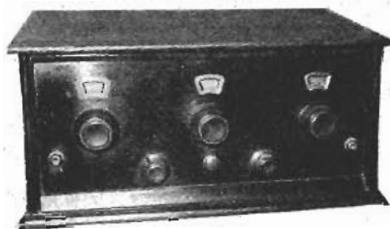
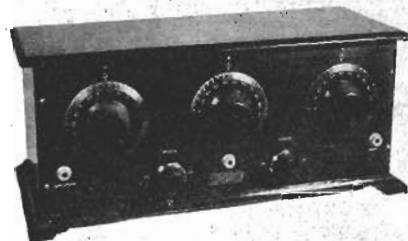


ATWATER KENT model 36, 1927



FRESHMAN MASTERPIECE, 1925



FRESHMAN MASTERPIECE, 1925

Restoring Antique Radios

Antique radios have gained popularity in recent repairing and modifying and how to go

MORGAN E. McMAHON*

THE OLD RADIOS ARE COMING BACK. THOUSANDS of collectors and nostalgia hounds are dragging old sets out of attics, basements and junk shops. You can be the one to make them play again. If you have an old-line repair shop, you can revitalize your business. If you're a hobbyist, you can discover real fun in renovating antique sets. Chances are you'll become an enthusiastic collector yourself.

AC radio sets from 1927 to 1950 are now very popular with collectors, and are in demand by almost everyone as conversation pieces for den or rumpus room. Prices for early AC sets in playing condition run from \$25 to over \$200. Battery sets from the early 1920's command even higher prices, even pre-1951 TV sets are fair game.

Getting Started

What does it take to jump into the hobby or business of renovating antique

*Author-publisher, Vintage Radio Company.

sets? If you're experienced at repairing tube sets you've already got a start. How far you go depends on skills such as refinishing and machine tool operation.

There are really three levels of renovation: **Restoration** requires that the set be brought back to its original condition in every respect, except that the rich luster of the finish, accumulated over the years, is not disturbed unless required. The restorer puts new transformer windings into the old transformer cans, and places new dry electrolytic capacitors in the old wet-filter capacitor cans. The set should be indistinguishable from new, except for the richness of the finish. A true restoration job involves using skills in cabinetry, refinishing, metalworking and electronics.

Repair means to get the set working as it once did, but with possible shortcuts such as hanging electrolytics under the chassis and substituting R-C networks for those hard-to-get transformers. **Modification** involves substituting modern modules, such as transistorized

tuners, for the original (an unpardonable sin to the purist!).

How do you get started? First, you must be competent to do the work. Just because the sets are many years old doesn't mean they're a snap to fix. Next, you need the tools—workbench, testers, circuit references, etc. You must know where to get obsolete tubes and parts. You also have to find the best way to ship sets, as you'll want to work beyond your immediate locale if you want to set up a business. You must advertise your talents and services and set up channels for finding old sets to renovate and sell at a profit.

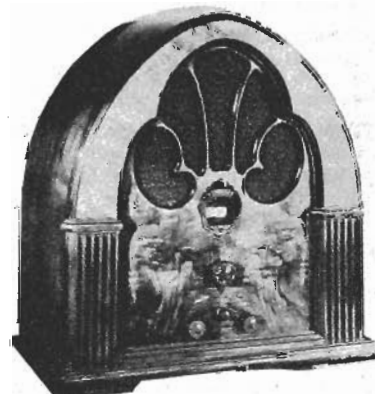
It's not hard to sell sets to incidental buyers. Try local antique and collectibles dealers, and the new "funky things" shops. An exhibit of your own helps. However, your best bet may be with more serious collectors who don't have the time or resources to restore their acquisitions. If you become *the* restorer for collectors in your area, you're pretty well set.



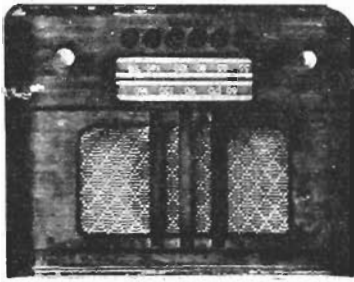
1933 AUDIOLA



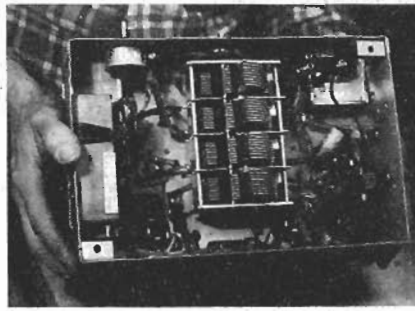
ATWATER KENT model 55, 1929



PHILCO CORP. model 90B, 1931



RCA model 95T5, 1938



JACKSON BELL CHASSIS, 1932



ZENITH model 75 Radio Phonograph, 1930

-How to get started

years. Here's a look at what's required in restoring, about obtaining parts and schematics

Clubs and periodicals

To tap the collector community, start by reading the same books and periodicals as they do, and by getting to know the local or regional collectors' clubs. Start with the Vintage Radio Company books; write to Vintage Radio, Dept. P, Box 2045, Palos Verdes, CA 90274 for information. The volume of key interest to you is *A Flick of the Switch*. The 1887-1929 counterpart to this book is *Vintage Radio*.

There are some periodicals devoted entirely to radio collectors. *The Horn Speaker*, 9820 Silver Meadow Dr., Dallas, TX 75217, is a monthly newspaper for collectors and historians. Other collector newsletters are: *Radio Age*, 1220 Meigs St., Augusta, GA 30904; *Antique Radio Topics*, Box 42, Rossville, IN 46065; and the *Classic Radio Newsletter*, Box 28572, Dallas, TX 75228. A good directory of publications and of hard-to-get parts and services is available from Historical Radio Services, Box 15370, Long Beach, CA 90815.

Historical radio clubs are your best doors into the collector community. The Antique Wireless Association and the Antique Radio Club of America are national, and there are also regional clubs. In Canada the Canadian Vintage Wireless Association is the key organization.

Your other main need is for circuit-diagram references. Rider's *Perpetual Trouble Shooter's Manuals* cover sets from the mid-1920's to the 1950's. Howard W. Sams' *Photofacts* give detail on sets built after 1945. Morris Beitman's *Most-Often-Needed Circuit Diagrams* books are still available from Supreme Publications, 1760 Balsam

ANTIQUE RADIO CLUBS

Antique Radio Club of America
c/o Mr. Bill Denk
81 Steeplechase Rd.
Devon, PA 19333

Antique Wireless Association
c/o Mr. Bruce Kelley
Main St.
Holcomb, NY 14469

Buckeye Antique Radio and Phonograph Club
c/o Mr. Ken Longenecker
1937 Stoney Hill Dr.
Hudson, OH 44236

California Historical Radio Society
c/o San Jose Historical Museum
635 Phelan Ave.
San Jose, CA 95112

Canadian Vintage Wireless Association
c/o Mr. Sid Prior
102 Parkhurst Blvd.
Toronto, Ontario, M4G 2E6
Canada

Indiana Historical Radio Society
c/o Mr. Ed Taylor
245 N. Oakland Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46201

Mid-America Antique Radio Club
c/o Dr. Robert Lane
2301 Independence Ave.
Kansas City, MO 64214

Northwest Vintage Radio Society
Box 13544
Portland, OR 97213

Rocky Mountain Antique Wireless Association
16500 W. 12th Dr.
Golden, CO 80401

Southern California Antique Radio Society
c/o Mr. Alan Smith
6712 Bisby Lake Ave.
San Diego, CA 92119

Southwest Vintage Radio and Phonograph Society
Box 19406
Dallas, TX 75219



ATWATER KENT model 35, 1926

Rd., Highland Park, IL 60035. Gernsback Publications' *Official Radio Service Manual* covers the period from the mid-1920's through 1935. Vintage Radio Company provides a circuit research service in which the schematic diagram and other available information on any pre-1951 radio set will be sent for \$3.50.

You can help preserve radio history and have some fun at the same time; and if you're interested, earn some money in the process.

R-E