



## The Alabama Historical Radio Society Newsletter

June 2017

### NOTE FROM PRESIDENT TOM

Hello, All!

We continue to fix old radios every week and give new life to radios that used to be thrown away before we existed. The abandonment of old radios on the curbside is one thing that got our principal founder, Don Kresge, interested in starting an organization to address saving old radios and educating the public on the value of early wireless communications and its significance in today's communications landscape.

We work to preserve every aspect of early radio with the Don Kresge Memorial Museum displaying restored radios, with a library full of information from the invention of wireless through the latest developments in radio communication, old magazines, fiction and non-fiction radio novels, with presentations to local historical and senior groups about early radio and its founders, with radio classes to teach the safe repair and restoration of old radios, with support of other antique radio societies around the country, and more. We have a dedicated core of member volunteers who do the lion's share of work around the shop. One of our goals is to grow this core to a point where no one member is burdened with too much and the work load is spread around.

In that vein, we need additional members to volunteer to be on one (or more) of our committees formed to get things done, primarily at the shop. These committees are Shop, which is primarily concerned with the workshop benches, test equipment and tools for these benches and resources for the workshop; Museum, which is primarily concerned with the Don Kresge Memorial Museum, maintaining and updating its contents and keeping it in first-class shape; Library, which maintains the resource material in the library, reviewing additions, removing duplicates and continuously updating the thousands of items housed there; Marketing, which is tasked with turning donations, which can be sold, into income to support the Society. These committees are important and need our support to be successful. Please consider volunteering sometime in the future. Let me know your interests and I will get you in touch with the right person. Thanks!

In recent years, there have been several high school students that have shown a high interest in the Society and what it does. One has moved on through college, has gotten a Masters and is currently gainfully employed with a contractor. All the time, his interests have grown and he comes by when he has time. A great success that we helped in a small way!

Now, there is another high school student, currently home schooled, following a similar path. Milo has been with us for most of the year and is learning how to fix old radios, safely. Recently, the Society received a donation of a Sansui stereo receiver which caught Milo's eye. He has worked on the receiver with the help of several members, including Dave Johnson, and on a recent Saturday, he got it working and producing a great sound. He admitted putting a part in backwards, but he quickly fixed that problem.

He used basic troubleshooting skills he learned in the shop, without the benefit of service information specific to the Sansui.



**Milo Jones working on the Sansui Stereo receiver**

The May Monday Night Program was presented by member Mack White. Mack is known for his sound restoration projects, and he set up a demonstration of the equipment he uses to clean-up and restore audio recordings. He played the unrestored sound and the restored sound, showing incredible improvement in clarity after running the sound through his equipment. Mack diagrammed the equipment blocks necessary to restore the sound. The meeting was well attended and Mack did not disappoint.



**Mack White diagramming the setup needed to restore audio.**



**Mack White with his equipment setup to restore audio.**

The June Radio Class was the first one under a new format in which, absent a formal planned presentation, the class would determine the items they wanted to learn, based on the list developed two classes back. On the list was to learn more about the Simpson 260 Volt-Ohm meters used on the shop test benches. Also, some of these meters had been acting erratically, so this was a good opportunity to check them out.

A YouTube video on checking out a Simpson 260 meter was accessed and we followed the basic check-out procedure. Some batteries were changed and the meters were put back in service. Member Joe Minor reviewed the marking schemes for resistors and capacitors and how to determine their values. He also handed out a data sheet for this information. The class then watched a YouTube video on the signal path through an All American Five Radio (AAF). The group agreed to review additional AAF videos and suggest some to watch at the July 8 radio class, which is the second Saturday, due to first Saturday 's proximity to July 4.





**June radio class watching video about signal path through an All American Five radio.**

The Society has a Facebook page now. On Facebook, enter Alabama Historical Radio Society and like the page. Thanks to Milo's mom for setting this up. There will be more on this later.

There will be a special presentation at the Shop on June 17, beginning at 10 a.m. on 3D Printers, with demonstrations on how we can use them to make radio knobs and other things. Thanks to Willie Henderson for lining this up. John Godwin, President of T&G Professional Technology & Graphics, will make the presentation. Please come learn about this new technology.

Some things coming up include another radio auction planned for July 22 at the Shop beginning at 10 a.m. We will have a booth in the vendor area at the Alabama Broadcasters Association (ABA) Annual Conference at the Hyatt at the Galleria in Hoover on August 18 and 19. The Huntsville Hamfest will be held on August 19 and 20. We hope to have at least three tables there to sell surplus radios and stuff. There are plenty of opportunities to participate. Come join us!

The June Monday Night Meeting will be on June 26, beginning at 6 p.m. at the Shop in Birmingham. The program is to be announced.

See you there.

*President Tom*

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## OLD TIME RADIO BITS

This month's article is going down a different path. The old time of old time radio will return next month.

I was raised on radio. I mean the type where the top 40 songs were played daily, where the news was presented at the top of the hour, where Birmingham Barons baseball was broadcast during the summer and Alabama football was broadcast during the fall. There was only one television in our house (it was black and white) but several radios lived there. The tv was tuned to what my Dad or Mom wanted to watch, but the radio tuning could be entrusted to the young'uns.

Of course, I had my own three-transistor radio, courtesy of Santa one year. It is funny how the nine-volt battery "ran down" so quickly. So, I was frequently relegated to one of the tube radios scattered throughout the house. I didn't realize it at the time but those radios, though stationary, sounded much better than my little-bitty speaker in the transistor radio.

Somewhere in this experience of getting older, my love of radio developed. I could name every station on the AM dial by its call letters and its frequency. Remember those were the days when you dialed a station until it sounded right. There was no display to show the frequency of the station; you knew the station in a moment by the programming that you heard. The Good Guys were on WSGN 610, Joe Rumore was on WVOK 690, WAPI broadcast Monitor on the weekends, and on and on.

Before we get too far down memory lane, let me get back to what I wanted to present this month. I came to realize the vast potential of radio to influence my life. When Alan Armstrong was launched into space I was in the car on my way to my great-grandmother's funeral. Listening to the commentary associated with the space shot didn't diminish my appreciation of the event. It is quite possible that my experience was enhanced. When the Barons were playing and I was listening to the game, in my mind I could see so much more than I could see on the 19-inch b&w television. When the riots of the 60's happened in Birmingham, I could see the horror of it. It was only later that I realized my mind was not mature enough to realize the full horror. These events and a thousand more helped to shape my childhood. And to think that all of this occurred from a box sitting on a table.

I still listen to radio, even though it is not always from a box sitting on the table. I listen to radio with my phone. I listen to radio in the truck. I listen to radio with my wi-fi radio. Yes, the method of delivery may have changed, but the influence is still there.

Recently I was listening to the BBC World Service when I heard a program about the space shuttle Challenger. Like many events in life, I can remember where I was when I heard that it had blown up. I remember the anguish I felt that one of our space craft was destroyed on its way to space. I remember not having a television available, so I turned on the radio to get the whole story. It turns out that the whole story would be a while in coming. And that story is what the program on the BBC dealt with.

Rather than trying to relate the details of the program, I will just give some information from the [website](#) where it can be heard.

"Sue MacGregor brings together four people who were profoundly affected by the Challenger disaster, when NASA's space shuttle exploded just after lift-off....Joining Sue MacGregor round the table to look back on one of NASA's darkest tragedies are June Scobee Rodgers, the widow of Challenger Space Shuttle Commander Richard "Dick"

Scobee; Steve Nesbitt, NASA Chief Commentator; astronaut Norman Thagard; and Allan McDonald, former Morton Thiokol Director of the Space Shuttle Rocket Booster Project.”

The program shows what radio is still capable of conveying. It also shows what is usually relegated to television these days in the United States. Still it is worth taking the time to listen to somewhat of a throwback in radio. The name of the program is [The Challenger Disaster](#) and it is part of a series called *The Reunion*. I believe that in listening, you might see that radio is still a powerful medium.

As a side note, if you have trouble listening to the show using the 64-bit Firefox browser try another browser. Strange as it may seem, that particular browser version does not support javascript.

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 18<sup>th</sup> 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 6:00 p.m. 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 INFORMATION



**Membership dues are \$25 a year, payable beginning in January.** If you have questions about your dues, you can contact Mike Woodruff at 205-823-7204. **Dues can be mailed to AHRs @ P.O. Box 131418, Birmingham AL 35213.**

## CLUB OFFICERS

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## 2017 HAMFEST AND SWAP SCHEDULE (FOR AL, GA, TN AND MS)

### **06/17/2017 Knoxville Hamfest & Electronics Exhibition**

**Location:** Knoxville, TN

**Website:** <http://www.w4bbb.org>

### **8/18-19/2017 Alabama Broadcasters Association (ABA) Annual Conference at the Hyatt at the Galleria in Hoover**

- **Keynote: “Generational Diversity” with Kristen Scroggin**
- **Radio Programming Topics: Alan Burns**
- **Sales Topics for Managers: Chris Lytle (Friday)**
- **Sales Topics for AEs: Chris Lytle (Saturday)**
- **Selling Against Cable: Rob Russo**
- **Nielsen Audio for Radio**
- **Nielsen for TV**
- **Music Licensing Panel moderated by Kevin Goldberg, FHH Law**
- **Personal Safety: Dawn Hendricks (Fri and Sat)**
- **Live Wire Safety: Kim Frank, Mark Ingram**
- **Music Use in Newscasts: Kevin Goldberg**
- **Lobbying 101: Shawn Donilon, NAB**
- **Engineering Sessions on Friday**
- **Exhibit Floor on Friday**

### **8/19-20/2017 Huntsville Hamfest**

The Huntsville Hamfest is held at the Von Braun Civic Center, 700 Monroe Street, Huntsville, AL 35801. [See their map here.](#) (GPS Coordinates: 34.7270°N, 86.5918°W). The map on the right shows the parking facilities in the VBC area. If you plan to park in the parking area under the South Hall (P2), enter via Pollard Street from Clinton Avenue.

Of course, our talk-in station will be available to you if you need further navigation aid. The talk-in will be on the 146.94 repeater, 100Hz tone, and the backup in case of failure will be on the 145.33-, 100Hz tone, repeater.

For more info during the hamfest, other repeaters are:

- 53.210-
- 147.24+
- 224.94-
- 443.500+
- 444.575+
- 444.75+

See [N4HSV.NET](http://N4HSV.NET) for more about area repeaters.

### **11/11/2017 Montgomery Amateur Radio Club Hamfest 2017**

**Location:** Montgomery, AL

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