



RADIO LOG

MARCH 1979

Vol. II

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ANTIQUE WIRELESS ASSOCIATION

Log 1

Ruth Etting

AMERICA'S RADIO SWEETHEART





ROCKY MOUNTAIN ANITQUE WIRELESS ASSOCIATION

MARCH, 1979

Next Meeting...

The next meeting of the RMAWA will be held Friday, March 16, 1979 at 7:30 P.M. at the Southwest State Bank, 1380 S. Federal Blvd., Denver, Colorado.

The topic will be Colorado manufactured radios and related accessories. Everyone owning a radio built in Colorado is encouraged to bring it for viewing and discussion.

Last Meeting...

Several members participated in cathedral night. Among these were: Leamon Brooks - Crosley 168, Lee Bruton - GE, Ron Harmon - Freshman, Battery Airline (for sale), Bob Slagle - Philco 19, George Stevens - National Jr, Barney Wooters - Philco 70, and Ray Windrix - General Motors and a Glorytone.

Doug Furney provided a workshop session on checking and repairing AC receivers. He even blended in with the cathedral theme by diagnosing and repairing three distressed sets of this type.

The club involvement in the April Science Fair was presented and details will be worked out at the next meeting. The club's checking account has been transferred to the Southwest State Bank and a post office box acquired for the new mailing address. All club mail and dues should be directed to this address:

RMAWA
P.O. Box 17311
Denver, CO 80217

At the close of the meeting Barney Wooters had several for sale items on display. These included receivers, books and miscellaneous stuff. New member Don Kessler was delighted on his first visit with the purchase of a Radiola III.

Future Meetings...

Due to popular demand, a club auction is scheduled for April. The club contest is planned for May.

Dues...

Last call for dues. Please pay at next meeting or mail to P.O. Box noted above.

RUTH ETTING - AMERICA'S RADIO SWEETHEART

by Ray Windrix

On September 24, 1978 another of our musical "Stars" faded from the scene, Ruth Etting. She was 80 years of age.

From time to time in the past five or ten years, some newspaper columnist would rediscover her existence and interview her. What I will attempt to do here is to try and combine the information of these sources into one article. I realize, of course, some things may be overlooked.

I intend to wind this article up with a description of my one and only personal meeting with Ruth Etting, a few days before she died. First let's start at the beginning.

According to her own words, in the liner notes, she wrote for a LP album of her material, which was released on the Biograph label in 1973, she began her career in Chicago in 1925. Ruth then skips to 1927, where she appeared with Paul Whiteman, at the Paramount Theater. Here she first met Bing Crosby, then with the Rhythm Boys. She then went on to the 1927 Ziegfeld Follies, starring Eddie Cantor. Her five year run with Ziegfeld included, "Whoopee", also with Cantor in 1928, "Simple Simon", with Ed Wynn in 1930, and the "Follies of 1931", with Helen Morgan, Harry Richman, and Jack Pearl.

Ruth was seen in but a few movies. The most notable being "Roman Scandals", again with Eddie Cantor in 1933. Other films she appeared in included a 1928 short of "Whoopee", "Simple Simon", in 1930, and "Gift of Gab", and "Hips, Hips, Hooray", both in 1934.

Ruth Etting was born on a farm in David City, Nebraska, in 1897. Arriving in Chicago, she attended, The Chicago Academy of Arts, intending to be a designer. Through a chance meeting with a music publishing official, her career as a singer was launched.

Following a trial engagement as a soloist in a Chicago hotel, Ruth was discovered by "Columbia Records", and instantly became a hit. She sang with Abe Lyman's Orchestra, at Chicago's famed College Inn. Two of her earliest recordings with him were, "Let's Talk About My Sweetie", and "Nothing Else To Do". Ruth was described as a "Wax Natural", by Columbia, and her recordings for them earned her the title of, "The Sweetheart of Columbia Records". She made approximately 190 records during her career.

Ruth met "Moe the Gimp" Snyder, in 1920. He was a small time Chicago hoodlum, who, then became her manager. She married Snyder in 1922, the same year she went on the new-fangled radio, on Chicago's WSL. Hence, she became known as "Chicago's Sweetheart". It was from here, that Ruth went to New York, and began her "Ziegfeld Years".

Ruth Etting's peak years of stardom lasted from ten to twelve years, from the mid 20's to the late 30's. She appeared on many radio programs through the 30's. Here's a list of some of them: a 15 minute program, "Music That Satisfies" sponsored by Chesterfield Cigarettes, in 1932-33, "The Jimmy Fiddler Show", in 1933, "The Oldsmobile Show", in 1934, "The Dodge Shows", in 1935, "Kellogg College Prom", in 1935-36, and "The RCA Magic Key", a 60 minute show in 1936.

Ruth's stormy marriage to Snyder ended in 1937. In 1938 came the scandal that ended her career. A jealous Snyder shot and wounded NBC conductor-arranger Myrl Alderman. Snyder was convicted of attempted murder. During the trial Ruth married Alderman. This was all depicted in the 1955 movie "Love Me or Leave Me". When asked "Do you ever see that film on late night television?", Ruth replied, "I wouldn't want to". She felt the movie portrayed her as very hard and tough. "They had me drinking all through it and I never, never drank". Ruth was quoted saying, "I'm sorry they choose Doris Day for the part, no reflection on Doris, I like her, but Jane Powell would have been right for it".

With the scandal and the messy trial that followed, Ruth's career ended. The Alderman's moved, and for a short time lived in Florida, Nevada and finally settling in Colorado Springs.

They operated a place known as the T-Bone Restaurant and later Henri's Restaurant with local resturanteur, Henri Ruiz. Ruth lived in semi-retirement and rarely appeared in public. She performed in the T-Bone Restaurant, and the famous Colorado Springs, Antlers and Broadmoor Hotels.

Many attempts were made to bring her out of retirement. She refused until 1947, when she appeared for three consecutive weeks on "Rudy Vallee's Phillip Morris Show". Also in 1947 Ruth and her husband aired a local 15 minute show from New York station WHN. Its format was husband and wife small talk, with popular tunes. This was "The Ruth Etting Show", which ran for one year.

Talk about irony! As previously mentioned, newspaper columnists kept rediscovering Ruth. I received an interview clipping from the Los Angeles Times the day she died - Sunday, September 24, 1978. She had been interviewed by telephone a few days before.

My visit with Ruth Etting was six days before she died. For the past six months she had been in a hospital and nursing home suffering from a broken hip. Since I interviewed her on the first day home from recuperation, she looked surprising well. When questioned about her health, she had quite a sense of humor. She said, "You are looking at a Bionic Woman", and began to list her operations. She had had cataract operations, a plastic colon installed by the famous Dr. DeBakey, several dental plates, a hearing aid, and a couple other things of which I have forgotten. As she listed all these parts, I realized she did fit the bill! It was amusing the way Ruth told it.

Ruth seemed to be alone since her husbands death in 1966. Although she lived in a retirement apartment complex and had many friends in the building, there were no relatives nearby. My own personal feelings are that although she appeared in reasonably good shape, her spirit wasn't the best.

Sports were the only TV shows that interested her. "The baseball and football games on the TV are what keep me going", she said. Since she followed the NFL Denver Broncos closely she knew most of the players and the coach by name. In a recent Denver game with their arch-rivals the Oakland Raiders, she amused me by stating her displeasure with the then Oakland coach, John Madden. I think it best not to quote her here.

Ruth was pleased to use whatever influence she might have to help someone. She related a story which involved a local businessman who wanted to meet Lawrence Welk. He wanted to take some pictures. Ruth had never met Mr. Welk, but he had once credited her as one of his favorite female singers. So while he was appearing at the Broadmoor Hotel, Mr. Welk met with her and granted her friends request.

Somewhere during the conversation Ruth asked if I had any of her albums? I didn't so she offered me one. Just my luck she had one left, which she autographed for me. It was called "Ruth Etting - America's Radio Sweetheart". It was unique in that all the songs were taken from the transcriptions of old radio shows.

Ruth never received monetary benefits from the record companies. Instead they would send her free samples of her albums they released. This seems to be a good time to list them. I know of three; in 1977 Ruth Etting America's Radio Sweetheart - Totem 1018, P.O. Box 724 Redmond, WA. 98052, Hello Baby - Biograph ELP-C-11, Biograph Records Inc., P.O. Box 109 Canaan, NY 12029, this was is 1973. The other is The Original Recordings of Ruth Etting - Columbia Records, Col. ML 5050.

Ruth was amazed that record collectors and oldtime radio buffs remembered her and were able to seek her out. She showed me a stack of about a dozen of her albums and old 78's that people had mailed her for her autograph. They were from all over, Denver, Ohio, Michigan, etc. Some telephoned from around the country about the items they had sent to be autographed. Her problem in getting this done for them, of course, was the fact of the broken hip and the time spent in the hospital. I offered to take the items to the post office, and gave her my number should she need any assistance in errands of the like.

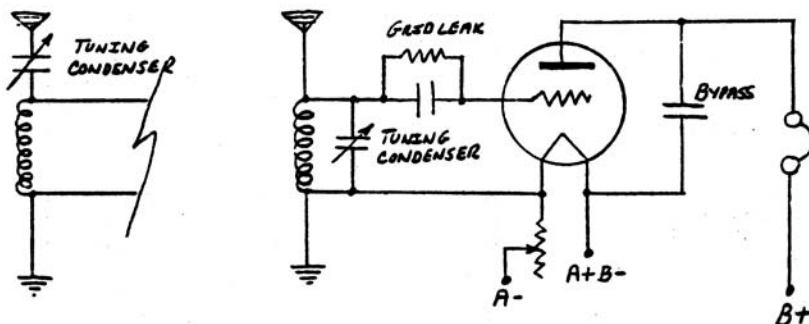
She fully intended to get around to these items but probably never did. This being her first day back in her apartment, she meant to see to it when she felt a bit better. On the basis of, one meeting, I liked, respected, and was impressed with this lady.

ONE TUBE RECEIVERS

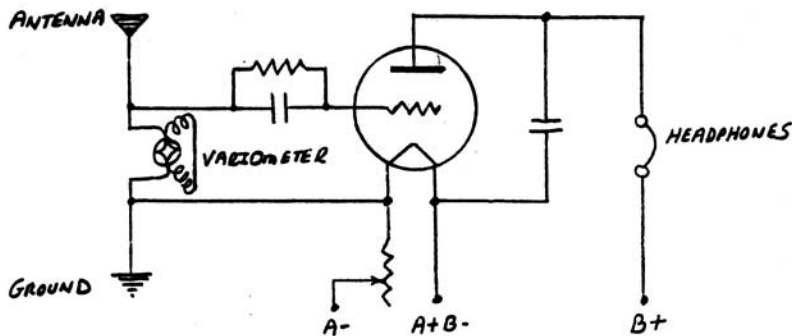
by Bob Slagle

Recently I was doing some tinkering on a one tube regenerative receiver and lacked a schematic. Even though this is an extremely simple circuit it seems easier to me if some reference is available to follow.

The one tube receiver consists of a single vacuum tube used as a detector. Since there are no audio amplification stages, the listening device is usually headphones. A non-regenerative one tube receiver with variable condenser tuning located across the grid coil is shown below. The variable condenser could also be placed in the antenna circuit.

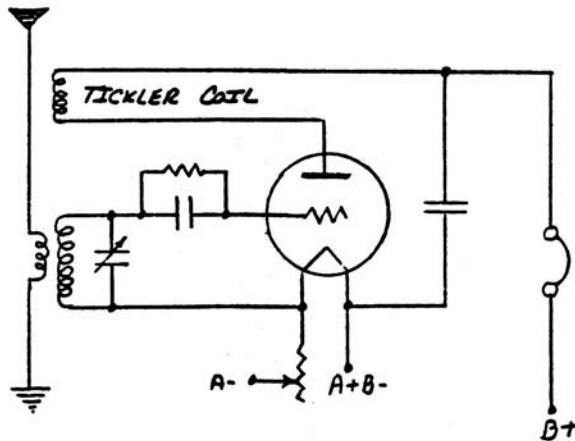


The next one tube non-regenerative circuit is exactly the same as above but with variometer tuning.

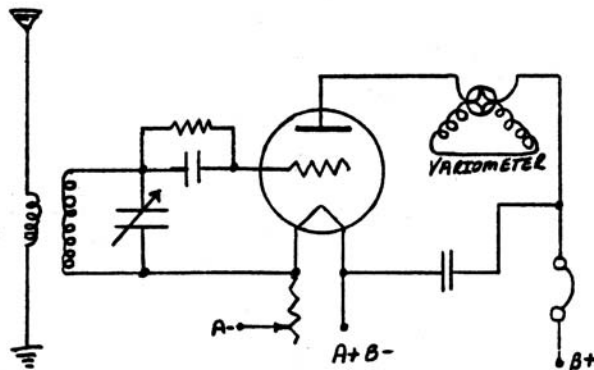


These two circuits shown above are known as the single circuit variety. that is, the antenna is directly connected to the grid circuit of the detector tube.

The next two diagrams are of regenerative one tube receivers. Notice that the antenna circuit is loosely coupled. The reason being, the single circuit with regeneration becomes a powerful radiator and acts as a transmitter. The following circuit uses tickler coil feedback.



The last circuit uses the variometer feedback method. The internal capacitance of the tube plus the variometer produces the feedback.



These diagrams will hopefully provide a tool for trouble shooting this type of receiver. Perhaps a future article describing regeneration and one-tube operations can be presented.

ANTIQUE RADIO PRICES AND THEIR PHENOMENAL ESCALATION

by Paul Giganti

In a way I feel partly responsible for today's high prices on old radios. When I first began to collect, I made up my mind to accumulate a collection in a hurry. So I decided to pay high prices in order to attract the gear; such as \$5.00 for a Grebe Synchrophase (my first set), \$3.50 for an Aeriola Senior, \$50.00 for an IP-500 (a fantastic price), and \$15.00 for an AK Breadboard. This really blew the market and sellers began to realize the value of the treasures in their attics.

I met Harold Greenwood about 20 years ago when I first became interested in the old gear. Harold had already been collecting for several years and had just begun on the Greenwood Book, the first ever written on Antique Radio and Wireless. You probably know the book as Vintage Radio, the title given it by Morgan McMahon when he took over the revision and reprinting of the book. I recall vividly a trade I made with Harold. He had been looking for a Radiola Special, a one-tube Regen receiver, and I had the good fortune of finding one. So I went down to see him and set the radio on his desk. He went into his garage where the floor was literally covered with his duplicates. He pointed to a Kennedy 110 and asked me if I thought that would be a fair trade. I was so shocked at such a fabulous offer that I stuttered a little. He took this to mean that I was not satisfied, so he kicked a Grebe CR-8 and said, "How about adding this?" Then I was really flustered and started to say, "Do you mean I can have both?" He pointed to a CR-5 Grebe and said he would throw it in also. I pulled myself together and said, "Yes".

A few years later, Bill Traver and I purchased the Greenwood collection. We acquired almost everything in the book, a total of about 300 pieces, including all the tubes for the receivers. We did not get the tube collection. This was purchased by Floyd Lyons, an active light bulb collector who was beginning to take an interest in radio tubes. The price of the collection was \$3000 or \$10 per unit. Mind you, this included Marconi, DeForest, RCA, Grebe and at least five AK Breadboards. Overnight I became a poor-man's Glen Streeter. I kept what I wanted and readily disposed of the rest. I even sold a DeForest tuner to the Smithsonian Institution.

I recall another incident which occurred during the depression. A friend and I walked into a junk shop in Chicago and spotted a Grebe CR-8 receiver. The price was \$1.00, so we chipped in 50¢ each, took the set home and sawed it in half. I wanted the variocoupler for a crystal set and he took the rest. Today I would be shot for such a sacrilegious act.

The price of antique radios is determined by several factors:

1. How anxious the buyer is to possess the object.
2. How reluctant the seller is to part with it.

3. Then there is inflation.

We do, however, have guidelines; such as previous experience. For instance, if a radio is priced at \$100 and does not sell, obviously the price is too high. In a few exceptional cases, raising the price might cause it to move. Some buyers are not attracted to a piece that is, in their opinion, too cheap.

Some sets, for no apparent reason, seem to sky-rocket in value. One of these is the Atwater-Kent Breadboard. Today, this is a very popular set and in extreme demand. About 5 years ago I had 12 breadboards in my garage, priced at \$35.00. They did not move. Nobody seemed interested in them as they were too "modern". Finally they went, one by one. Last month I was broker on a sale of an AK model 5. The price: \$1320. What happened to cause this sudden jump in value of a set that not too many years ago sold for \$85.00? I can tell you why. A collector in Illinois had a duplicate AK-5 which he was holding for trade. A certain collector in Lodi, California made him an offer he could not refuse. \$1000, at that time the highest price ever paid for an AK Breadboard. This set a precedent. From then on, any collector with an AK-5 would take no less. I ask you, who is to blame for this state of affairs, the buyer or the seller?

At this point I would like to say something in defense of the dealer one of whom, because I have to eat, I happen to be. Some collectors take a dim view of dealers in our hobby and tolerate them as a necessary evil. I once visited a collector who told me that I was not a good collector because I sold things. I pointed to a Radiola III on his shelf and asked if he would take \$1000 for it. He said, "Yes." So then I told him that the only difference between us was that his price was higher than mine.

To a lot of collectors, a dealer's prices seem high. Let me say something in this regard. Let us take a hypothetical case. A dealer hears about a collection for sale through the grapevine. He spends \$40.00 on phone calls. Then he buys a plane ticket and spends two or three days inventorying the collection and arriving at a price. In the meantime he must put up at a motel. If the deal goes through he hires a moving van and several helpers; then proceeds to drive across the country. Arriving at the home base, he rents several garages for storing and sorting. Some of the sets are very good and some are three dialers. And you know how they go. I forgot to mention the loan at the bank, with a substantial rate of interest attached. Then he sits back and waits for customers to break down his door.

Speaking of three dialers, don't sell them short. Some of them are quite beautiful and can make a good addition to any collection. Some collectors, especially the new ones, are turning up their noses at the three dialers. All they want is Marconi, DeForest, Atwater-Kent Breadboards, etc. I'm afraid they are in for a disappointment. They might be passing up a good deal, as prices on three dialers are as yet not affected by inflation. It is possible to pick up a good three dialer for a little as \$35.00 to \$75.00

In conclusion, I would like to tell you a true story. It happened in Holland over a hundred years ago. Holland, as you know, has always been famous in a commodity market similar to our Board of Trade. People were mortgaging their homes and buying tulip bulbs on speculation. Soon the price reached \$2000 for a single tulip bulb. One day, during the town meeting, a wise old man got up and said, "Folks, let's face it, no tulip bulb is worth \$2000." At that moment the tulip market collapsed and a great many people lost their shirts. Wouldn't it be nice if some wise old man would get up and say that no old radio is worth \$2000?

(The editor would like to thank Mr. Paul Giganti and The California Historical Radio Society for granting permission to print this article.)

MEET THE COLLECTOR

by Ray Windrix

The purpose of this column is to acquaint our local members with some of our out of state members.

One such member is Jim Collings of Abilene, Texas. He is single, 28 years old, and is a petroleum engineer.

Jim's collecting began 4 years ago with the purchase of three 1930's type sets from a garage sale. He recalls tinkering with radios at a younger age.

I have known Jim for three years and had the pleasure of personally meeting him in Dallas at the 1977 & 78 Vintage Radio & Phonograph Conventions. Prior to that I had several dealings with him in buying and trading sets by mail.

I don't know of anyone more active than Jim. He is constantly buying, trading, and selling to improve his collection.

He is a member of the AWA, RMAWA, and VRPS, his home club. He is on the newsletter staff and usually gets involved in other activities such as the conventions. He also subscribes to almost all antique radio publications.

Some of Jim's favorite sets in his collection include a DeForest Interpanel, Echophone TA 16, Magnavox 2-stage amp., and a Grebe CR-12.

OUR STAFF

PRESIDENT: Ray Windrix

VICE PRESIDENT: Richard Jackson

SEC. OF TREASURER: Ron and Sherry Harmon

EDITORS: Bob and Margie Slagle

R.M.A.W.A. is a non-profit organization with the intent of preserving early radio.

Radio Log will be printed quarterly and distributed at no charge to members of the club.

Wanted...

- Schematic for an Ozarka Senior S-1; Victoreen sets and information. Ray Windrix, 915 Potter Place, Colorado Springs, CO 80909 (596-0179).
- Tuning knobs for AC Dayton XL25; two panel meters for A & M Radio manufactured set. Leamon Brooks, 10718 W. Marlowe Ave., Littleton, CO 80123 (979-0331).
- Old and unusual tubes up to 1930 -good or bad-; Grebe CR-3; Paragon DA-2; for trade - Kennedy 281/521. Barney Wooters, 8308 E. Mansfield, Denver, CO 80237 (770-5314).



Ken Hardy examines Barney Wooter's
1922 receiver containing 3 WD11's.

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