



October 2013



NOTE FROM PRESIDENT TOM

Hello, All!!

October has been a busy month with the Radio Show for the APCO Birmingham Division Energizers, Helena Hamfest, the upcoming Chattanooga Hamfest, Robert's Radio Class, more donations and general customer repair work in the Shop. We have added several new members, and we are "courting" a few more. Membership is important as it keeps the Society Objective alive.

To restate our Objective:

To promote the preservation of antique radios, training aids, manuals and repair bulletins and antenna-related tools or equipment associated with them, including all things related to the electronics industry.

To advance the need for the members and the general public to search out, locate and preserve an important segment of American history that is in real danger of becoming lost forever.

To establish a working library for future generations preserving the technology, technical literature, service data, catalogs and the textbooks – old and new – which relate to the early development of radio.

To promote, educate and generate an appreciation of this marvel whose development had, and continues to have, the single most influencing impact upon all the people of the world. Without the development of radio, there would be only one means of mass communication – the written word.

The things we do at the Society should have some relationship to our Objective. I will admit that fellowship is not directly in our objective, but it is a key ingredient in making us successful. When we meet on regular workdays, special workdays and on Monday nights, the fellowship we share through discussions of all things radio, and a few other non-radio items, help all of us to learn new things, to empathize with other members and to become a contributing part of the Society. To grow, we must seek out and offer, to those with similar interests, the opportunity to become a part of this group. Diversity is good, coupled with the desire to work toward our stated Objective above.

We continue in our Twenty-Fifth Year and don't want to lose sight of the things we have done and the things we plan to do in the future. There are still tickets available for the Radio Show on February 22 at the Virginia Samford Theatre in Birmingham, Alabama. The phone numbers are 205-251-1206 or 205-251-6805. Society purchased a block of thirty seats based on a list of those wanting to attend. If you were on that list, it is time to write John Outland (payable to AHRS) a check for \$21 for each ticket you reserved.

We continue to collect information for our planned book celebrating Alabama Historical Radio Society's first twenty-five years. Each of you has some story that can be told in public, which should be a part of this book. You can be anonymous or proud. Either way, we need your stories! Don't worry that they are not perfectly written or missing some detail. Someone else may be able to fill in where you leave a blank. The editors will make it look good and make sense out of it, unless non-sense sounds better.

Meeting the educational part of our Objective, Dave Cisco and Dee Haynes conducted an Historical Radio Show for the Alabama Power Company Birmingham Division Energizers (Energizers) at their regular membership meeting with about forty-five attendees. I am close to this group, as I am the incoming President for the next two years. I must say that, while I have accompanied Dave and Dee on three or four previous shows, their presentation seems to become more interesting and educational each time! Energizers came up to Dave and Dee, and me, after the Show and raved about it. I had a little glow inside thinking about the impact Dave and Dee have on those attending each of their shows. You need to attend one of their shows and, if you have the desire, learn from them and help them put on these shows.

I attended Robert's Radio Class on October 12, in lieu of attending the Helena Hamfest, where many of our members were. It was our first class with the big screen TV and it was a hit! We had a small number of students due to some conflicts, but an eager group, I must say. I have been to many of Robert's classes over the years, and I have learned a lot. This class seemed special as Robert showed an energy level not seen in a while. Now he is always energetic, it just seems that he had backed into a wall outlet, or something, and he was on fire! Best Saturday morning I have had in a while! I have included a picture of him and the SKYPE setup from the class. We have a little more tweaking to do on the setup, but we are close.



Robert teaches the class from a workshop he had built behind his house in Loxley, Alabama. He sent me some pictures of the workshop as he was moving things in. Several pictures of his shop under construction appeared in the July 2012 Newsletter in the News link on alhrs.org. I have visited Robert and Margaret and toured the workshop and it is great fellowship, and a nice shop, too. Please thank him for his efforts whenever you get the chance.

Robert tells his story: "We moved from Gardendale, AL to Loxley, AL in May, 2012. The move was necessary due to my health. We sold, bought a new house and moved in 31 days. My wife and I packed my workshop – a total of 178 boxes of radios, parts, tubes and test equipment. My collection is so invaluable to both of us that we rented a U-haul truck instead of moving it on the moving van with our home furniture. We rented a climate controlled storage unit until I could build a new radio shop. The contractor started the building in June and completed it in the middle of August. This shop is heated and air conditioned and has hurricane tie downs, pull-down stairs for storage in the attic (which is full). From this location on the first Saturday of the month, I teach the radio classes via SKYPE back to the AHRS in Birmingham. An extended invitation is offered to each of you to come visit."

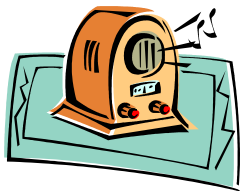


Robert's next Class will be on November 9, from 9 until 11:30 a.m. This is the second Saturday in November and not the usual first Saturday class day.

Our next monthly Monday night meeting is on October 28 at 7 p.m. There will be a Board meeting at 6 p.m. prior to the regular meeting. I request that the standing committees meet prior to this Board meeting and discuss action steps to do those things we have been discussing for a while. I am looking for a member that is knowledgeable of SKYPE and can educate us on it, for the Program. Please let me know ASAP if you are that person. Thanks!

Tom Killian

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OLD TIME RADIO BITS

Hello Folks!

Well, I'm still enjoying my Wi-Fi Radio. Several of our members have purchased these radios and are getting much enjoyment from them. The other day my postman, knowing that I was a ham, asked me where he could get a radio that would pick up radio stations from other countries. Being proud of my hobby, I jumped at the chance to tell him all about HF radios and antennas and such. Then I invited him back to my room to see some of my radios. There, he saw my little Wi-Fi Radio. I explained how you could find radio stations from all around the world. He asked me if I could pick up Israel. I put Israel in the search bar, and a second or two later, we saw a half-dozen stations from Israel. Well, that sold him. He said he was going right out and buy one for himself.

So much for Internet Radios, I think I will become a fly on the wall in the house halfway up in the next block. I've put Fibber McGee back into his closet for a while and reloaded my bedside iPod with "Vic and Sade." This was a 15 minute daytime radio show about a typical Midwestern family with everyday run-of-the-mill happenings. Nobody used foul language or stayed out past midnight. Quite often they would go out on the front porch and sit in the swing to wait for Mr. Victor Gook, the man of the house. Mrs. Sade Gook was the typical housewife of the 1940's. Her hobby was collecting dish rags. They were always on sale at Yamelton's department store. Sometimes they would invite the neighbors, Fred and Ruthie Stembottom, over for a friendly card game of 500. Their young son, Russell, always talked about his friends and the happenings in school. Then there was Uncle Fletcher, played by Clarence Hartzell. It is well worth listening to the show just to hear Uncle Fletcher.

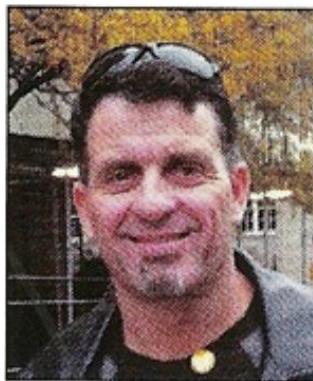
If you have abso-dog-gone-lutely nothing to do, you might want to listen in on the Gook family. They live halfway up in the next block. It will give you a chance to ketch up on some sleep.

So long for now. See you in the funny paper.

Dee Haynes

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Chapter Chatter

Todd Robinson, Associate Editor

Telefunken meets The Alabama Historical Radio Society

By Mike Violette

The **Rabbit Hill Music** store sits one hundred feet back from the highway on the Route 50 straightway between Grasonville and Easton Maryland, a long way from Birmingham, Alabama.



It's even farther away from Berlin, Germany on the River *Spree*. My 1956 Telefunken *Concertino* has spent time in all three places.

How she got to Rabbit Hill Music Store is anyone's guess. The store is more an eclectic collector's den than bona fide music shop, although the collection has some items to recommend a visit. LPs are arranged in bins, sorted alphabetically (sort-of). Boxes of 45s are stacked precariously by the door. The odd guitar hangs on the wall, usually missing the "B" or high "E" string, or both. Pieces and parts of musical ephemera are arranged on the counter behind which an ancient woman is sunk into an overstuffed tattered wingback, her gray thinning hair pinned up haphazardly by bobby pins. Thick whitish cataracts are layered upon once-dark green eyes.

The back room of the store contains more stuff and mysteries.

I first saw her lying on the floor in front of a stack of framed, tattered posters. She was sitting low on the ground but still proudly standing erect. No fan of radio or antiques would overlook her and I was drawn to her clean lines, warm wood tones and still-bright faceplate. I bent down to inspect her a little more closely. She was a *Telefunken*! I knew the company name from my first car, a '66 Volkswagen with a Telefunken radio (AM-only). An iconic brand. The model before me, ever more glorious, was a table-top *Concertino*. The allure was immediate. Even if she no longer could demodulate, she was a beauty and would add some style to my modest collection of classic "valve"-powered receivers.



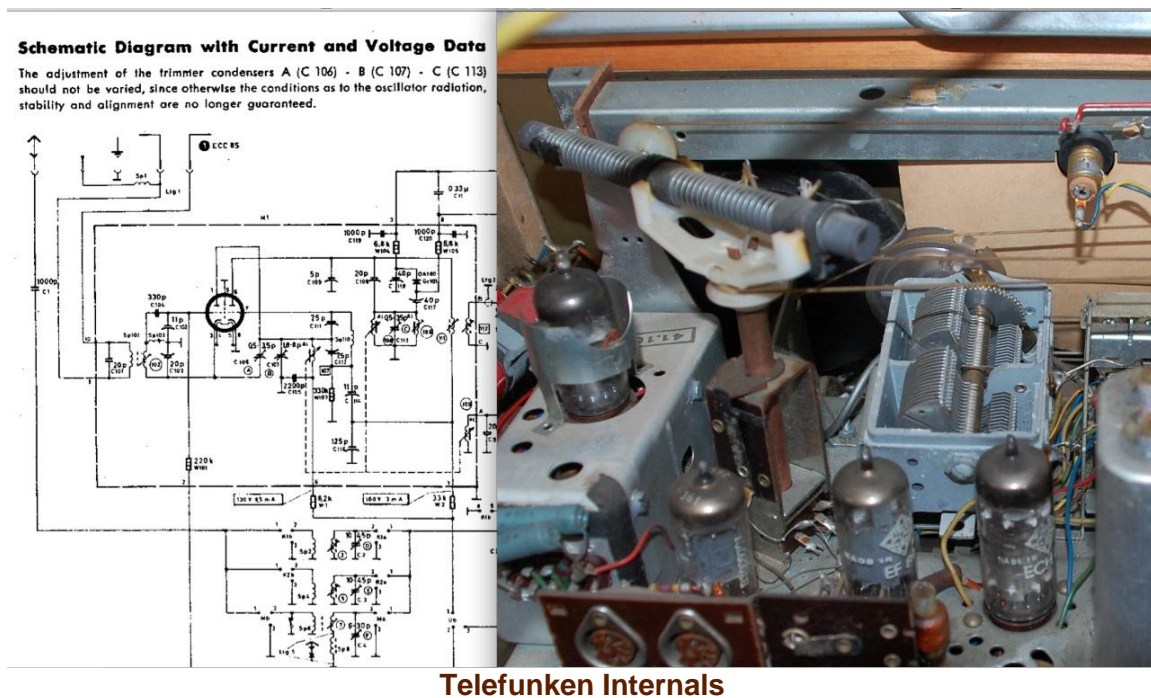
Telefunken Concertino

Telefunken is still a robust manufacturer and innovator of electronic products and got its start in Germany in 1903, just as Marconi and others were commercializing the early airwaves, a time of mad rush of innovation and elbowing. The artfully-mustachioed Kaiser Wilhelm II mandated that Siemens and AEG join forces. The result was the *Telefunken Society for Wireless Telegraphy*. A half-century later, my lady was conceived and created, hand-spun by the River Bree.



I moved the radio out away from the wall, gently pulled the Masonite cover away and peeked inside. All the guts were there! I spun the tuning knob and watched the pulleys rotate the inter-coupled vanes of a big capacitor. Buttery smooth. Maybe she *could* be coaxed back to life.

I paid the gray lady a hundred bucks and brought my *Concertino* home. Now, what to do? Schematics would help, my youthful encounters with tube-driven devices amounted to cannibalizing broken receivers, which included getting my first taste (touch!) of B+ (“Unplug the damn thing before you open it up!” my father would admonish—too late...). Knowing that there is a society for every passion, fad and fetish, my search for schematics for my *Concertino* led me to a radio museum in, well, Germany, where for 30 euros I could have the schematics and alignment procedures. (radiomuseum.org).



Ambition and fancy was too-soon slammed by reality, however (lack of time, rusty bench skills, waning fortitude, laziness), and my *Concertino* was relegated to a spot on my table, mere decoration, beautiful, but mute.

That is until this spring, when I was introduced to the dedicated members of **The Alabama Radio Historical Society**. You see, it happened kind of like this:

John G was a long-time client and had recently retired and was liquidating some items from his day-job. “Mike, are you interested in some shelves and benches?” He sent over some snaps. It wasn’t the workbenches that caught my eye, however, it was his impeccable shop, tidy, exquisite, the place for skilled tinkering (and quite unlike most compliance labs).

I rang him back immediately. “No thanks for the benches and stuff, but I notice you have a nice shop. Do you think you can work on an old radio I have?” I explained a bit about the *Concertino* and my wishes that it once again whisper its musings gathered from the *æther*.

Nexus has a funny way of working. John thought a moment and replied “No, I can’t do it, but I *do* know a good friend. I’ll get a hold of Dave. He’s with the Alabama Radio Historical Society” (alabamahistoricalradiosociety.org). “These are guys who love to work on old radios.”

Super!

The Alabama Historical Radio Society, headquartered The Alabama Power building in Birmingham, got its start eighty-six years after Telefunken was founded. Weekly meetings and monthly newsletters keep aficionados connected. (The latest version of newsletter shares a reminiscence of “Floyd the Barber” from the *Andy Griffin Show* actor Howard McNear who also broadcast shorts called “Speed Gibson of the International Secret Police.”) Meetings on Tuesdays run from 9 til 11 a.m. with lunch at *Marilyn’s Deli and Dog* next door.

Dave agreed to take a look at the *Concertino* and I offered a modest contribution to the AHRHS. I packed it up and sent it south. Dave sent a message not much later “We’ll have to work on the power supply and a bunch of the electrolytics have dried out.” I crossed my fingers. “But we should be able to get her humming for you.”

A few weeks passed and I got an email. “Your radio is working great. We had a fun time working on it and I’ll send it back.” Cool.

Now to demonstrate the kind of passion that beats in the hearts of radio connoisseurs, Dave and John arranged to meet in Cincinnati and exchange the radio and all I had to do was to take a short drive to Charlottesville. I arrived at John’s house just as Brood II cicadas were humming in the trees in rural Virginia. He excitedly welcomed me into his fine home, the *Concertino* lovingly displayed on his dining room table. “My wife likes your radio, Mike. She even said you could ‘take your time’ coming to fetch it.”

He powered it on, we waited for the tubes to warm up and in a few moments strains of Tommy Dorsey came wafting from the stereo. Well, it was really Lady Gaga, but that’s OK, thanks to the Alabama Radio Historical Society my *Fräulein Concertino* sings again.



The Alabama Radio Historical Society

Antique Radio Repair Classes

By Robert Frye

In this article we will be talking about a radio with multiple problems. Is it a tube, resistor, capacitor, speaker, transformer or maybe two of these on the list? Problem when the radio plays awhile--the volume gets low and then no volume. This can be a hard problem to troubleshoot. The following are things to consider:

- 1) tube
- 2) resistor heating up toward infinity
- 3) capacitor leaking

But remember the radio is playing. What do we do first: checking a tube would not show it has a problem. The best way is change the tubes with good ones you know work. Do this by changing one tube at a time.

This might not correct all the problems - you might have two problems. You could have a resistor opening up when it gets hot--remember there are lots of resistors.

Maybe this will help locate the problem – while the radio is on, get your soldering iron out, heat it up, and touch one resistor at a time with your hot iron. When you touch the resistor that is opening up, the heat will sometimes open the resistor up and the radio will stop playing (then you know to change the resistor)..

The second way - unplug the radio - take your volt and ohm meter out - check each resistor. You are looking for a resistor that has increased in value. If you find one that is out of tolerance, change the resistor.

Running a signal through the radio with a signal generator while it is playing will not help. The signal will go through - so until the radio stops playing, this check will not help. But, when the radio stops playing, then you can begin to isolate the locations of the problem with a signal generator.

Once you get to this point – check capacitors for leakage. Check your grid voltage, then the by-pass capacitor - you are looking for a leaking capacitor. We will talk about this in class on 10/12/2013.

Robert Frye, Instructor

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MEETING TIMES

We meet every Saturday (unless a Holiday weekend) at 09:00 AM, at the one-story AHRS Shop at the corner of 8th Avenue North and 18th Street (1801 8th Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203). Use the rear (Southeast) entrance.

Also, we have opened the Shop on Tuesdays at 09:00 AM until around 11:30 AM when we go to Marilyn's Deli and Dog for lunch next door. Note that parking can be a problem on Tuesdays because it is a business day and the lot is usually filled, so you may have to find street parking occasionally.

We meet on the fourth Monday night of each month, too, at 7:00 PM. Please come join us!

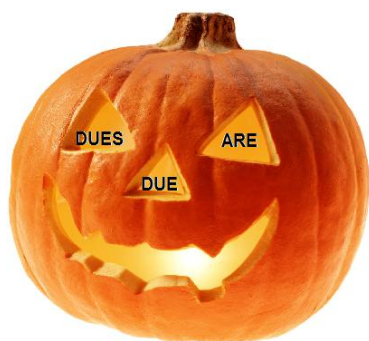
FREE ELECTRONICS CLASSES

One more great benefit from becoming a member of AHRS--free Electronic classes!

Classes are taught the first Saturday of each month (except when something special is taking place, then we agree on what Saturday).

We start from the beginning Ohms Law, inductors, resistor and Capacitors color codes, as well as what each component does within the radio circuits. We also teach how to use test equipment used in the repairing of radio. We teach troubleshooting radio troubles, as well as how to read a radio diagram. There are coil winding classes, and one-on-one repair help.

Come join these classes.



DUES! DUES! DUES!

Membership dues are \$25 a year, payable beginning in January. If you have questions about your dues, you can contact John Outland at 205-354-5258. **Dues can be mailed to AHRS @ P.O. Box 131418, Birmingham AL 35213.**

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