

# *The Superflex*



A Publication of the Alabama Historical Radio Society

July 2019

## NOTE FROM PRESIDENT DAVE

Greetings to all!!

I hope all of you enjoyed a happy and safe Fourth of July holiday, as our country celebrated 243 years. May God continue to bless America - the greatest country on earth!!!

June was an active month for the Society. Thanks to our friends in the Shelby County Amateur Radio Club (SCARC) for inviting us to participate in their first indoor hamfest. The Society had two sales tables and one display table. We displayed the very early receivers and spark gap transmitter, expertly built and donated to the Society by member Pete Sides. The attendance was good and all indications are the event was very successful for SCARC. Congratulations to them.

We closed out the month with another membership auction. Once again almost all items were sold. I want to thank Ray Giles and Willie Henderson for managing the event and also all of you who helped clean, repair and check the sale items. Thanks to all who purchased these sale items. All funds collected go to the operation of the Society.

Shortly after the tables were cleared after the auction, we received another large quantity of radio equipment from the Dave Holder family. Dave was a longtime member of the Society. We were told that more items may be coming later. These donations can be seen at the shop and will be in a future auction.

We were recently contacted by Scott Benton from Robertsdale, Alabama about a large radio estate sale later this month. He said there are about 200 radios, mostly small table radios. I have pictures on my phone, so if you have any interest I can show you what is for sale.

The Society has been invited to participate in the annual Alabama Broadcasters Association Conference here in Birmingham in August. Our own Ed Boutwell will be involved in the induction of Patti Wheeler and Tom "Doc" Atkinson into the Alabama Broadcasters Association Hall of Fame. Also, the Society will have a booth in the trade show. I will have more details at a later date. That is all for now.

Enjoy your summer vacation trips and be safe!!!  
See you at the shop!

Dave

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE SOCIETY

### The Voice of Music



**Submitted by Steven Westbrook**

A few years ago I had the pleasure of dealing with Gary Stork, an enthusiast of all things relating to V-M Corporation, known to us as The Voice of Music. VM was a manufacturer of high-end electronic sound equipment such as tape records, amplifiers, turn tables etc. Gary is the best source for information, sale brochures, schematic diagrams and parts for all VM equipment. His website is <https://www.thevoiceofmusic.com/>

During my dealing with Larry he sent me this article, written by V-M Corporation Founder & President Victor Miller and published in his VM Newsletter "Collector's Voice". He graciously gave me permission to include the article in our newsletter.

#### **Brief History**



**Walter Miller, VM Founder**

**The following brief history was written by V-M Corporation President Victor Miller  
for the January 1996 V-M "Collector's Voice" Newsletter:**



"Fast Forward" ..... Through a few high spots of V-M Corporation's history! It is inspiring to see the effort Gary is putting into keeping the products and legends of V-M going this many years after our bankruptcy in 1977. I consider it a privilege to contribute in some small way to this tribute to the dedication, skill, loyalty, and decades of hard work of employees, suppliers, distributors, dealers, and independent service centers who made up the V-M action team. A special "thank you" is due the loyal manufacturers who kept including our record changers and/or tape transport mechanisms in their products - and to the consumers who bought those products as well as items sold under our own name.



Benton Harbor was the scene of record changer manufacture before V-M Corporation existed. My father Walter Miller, was an electrical engineer building up New Products Corporation, a custom die cast operation, through the heart of the depression of the 1930's. He had also started Modern Plastics Corporation, a custom plastic molding company in 1937. The reputation of those two companies for quality, service, and value led to his being approached to produce record changers for the blossoming phonograph market. Commencing in 1940, New Products Corporation produced the Erwood "blade" type record changer. Some 2,300 of these cumbersome units were being shipped daily by the time World War II cut off all consumer product manufacture (shortly after the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor).



V-M was created as a separate entity in 1944 and distinguished itself early on by producing initial quantities of one of Dad's classified wartime inventions. When the war ended, this separate entity jumped into the production of record changers just as soon as such consumer product manufacture was permitted.



In addition to phonograph manufacturers, early customers began to include independent service shops and electronic parts distributors. This then led in the early 1950's to designing and building amplified phonographs, consoles, and tape recorders - and selling tape transport mechanisms to other manufacturers. We had "binaural" sound in our tape recorders as an adaptation by late 1955. Then came "stereo" tape recorders, stereo record changers and stereo phonographs by 1958.



Our best year for sales and earnings was 1962, but we were serving an industry that subsequently got wiped out so far as U.S. manufactured products were concerned. As the battle got tougher, we tightened our belts and hung in, trying to also apply our technological skills to special motors, amplifiers, etc. These we had hoped would become standard products used by many U. S. manufacturers, resulting in lower costs and a more competitive position.



From 1971 on, we were on a shoestring. In spite of everyone's dedication, that string broke in 1977. When we could no longer produce, we filed for bankruptcy in the interest of protecting general creditors to the extent we could, from various predators. With the permission of the court, we converted what we could to cash for the benefit of employees and suppliers.



V-M remains a registered corporation in the State of Michigan, but is no longer engaged in manufacturing activities. Service parts and manuals are now available from V-M Audio Enthusiasts at 37530 E. Meadowhill, Northville, MI 48167. Let me say that it is great to have this opportunity to express my appreciation for the confidence manufacturers, distributors, dealers, service shops, and consumers placed in our products and in the men and women who built them. Many thanks! God bless you all!

Victor A. Miller  
January 1996  
Revised: January 2000

## Member News

### Submitted by Steven Westbrook

Gear up Bham gives students who attend public schools in Birmingham opportunities to attend free summer camps hosted by Alabama universities and colleges. This year (AHRS member) Milo Jones went to Auburn's Chef Tech Camp. He worked for a week with 32 other rising 11<sup>th</sup> graders to learn knife skills and sauces with Chef Sidney. They also visited the Legacy Museum, an urban farm, a fishery and learned about nutrition with Dr. Brown. Three students were awarded Top Chef Awards at the end of the week and Milo received one. Chef Sidney said Milo made an amazing béchamel, something some of his own chefs in Atlanta can't do.

Milo is a man of many skills and interest. Congratulations Milo



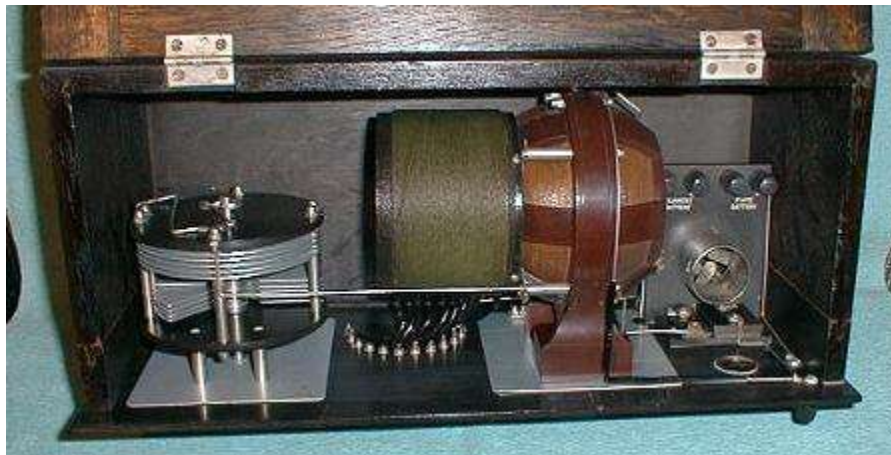
## Cleartone 110 Project (cont'd)

**Submitted by Jim Rogers**

Frank Roberts made all the adapters to substitute the type 27 tubes for the rare and expensive McCullough 401As. Frank also repaired and updated the power supply.

Since the radio needed a 22 ½ V battery bias supply, the decision was made to do the initial power up with the shop universal power supply and begin the evaluation with the audio stages. First, the filament supply (2.5 VDC) was connected. The two type 27s lit up. Frank's adapters were spot on. Moving on the -22.5 VDC bias supply was connected and a check of the vacant sockets proved the bias supply was present, until we checked the two audio amp stages. No -22.5 VDC. The two inter-stage transformer primaries were open. There was nothing to do at this point, but to put the project on hold until we could replace the two transformers. Stay tuned!

## GREBE CR-5 Super Regenerative Receiver



**Submitted by Jim Rogers**

With the Cleartone 110 project on hold, Frank Roberts brought a Grebe CR-5 super regen receiver to the workshop on the Saturday, July 6<sup>th</sup> workday. Now the first radio, other than a crystal set, I built was a one tube 40 meter super

regen. Maurice Lovelady had supplied a tube for the little jewel so we hooked up the necessary 6 VDC filament and the 45 VDC B+ and threw the switch. Atmospheric noise! It worked. Frank, being somewhat skeptical of my expertise, wanted to hear a station. We had no manual but adjusted the tuning coil switch and tuning cap until I found a signal. Maurice adjusted the variometer regeneration control to clear up the signal a bit. What fun getting an opportunity to play with this very early one tube receiver.



## Walking Through the Shop

**By Tom Killian**

President Johnson opened the July 29<sup>th</sup> AHRS monthly meeting and quickly dispatched the business at hand making way for the auction!



Meanwhile Ray Giles was busy prepping for the auction to follow. Ray and Willie Henderson are the unsung heroes of our auctions. Both spend time in the shop checking the equipment to be auctioned.

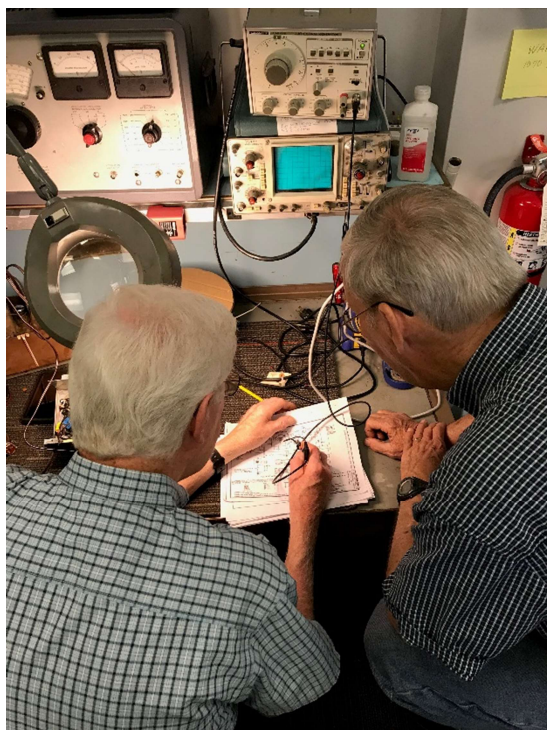


Lots of goodies to be auctioned off here.....



Ray Giles, Auctioneer.





Mike Lord and Tom Hayes, our restoration gurus checking out a schematic.

Thanks to Tom Killian for these great pictures for the SuperFlex.

## Hallicrafters SX-101A



Ray Giles asked your editor to look over a donated Hallicrafters SX-101A which was taken the SCARC Helena Hamfest, but would not work. Dee Haynes and I noted the dial pointer was dragging and would not move over the complete range of the band spread. The radio was removed from the cabinet and placed on the bench. Hooking up a speaker, antenna, and applying 115 VAC, showed the radio to be functional. The hanging dial pointer was resolved by clamping

the pointer to the dial cord and sealing in place with some super glue healed the pointer issues. The glass dial cover was loose and prone to fall backward and cause the dial pointer to drag. The metal retainers for the glass were missing on the top and right side of the radio. Fibre washers supplied by Tom Killian and some more super glue solved that problem. After some TLC the radio was proved functional and ready for sale. The SX-101A was a great radio during the period of transition from AM to SSB (Single Sideband Suppressed Carrier). Tuning in a SSB signal requires turning the AGC off, providing the re-insertion of the suppressed carrier. A mite of a learning curve for the uninitiated.



# AHRS AT THE SCARC HELENA HAMFEST

Submitted by Steven Westbrook

Dave Johnson at our display.



A view of the entire display. Items for sale and items to view.



Our best seller, the copper braid.



The set-up crew L-R, Ed Boutwell, Willie Henderson, Ray Giles, Dave Johnson, Mike Woodruff, and Mel Dearing

## **SATURDAY MEETINGS**

We meet every Saturday (unless a Holiday weekend) at 9:00 A.M., at the one-story AHRS Workshop at the corner of Rev. Abraham Woods. Jr. Blvd. (8<sup>th</sup> Avenue) and 18th Street, North, (1801 8th Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203). Please use the rear (Southeast) entrance.

## **TUESDAY MEETINGS**

The Workshop 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**

The AHRS business meeting is on the fourth Monday night of each month, at 7:00 P.M. Please come join us!

## **FREE ELECTRONICS CLASSES**

One more great benefit from becoming a member of AHRS is the free electronic classes! The classes are taught the first Saturday of each month (except when changed to accommodate a special radio event or a holiday).

We teach 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 repairing radios. We teach troubleshooting radio troubles, as well as how to read a radio schematic diagram. There are coil winding classes, and one-on-one repair tutoring. Come join us!

**Class Schedule for the Remainder of 2019**

**August 3<sup>rd</sup> First Saturday**

**September 14<sup>th</sup> Second Saturday**

**October 5<sup>th</sup> First Saturday**

**November 16<sup>th</sup> Third Saturday**

**December 7<sup>th</sup> First Saturday**

## MEMBERSHIP DUES

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

## WEBSITE

Be sure and check out our website at <https://www.alabamahistoricalradiosociety.org>, which has copies of all newsletters from 2006 to the present (click on News), videos, a Photo Galleries, Old Time Radio columns, Projects, Reading Rooms, Historical Archives, and Contact Information

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