

The Alabama Historical Radio Society Newsletter



April 2016



NOTE FROM PRESIDENT TOM

Hello, All!

This month your Society will hold the sixth annual Legends of Broadcast event featuring local broadcasters, current and past, radio, television, management, production and more, at the Shop in Birmingham. The day starts around 9 a.m. with guests arriving, enjoying coffee and a donut, meeting old friends and making new friends. For the new folks, a tour of the Shop is in order, including the library, workshop, coil winding area, dozens of radios on display, the broadcast area and for a picture at the controls of the working DJ broadcast studio. Videos of past Legends events play on the large screen TV. Around 11 a.m., lunch is served, buffet style, and things settle down for a while. Following lunch, the legends gather around the conference table to tell stories of their days in broadcasting. The stories vary each year as the attendees change and some are no longer with us. The recording of these stories, by video and/or audio, has preserved many interesting stories for posterity. This year's Legends of Broadcast will be on April 21, from 9 a.m. until about 1 p.m. at the Shop. I included some pictures from the past Legends events.

Upcoming Club Events

2016 Ham Fests

Atlanta, GA Hamfest

6/04/2016

<http://www.atlantahamfest.com>

Montgomery, AL (MARC)

11/19/2016

<http://www.w4ap.org/news/Hamfest.htm>



Legends of Broadcast in 2014 telling stories



Shelley Stewart making other legends laugh at the 2015 event



Legends at the 2015 event (note our own Legends, Ed Boutwell, third from the left, Molly Franklin, seated, Don Keith, second, standing from the right, Harry Butler, fifth, standing from the right and Don Mosley, sixth, standing from the right)

At the March Monday night meeting we tried something new, an auction of surplus radios. This was similar to the Saturday auction in January, but with short notice and in lieu of a Monday night program. The attendance was great with over 30 members

present. The January auction committee, Mike Lord, Willie Henderson and John Outlaw, conducted the Monday night auction.



March Monday night meeting auction



Mike Lord offers several Hallicrafter S-38 radios to members

Gene Samples was high bidder on one of the larger Philco cathedral radios and restored it inside and out. He is shown in this picture with the finished product. A before picture would have revealed how much effort Gene applied to get the final result. Let's just say that it needed a lot of work.



Gene Samples with his restored Philco radio

The next quarterly radio auction will be on Saturday, May 14 at the Shop. Another dozen or so radios and other items will be up for bid. It should start about 10 a.m. Come get a great restorable radio, or two!

The April Radio Class was well attended, with several new students attending along with the regulars. Robert went over basic electronics, including the relationship of voltage, current, resistance and power. Several handouts were given to the attendees about these formulas, color codes on resistors and capacitors and a multi-page handout on trouble-shooting tube type radios.



Robert is SKYPING in from Loxley, Alabama



Robert has their undivided attention

Next month's radio class is scheduled for May 7 at the Shop in Birmingham, beginning at 9 a.m. Robert will continue building on basic electronic theory. He will review the handouts from the April class to make sure the students have an understanding of their content. He will also answer questions about radios that students are currently working on.

The Colin-Kennedy that Ray Giles took on as a restoration project has been completed. I asked Ray to write something about how he found the Colin-Kennedy radio. The following is his account in his words:

"One day while working in the Annex building among our vast overflow of radios and parts, I noticed an old wood radio with four rather large holes in the front of the cabinet. Turns out it was a 1924 Colin-Kennedy battery set with a mahogany cabinet and solid brass face plate. The four holes were to accommodate the 01A multifunction tubes. We quickly decided this very rare set had to be restored and displayed. Our resident battery expert, Maurice Lovelady was the chief engineer; David "Doc" Holladay restored the cabinet to show quality. Gene Samples expertly rebuilt one large knob, and I put all the pieces back together. The radio will play and was displayed at the 2016 (Birmingham) Hamfest, receiving many compliments. This project represents one of the primary tenants of our club - to preserve for future generations, the beauty and function of early radio."



Ray Giles looking at the Colin-Kennedy before restoration



Doc, Ray, Gene and Maurice with the restored Colin-Kennedy radio

The Swap Meet scheduled for April 23 at the Shop has been cancelled due to several factors. We will be at the Shop on Saturday, the 23rd for a regular workday. Come enjoy some fellowship!

A Board meeting will be held at 6 p.m. prior to the general meeting. The Program will recap the Legends of Broadcast event. Come enjoy some fellowship and support your Society. See you there!

Thanks for your support!

President Tom

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OLD TIME RADIO BITS

As I have written these columns on Old Time Radio, one thing has become painfully clear to me – I am not a writer. Sure I know a little about OTR, but having the ability to write what I know and make it enjoyable reading is very hard for me to do. So this month's article is going to be a little different. I hope you are reading on a computer, because there are a potpourri of links.

A few months ago I wrote about a series on AMC called Remember WENN. It was a nostalgia program about a radio station from the World War II era. I really liked the shows, as corny as they could be, and provided links to anyone who wanted to watch. Recently I ran across a much more detailed article from the New York Times about the series. If you are interested, here is the link to the article – [AMC Classics 'Remember WENN'](#)

When I was growing up, I was always fascinated by shortwave radio. The myriad of stations kept me entertained for hours. I could hear informative, entertainment and propaganda shows. However, there was one broadcaster which wasn't made to fit any of these categories – The Armed Forces Radio and Television Service, commonly known as the AFRTS. The network was run by the Department of Defense and was specifically for the Armed Services members and their families. Recently when browsing through the Old Time Radio Restoration (OTRR) group on Facebook, there was a link to an AFRTS production from 1951 titled [If Freedom Failed](#). The program addressed communism and our freedoms. It has a specific message but it is an interesting 30-minute program. Clicking on the link shown previously will take you to the program and here is the link to the [AFRTS Archive](#) site. There is a lot of work being done to keep this website interesting.

Another site that I happened upon is [Past Daily](#) with the tagline "Because ignorance of your culture is considered uncool." That line is enough to make you want to look elsewhere, but checking out the site provided a lot of interesting programs which run the gamut from old news to old music. The April 11 entry is a [1937 news program dealing](#)

[with FDR's attempt to pack the Supreme Court](#). The April 9 entry is a [BBC interview with Buster Keaton from 1962](#). The April 7 entry is a [speech from Wendell Willkie at Madison Square Garden in 1941](#). Scrolling back presents more and more OTR programs. [Past Daily](#) is updated daily and some very interesting material can be found there.

While this link doesn't apply to OTR, it is still worth noting – a video of [the Demolition of Voice of America Radio Towers in Morrisville, NC](#). Don Keith, one of our club members, said the video made him cry like a baby. And since I have mentioned Don, we need to offer our congratulations to him as the [ARRL 2015 recipient of their Bill Leonard Journalism Award](#).

And lastly, to prove my point about writing, here is the link to the latest issue of [Old Radio Times](#) from the OTRR. There are articles dealing with Bob Elliot of Bob and Ray, WLS in Chicago, Dana Andrews who was A Communist for the FBI, an article on the Development of Radio Networks, and Parley Baer who was Chester Proudfoot in radio's Gunsmoke, as well as the mayor on the Andy Griffith Show. These articles are well researched and well written. Here is the link to [older issues of the Old Radio Times](#), in case you are interested.

I hope there was something in these links that is interesting to you. Until we meet again in the theatre of the mind...

Larry Lokey

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SATURDAY MEETINGS

We meet every Saturday (unless a Holiday weekend) at 9:00 a.m., at the one-story AHRs Shop at the corner of 8th Avenue North and 18th Street, (1801 8th Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203). Birmingham, AL 35203). Use the rear (Southeast) entrance.

SHOP ON TUESDAYS

The Shop is open on Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m. until around 11:30 a.m. when we go to Marilyn's Deli and Dog for lunch next door. Note that parking can be a problem on Tuesdays, so you may have to find street parking occasionally.

REGULAR MEETINGS

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



DUES INFORMATION

Membership dues are \$25 a year, payable beginning in January. If you have questions about your dues, you can contact Don Letchman at 205-967-8557. **Dues can be mailed to AHRS @ P.O. Box 131418, Birmingham AL 35213.**

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!

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