube.com/user/NJARC.

Meeting Review

At our June meeting, Jonathan Allen gave a presentation about *The History of Early Radio & Electronic Manufacturing in New Jersey & New York*.

Jonathan talked about how for much of the twentieth century, New Jersey was a hub of innovation in the radio, television and electronics industries. There was Bell Laboratories, RCA Laboratories and a whole host of other companies doing electronic device manufacturing and innovation, including vacuum tubes, metering equipment and test instruments.

If you missed the meeting, you can watch a recording of the live webcast on the club's YouTube channel: <https://bit.ly/3yZ5yoR>.

Calendar of Events

July 11: NJARC monthly meeting, Princeton

July 13: Sussex hamfest, Augusta NJ

July 15: HARPS montly meeting, Suffern NY

July 26: NJARC Summer Swapmeet, InfoAge

August 8: NJARC monthly meeting, Princeton

August 23: NJARC Summer Repair Clinic, InfoAge

September 12: NJARC monthly meeting, InfoAge

September 19-20: Kutztown Radio Show

October 7-11: AWA Conference, Henrietta NY

October 10: NJARC monthly meeting, Princeton

October 25: NJARC Spring Repair Clinic, InfoAge

November 14: NJARC monthly meeting, Princeton

November 22, NJARC Fall Show, Parsippany

December 13: NJARC Holiday Party, Jackson

From the President's Workbench

Greetings Fellow Enthusiasts!

On July 28th through the 29th, the NJARC's Amateur Radio Station WRTM participated in the Annual ARRL Field Day Event. The 40-foot-high aerial had been previously erected in the field south of Building 9032A, near the Guardrail plane. Weather, thankfully, was not an issue, unlike last year.



The President's Workbench.

The contest was scheduled to start promptly at 2 PM in a 24-hour cycle ending at 14:00 on Sunday. As with all Field Days, food & drink must be consumed regularly to sustain the operators and loggers on the mike and the key! So a luncheon of Radio Pepperoni Pizza, red wine and chocolate brownies was in order! The dinner menu was slightly different thanks to contest captain Nevell, who prepared his world-famous Radio Chile Con Arroz, served with red wine and chocolate brownies.

Radio contacts over the course of the contest were encouraging. Some of the numbers are as follows: at 40 meters on frequency 7.243 MHz there were approximately 740 contacts total with 13 on CW and 612 on phone. Ted worked about 115 contacts using FT8 digital mode on Sunday. These are preliminary numbers and Nevell will have more information at

(Continued on next page.)

President's Workbench

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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 on the second Friday of each month either at InfoAge or at Princeton University. Neither the editor nor NJARC is liable for any other use of the contents of this publication other than for information.

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our July 11th Meeting at Princeton University. The “usual suspects” radio operators showed up for our annual event: Captain Nevell, Ted, John, Gus, Matt and Mario, all sharing the mike and logging duties.

How about more operators for next year's ARRL Field Day Event!? Of our club's membership, 30% are licensed Hams!

— Richard Lee Pres. NJARC



The Contest Aerial



The Operators of Radio Station W2RTM
 Front to back: Ted, Nevell, John, Matt, Gus and Mario

(Continued on next page.)

President's Workbench
(Continued)



John Making Contacts



Radio lunch: pizza and wine



Radio dessert brownies



W2RTM

Refinishing a Radio Cabinet (Part 1)

By Dan Gervais

Cleaning a radio

As silly as it might sound, one should start with a vacuum cleaner to clean the radio cabinet. In tight corners one can use an artist paint brush with rather stiff bristles and follow along with the vacuum nozzle. Afterward you can use a slightly damp rag. Avoid cleaning with lacquer thinner or even alcohol. Even though alcohol does not dilute lacquers it does soften them up a bit so be careful with alcohol especially if you don't know if the finish is shellac or lacquer (alcohol dissolves shellac.) Cleaning with compressed air is helpful, but be very careful around labels typically found inside the cabinet.

Re-gluing veneer and delamination

After dusting and cleaning, re-gluing is often the second step in a radio restoration. Tap on the veneer to sense what is loose or not. Loose or lifted veneer will make a distinctive sound. Usually it's the perimeter of the radio that comes undone first. Look for areas where the veneer was but joined together (like on the top of a radio) as these joints commonly lift up. Inspect those joints, and re-glue as necessary.

Follow along the delaminating line of the veneer with an X-Acto knife and carefully pry open to see how far it goes. If there are many you may have a radio that has had a hard life. In this case you may have to decide if it's best to remove the whole veneer and start over or re-glue all the many lifted areas. Obviously this becomes another project, but can be quite rewarding.

While clamping is the standard and sure bet way, sometimes it's difficult to apply pressure in all of the areas, clamps never seem to have enough reach. Making a plywood template to extend the reach of the clamps helps to apply even pressure in all of the areas. I use scrap pieces of thick plywood ($\frac{3}{4}$ ".)

Another popular method to set veneer is to use an iron. You insert some wood glue under the delaminated veneer and use the hot iron to press down and wait for the glue to dry. The iron is set to a rather low temperature. Obviously this method will destroy the original finish so it's refinishing time afterward. This method is very time-efficient on radios where there are many small areas to be repaired, where many areas can be re-glued quickly without the need to clamp and wait for the glue to dry. One inherent caveat to this method is that veneer will shrink when heated. If you have a large veneer that has a joint in it, the joint will open up when heated.

Proceed on with re-gluing the frame connections using clamps as required. Often a couple of corner inside blocks will have fallen off. Lightly tap them all with a hammer as more might come off. Sand them clean and re-glue them.

When taking apart a radio, try to locate hidden nails that lock in the joints and prevent disassembly. A powerful magnet is great for doing this. This is typical on some Atwater Kent radios.

Getting the glue in there!

For really deep delamination where you cannot reach the end of the veneer split, I usually like to wet the wood surfaces to be glued prior to applying the actual glue. I find that this method works well to let the thick glue penetrate deeper into the crevasse. To do this, I make a thinned glue mix of about 60/40 (glue/water) and apply a generous amount to wet the innards surfaces. Time is your friend: let the mixture slowly wet and raise the grain of the wood inside the split. I then remove all of the excess liquid, and apply a new coat of regular glue. I use items like a spatula or a knife or I press the veneer starting from the outside toward the inside of the split, this as to force the glue to move further down.

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Refinishing a Radio Cabinet (Part 1)

(Continued)

I usually use a good PVA glue and my favorite is Titebond III. This version has longer set time, so its easier to align you pieces properly. I'm also currently using a bottle of LePage Pro Carpenter's glue and it works great. hide glue is another good option that provides quick setting and is removable. Like contact cement, hide glue can be used in a similar way. A true hide glue will require a heat pot to maintain your glue at temperature. While this set-up makes using this glue more complicated, the quick setting nature of this glue makes it a good option to install those small corners inside a radio. Hide glue was widely used in radios of the 1920s.



Another method of getting the glue in tight spaces is to use capillary force to your advantage. With this method you apply glue over the entire length of the crack (or the veneer split) and by pushing on the veneer you should see small air bubbles come out of the glue, upon releasing the pressure on the veneer glue gets pumped back into the crack. Repeat this many times and slowly the glue will progress deep into the crack. Using a rather thinned out PVA glue works best.

Finally, you can use syringe to inject the glue in tight or far reaching corners.

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Basic sanding without removing the finish

This is always a judgment call, but on many radios there is enough finish left over but the lacquer itself is either cracked, flaked off or uneven. In these cases it is possible to sand lightly and reshoot another coat of lacquer over the radio. You must be careful to clean up only the surface of the clear finish and not the tint underneath it. Be careful of corners as this is where it's easy to sand through the finish and expose bare wood.

A typical process could be:

Clean the lacquer with a lint free cloth with some mineral spirits on it.

If you think that people in the past may have used some refinishing compound with silicone in it, purchase some specific silicone remover solvent and wipe off the radio totally. Silicone is the arch enemy of radio refinishing. Grease & wax removers will be efficient in removing silicone and are readily found in car paint refinishing.

Refinishing a Radio Cabinet (Part 1)

(Continued)

ing stores. If you see 'fisheyes' appear after your coat of lacquer, it's a clear sign that silicone was used on this radio at one point in time.



Sand the surface with some 320-grit sandpaper or 0000 oil-free steel wool. Because our radio surfaces are rarely flat and equal, mount your sandpaper on a foam piece. Be careful over the edges and don't try and sand everywhere, but clean up the surfaces that are apparent.



Soft sanding block

Mounting the sandpaper on a semi-rigid surface makes it ride somewhat on top of the lacquer.



Semi-soft sanding block

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Refinishing a Radio Cabinet (Part 1)

(Continued)

Finally, in case you were sanding to remove a hump on a radio, you would probably use very little foam so that the veneer will conform more to the flat surface of your sanding block.



Firm sanding block

Not all sandpaper is created equal. I use Norton 3X sandpaper or their ProSand series, and I avoid the traditional garnet sandpaper and the cheap sandpaper on Amazon like the Gator brand. 3M has recently released a new line of high performance sandpaper named Cubitron™.

These new generation sand papers have very hard and sharp particles that sand extremely well and don't clog up. The one drawback is, the surface tends to have more scouring lines than traditional papers. Because of this, I use this type of sandpaper for rough sanding, or for finishing I will use the next higher up smoother grit (for example, using 320 instead of 220.)



Semi-soft sanding block

Now back to basic sanding without removing the finish!

At this point, you could apply some oil base stain (not too dark) and usually this will make disappear many if not all of the scratches and defects. Let the oil base stain dry at least a day.

Using a spray gun, apply a thin coat of lacquer. Applying lacquer is a subject within itself. I suggest some reading and watching videos to get some pointers. If you have never done this before, practice on some cardboard pieces first. Start with a basic horizontal piece trying to get an even overlap and straight lines, progress onto vertical surfaces.

Refinishing a Radio Cabinet (Part 1)

(Continued)

There are many variables in air spray, here is what I think are some of the important ones:

Maintaining a constant distance and angle is important. Before shooting, practice how your arm will travel and figure out if you will be stable for the whole length your attempting to spray. Sometimes having the other hand stabilize your elbow helps. Spreading your feet apart helps also. Is the radio at a convenient height? Mounting the radio on a turntable helps quite a bit.

The viscosity of the lacquer and how fast you advance the gun will dictate how much material you are laying on. You must position yourself and have the right backlight so that you will see the reflection of the surface once it becomes wet. This last point is probably the most important tip on spraying. Basically if you cannot see the reflection as the surface become wet as you spray it, you are basically running blind and your chances of having runs are almost guaranteed. If you do have runs, it's usually best to let them dry completely, sand and recoat. I've had great success in wearing a frontal headlight while shooting lacquer, this has become my standard setup for spraying.

Lacquers are an evaporative finish. They skin on the surface first and then the liquid phase underneath must evaporate thru this hardened surface. This is why thick coats takes exponentially longer to dry, so it's best to be patient and apply a regular coat, sand and then apply another. If there are water vapours in the lacquer, this water will need to find its way out either to the top or thru the bottom.

Retarders are solvents (like lacquer thinner) that dilute in lacquer but evaporate more slowly than regular lacquer thinner (which is itself a mixture of several solvents.) You add them in part to the thinner you're already adding to thin out your lacquer. In humid areas (like Florida) they're probably a must. I use them to help retard the drying process, and to have a flatter finish. But I've also used them in the past as a precautionary when I dared finish a radio on a humid day!



Lacquer Retarder

End of Part I. Article continues with Part II in next month's *Broadcaster*!

(Continued on next page.)

Intercontinental Radio Restoration ("Never Give Up!")

By Isaac Reiff

Back in 2007 while residing in Viera, Florida (Melbourne), I was offered a Grundig Radio-Phono Combo by a retired Air Force Lt. Colonel who was moving into an assisted living facility. I rushed over to see said unit and knew that this was a 'must have.' After bringing it home and placing it where it would be seen by anyone that entered, it became my special toy.

As time went on, the selector switches were becoming more erratic and the FM band quit working. After careful inspection, it was clear that the plastic used in the early 1960s by the Grundig folks was of poor quality. The slide switches were disintegrating to the point where only the AM band would work. Fast forward to 2015, we moved back to NJ and of course my Grundig came with us. I started to look for solutions and came up empty, until I went to eBay Europe.

Approximately three years ago, I came across a set (Stereomeister 15 Stand Alone), in Belgium. With my bid at \$75 higher than all other bids, it seemed I was going to finally get my replacement chassis. Well, somebody took the unit at \$10.00 more in the final seconds. Moving along to Jan 2023, out of the clear blue, I get a text message from a gentleman name Harry, located in Salzburg Austria. I got back to him and he assured me that he had what I was looking for and that it was fully operational. His price with shipping was just under 400 Euros. I went to my bank and wire transferred the exact amount. Within three weeks, my unit arrived.

Of course I was concerned about the quality of the packing and whether or not it would arrive in one piece, but lo and behold it did. After making it USA compatible, I installed it in its permanent home and now, I'm back to enjoying the great sound coming out of those built-in speakers.

Moral of the story, "Never Give Up"



Online Resources

The NJARC Online Library: Ed Papson has generously made even more additions to the club's online library of radio-related books. New categories include: Crystal Radios (over 60 new publications); General Radio (23 new submissions of radio-related publications, not specific to the General Radio company!); Radio Shack Notebooks (18 notebooks); Regen & Reflex (36 articles and schematics.) Please thank Ed when you see him for making this information available from his personal collection of publications that he has gathered over the years. It can be found in the online library on our website, or you can use this link: www.njarc.org/books.

Newsletters: Back-issues of the club's newsletters for the past 30 years can be found in our online library. www.njarc.org/newsletterarchives.html



New Jersey Antique Radio Club's

Summer Tailgate Swap Meet and Ham Fest



InfoAge Science and History
Learning Center and Museum
2201 Marconi Road
Wall Township, NJ 07718



Saturday July 26, 2025



Refreshments Available

40 Spaces available
\$25 for members
\$30 for non-members
Bring your own tables

Open to the Public

8 AM to Noon
Vendor setup at 7:15 AM
\$5 ENTRANCE FEE
CLUB DONATION

For Directions

Visit our website: www.njarc.org
or set your GPS to:
2201 Marconi Road
Wall, NJ 07719

Vendors Make Your Reservations Now!

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