

# Antique-radio enthusiasts share passion in Parsippany

Swap meet at PAL draws 300 who shop for parts, trade tips

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## PARSIPPANY

Guglielmo Marconi, inventor of radio, and Edwin Howard Armstrong, inventor of FM, were off-mentioned names at the spring antique radio swap meet at the Parsippany Police Athletic League building on Saturday.

It was there approximately 300 antique radio enthusiasts from New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut bargained for, browsed through and delighted in radios of the 1920s and 1930s.

"Some people go to the opera. Some people play sports. I like to play with the radios," said Dave Sica, a Parsippany resident and 16-year board member of the New Jersey Antique Radio Club.

This season's meet was most noteworthy for the increase in the number of people purchasing parts and decrease in radio sales — some sell for thousands of dollars.

Richard Bednarck, 56, of Lincoln Park said parts were selling well. Test meters, capacitors, spark coils and spark plugs were displayed in boxes.

Ruth Milano, 79, of Wayne, and her husband Joseph, 77, exhibited stacks of large antique radios, mostly from the 1930s. A large orange sign under their stacks of radios read: "All Radios Work."

"I'm older than some of these radios; maybe that's why we like them so much. It brings back memories," Milano said.

By the end of the day the couple sold one radio, which he said is unusual. He attributed the slow sales to the economy but

added that it's not about making the sale for him.

"It's not a business for me. I usually fix them up and trade them. I like it," he said.

John Tymiski, 19, of Bordentown, stood out as one of the youngest at the meet.

"People from my generation are not into this," Tymiski said.

Tymiski took the encasement of a television set from 1948. It had a cathode ray tube in a screen approximately the size of two business cards.

Wayne Wiles, 60, of West Paterson said, "I think people are more conservative in their buying habits."

Wiles pointed to a small white radio priced at \$2,000. "It's not selling," he said.

Peter Dubinski, of Clifton said every swap meet was different. Among the items that stood out for him this year included wood cabinet radios, Emerson and Zenith.

Walter Heskes, of Edison was there with his 11-year-old son, Aaron. He emphasized the tradition of passing the hobby down from one generation to the next.

"Every time we come, we find something," he said, noting they have more than 100 radios at home.

"We see it, buy it, restore it and later on find it may have some value."

The antique radio club holds the swap meet three times a year. Two of those are held at the Police Athletic League in Parsippany.

"The idea is that we are stewards of these radios," said Richard Lee president of the radio club.

There was an auction at the end of the show.

"It works to everyone's advantage because the sellers get rid of the stuff nobody wants, and the buyers get a good price.



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Marianne Reid-Brown of New Milford, above, looks at two old tube radios at an antique radio swap meet Saturday in Parsippany. Steve Sideroff, below, left, of Marlboro and Joe Milano of Wayne check out an old tube receiver.



Everyone goes home happy," he said.

Michael Littman, antique radio club member and professor of aerospace engineering at Princeton University, is particularly interested in the history of radio, from Marconi to Armstrong.

The professor has what

he calls an "eclectic" collection of radios and battery sets. "I like to rescue an old radio," Littman

said.

"It's an inexpensive way to learn history and preserve the past."