

**June 2013**



***NOTE FROM PRESIDENT TOM***

Hello, All!!

Things are hopping at the Radio Society these days! More folks are coming to regular work days; more of our friends are bringing in radios for repair; and our donations are outstanding!

Our second radio class taught by Robert Frye, through the SKYPE system, was well attended and packed with good information to help us repair our radios, safely. The interaction among students and the teacher through questions and answers was very effective in addressing some unique trouble spots our students were having. While I have been going to these classes for several years, this was my first SKYPE class, and it sent chills down my back with this interactivity and exchange of ideas. I look forward to the next class, which will be on July 13, the second Saturday in July, and not the usual first Saturday (I think the teacher is playing hooky!). Robert has an article in this newsletter about radio repair. It is "more good stuff".

Four of us traveled to Huntsville last Thursday to pick up two car loads of ham equipment, general purpose receivers, military radios and test equipment, tubes including some 1 volt types, transformers, am/fm radios and general test equipment. We unloaded this stuff in the main room at the Shop and, while it sat there waiting to be checked in, we sold several items to our members. Let me say that when the Society has items to sell, first priority will be given to active members. We ask for an appropriate donation to the Society.

A Marketing Committee was created at the last meeting to seek out items belonging to the Society that may be marketed for donations. The Committee members are Dave Cisco and Dave Johnson. They have been very busy this last week!

Also, recently created are the Shop Committee, consisting of Mack White, Mike Lord and Ron Hall; the Museum Committee, consisting of Dee Haynes, John Outland and Charlie Tate; and the Library Committee consisting of Reggie Olson and Ed Boutwell. There will be opportunities to serve on these committees as they work to make the Society better. There will be more about these committees and what they are up to in future newsletters.

Repairs of customer radios and phonographs have been brisk! The donations for these repairs in the last few weeks are approaching \$800. The backbone of our repair crew has been very busy. At the risk of leaving someone out, I want to thank Dave Cisco, Marvin Sheppard, Mack White, Dwight Crider, Dee Haynes and Maurice Lovelady for contributing their time and knowledge, not just to customer radios, but also to assisting our members with their individual repair issues. These guys are the A-Team, and the rest of us can learn a lot from them!

One other word, each of the donations requires a response from the Society thanking the donor for their generosity. Quietly, behind the scenes, your vice-president, Steven Westbrook, is writing these letters (and inventorying those donations which the Society will keep for display or its use). I want to thank Steven for handling this necessary part of the Society's business!

I want to thank each of you for your contributions to the success of the Society! The next regular membership meeting will be on Monday, June 24, at 7:00pm with the regular monthly board meeting at 6:15pm. Please come join us. The program is "to be announced."

*Tom Killian*

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## **OLD TIME RADIO BITS**

Hello Folks!

With our country's birthday coming up soon, I started looking through my collection for a show which ties in to that celebration and found the series *You Are There*. The show was on CBS for almost three years in the late 1940's and, according to John Dunning's *Encyclopedia of Old Time Radio*, "blended history with modern technology, taking an entire network on a time trip each week to report great events of the past."

Each show opened with the following, - "CBS asks you to imagine that our microphone is present at this unforgettable moment. All things are as they were then, except when CBS is there, *YOU* are there!" Again quoting Dunning, "It was based on "authentic fact and quotation," a present-tense stream-of-consciousness told by newsmen allegedly witnessing great events unfolding before their eyes." The shows contain interviews, analysis, news bulletins, and remote broadcasts –everything that one would expect from a real news program.

In today's environment, one might think this series would seem quaint, but *You Are There* is very enjoyable. Listening to the show dealing with the signing of the Declaration of Independence, I found out there was much more conflict than I had imagined. And I must admit that, as accustomed as I am to the news broadcasts of today, I found myself listening closely to the show, even though I knew the outcome. The Declaration of Independence show was broadcast on July 4, 1948, and can be found at this location:

*[You Are There – Declaration of Independence](#)*

Other shows ranging from the *Last Day of Pompeii* to the *Surrender of Sitting Bull* are also available on my website. These shows can be found by following this link:

*[You Are There – Other Shows](#)*

If you can find the time, take a few minutes to listen to moments in our history. You may find that you will enjoy these shows.

Have a fun and safe 4<sup>th</sup> of July.

Until the next time when we will have more shows from the "Theatre Of The Mind,"

*Larry Lokey*

[larry@otronmp3.com](mailto:larry@otronmp3.com)

## ***TROUBLE SHOOTING OF AN ALL-AMERICAN FIVE RADIO***

By Robert Frye

This radio has been sitting up for many years. The cabinet is made of Bakelite and can be cleaned with a liquid car polish and 4 ought steel wool along with buffing by hand.

Any radio that has been sitting up for a long period – **DO NOT** plug the radio directly into the AC circuit. After many years of sitting up - tubes can go bad – (Tubes are vacuum sealed) and can last a long time – but they do go bad. The capacitors do go bad just sitting up, for sure, the electrolytic capacitors (filter capacitors). Next thing - look close to see if no burn signs are around the metal chassis of the radio – if you see dark spots like a burn, you could have a short.

After a visual inspection – it is time to start changing the capacitors, checking the tubes and also the AC line cord. Now it is time to plug the radio into the AC circuit, hope the radio plays. If not, you need to get the diagram of your radio out along with your volt and ohm meter.

First read the B-+ voltage – a good place to check is at the filter capacitors – this will be your reference voltage. If this checks “ok” according to your diagram – the next place to check is the plate voltage on each tube. If this checks “ok”, the next place to check is the grid voltage on each tube – this should be a small negative voltage – but check your diagram for the correct voltage reading. If the grid voltage is not correct, look for the resistor that has changed or open that connects to the grid circuit. Also, check the coupling capacitors for leakage – a positive voltage that is leaking from the coupling capacitors from the plate circuit to the grid circuit can turn the tube off. I know you changed the capacitors earlier, but as you know new capacitors can be bad.

Let’s take this trouble shooting one or two more steps further. After checking the grid voltage, let’s say it was found to be good – the next step is to start changing the tubes (with one you know to be good). I know they were checked on the tube tester and checked “ok” – this is only an indication – the true test is in the radio under the load of the circuits. Changing them one at a time – turn the radio on – and hope one of the tubes that were changed allows the radio to play.

Let’s say the tubes were “ok” – maybe this step should have been done while we were checking plate and grid voltage – but for some reason we did not make this check (this is the real world). Let’s check the screen voltage on the tubes – this voltage should be a little lower than the plate voltage. Be sure to check your diagram for the correct voltage reading. After checking the screen voltage – we found the screen voltage was missing or low on one of the tubes – look for the resistor that feeds the screen voltage that is missing or reading low. After checking this voltage, we find that one of the resistors is open or has increased in value – we made the replacement and now the radio plays.

Stay tuned for the next Trouble Shooting article.

*Robert Frye*

Instructor

## ***Vintage Computer Enthusiasts Unite in Roswell, GA at Festival Southeast***

By Kyle Owen

Thanks to Student Member Kyle Owen for the following article. Kyle is a senior at Auburn University, on a Presidential Scholarship, and has been a contributing member of the Society since his junior year in high school. He submitted this article on the recent Vintage Computer Festival Southeast, which he helped stage.

Over the weekend of April 20 and 21, the Atlanta Historical Computer Society held their first annual Vintage Computer Festival Southeast. For the unaware, vintage computers are getting as collectible as antique radios in some cases. For the past decade at least, enthusiasts have been meeting at conventions, similar to ham fests, to discuss, sell, and celebrate vintage computing technology.

Several exhibitors, including myself, attended the weekend gig to display some old computers. Some other exhibitors included a 1961 relay computer capable of playing tic-tac-toe, and a table of early mechanical calculators like addometers, slide rules, and flight computers. My display included two early Intel development systems, a SWTPC 6800 (thanks Joel!), a Northstar Horizon, and a to-be-restored Altair 8800b.

Another main attraction of the event was an Apple "pop-up" museum. One person, CEO of a large Atlanta-based real estate agency, owns the entire collection, which includes not one, but two Apple 1s. This was Apple's first computer, one of which recently sold at auction for over \$700,000. The computer itself was based on the 6502, which was also used in the Commodore 64, Apple II, Atari 2600, and several other popular microcomputers. In the display, there was almost one of each Apple product produced over the years. It was a very comprehensive display and featured a lot of excellent information. The exhibits themselves in the museum were very well-executed, as a professional exhibit designer did the layout.

I was able to get some pictures of the event. They can be found here: <http://imgur.com/a/9zXkm>. The captions should explain a lot of what's going on, so I won't spend a lot of time summarizing them here.

All in all, it was a very exciting weekend. Someone brought his ASR-33 teletype and impressed the kids (and adults) with the magic of paper tape. There was a soldering station for kids (and again, adults) to put together a basic circuit board with a microcontroller to flash some LEDs. With the success of this one, I fully expect to see VCFSE 2.0 next year.

For more info on this particular event, see: <http://vintage.org/2013/southeast/>.

For more info about the Atlanta Historical Computer Society, their website can be found here: <http://atlhcs.org/>.

## ***Team Restoring the Vintage German Radio***



These are the folks that had a part in the restoration of the German radio. They are from left to right: Dee Haynes, Mike Lord, Joel Tillman, Marvin Shepherd, Maurice Lovelady, Dwight Crider and Dave Cisco.



Jack Bryant had an emergency appendectomy on June 2 and is almost fully recuperated. He had the surgery at St. Vincent's East.



## **EDITOR'S NOTE**

Thanks to Dee, who answered Tom's request for a wireless Internet radio. Our almost new Logitech Squeezebox Wi-Fi Internet Radio arrived recently. I am an insomniac, who has to have a radio playing before I can sleep. Now, I can tune in New Orleans WWL, St. Louis KXMO, Chicago WGN, Tulsa KRMG, our local Fairfield Bay KFFB, and, of course, Tom's Nashville WSM, and all play clear as a bell. It has a sleep timer and will do XM radio, among a host of other stations. What can I say! It is an answer to a radio fanatic's prayers.

Thanks, too, for all the nice articles this month. It makes for a very interesting read.

## **MEETING TIMES**

We meet nearly every Saturday of the month at 09:00 AM in the one-story building at the corner of 8th Avenue North and 18th Street (1801 8th Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203). Use the rear (Southeast) entrance.

It has also been decided to open the shop on Tuesday, as well as Saturday. We have a lot of projects going on and need the extra day to get it all done. So, until further notice, we will be open Tuesdays from 9am till...and on Saturday morning. Note that parking could be a problem on Tuesdays, because it is a business day, and the lot is usually filled, so you might have to find street parking occasionally.

**Come to the Monday Night Meetings, TOO, on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month at 7 PM!**

## **FREE ELECTRONICS CLASSES**

Free electronics classes are taught the first Saturday of the month. Topics include test equipment, Resistors and Capacitance testing, Inductors and coil winding, to name only a few subjects!

We hope to see you there!



## **Dues are Due**

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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