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NEWSLETTER

Wisconsin Antique Radio Club, Incorporated

Volume 5, No. 2
March 2001

EARLY RADIO IN MILWAUKEE

I found this article in a collection of radio material at the Milwaukee Historical Society. When it was written, and by whom, is not indicated. It had supporting documents including a copy of the permit to erect the tower on the Railway Exchange Building, and a newspaper article including a photo of the tower at McKinley Beach dated 1920. In 1920, it was still being operated by the *Hans*. The photo is intentionally blurry. Along with the tower, there is an insert of the officer in charge, appearing as large as the tower, standing raised straight, seemingly floating about ten feet off the ground.

It is said that the first radio transmitter operated in Milwaukee was operated by the Great Lakes Telegraph Company, atop what is now the Railway Exchange Building. The towers were erected in January, 1909, and went into operation February 4, 1909. It remained in operation until 1912 under the direction of the Great Lakes Radio-Telegraph Company. Thereafter, it became the Milwaukee Wireless School which took possession February 6, 1912 and operated by them until November 1912. It became the property of the American Marconi Company after November 1912 and was operated by them until the World War. By an Act of Congress all of the Marconi stations in America were leased by the government during the World War. In 1918, the government offered to purchase the Marconi stations in America from the Marconi Company and were purchased for the sum of approximately \$1,500,000.

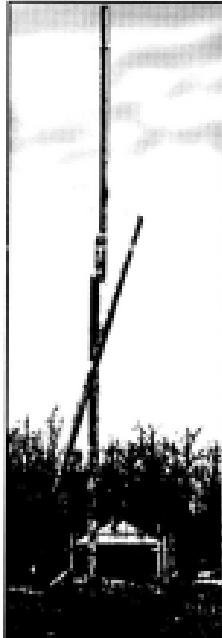
While the station was being operated by the Marconi Company, its call was WME. As a result of the War and the government taking over the station, the station was operated under the naval call number of NIK. After removal of the station from the Railway Exchange Building it was in operation for several years at the Life Guard Station near McKinley Beach.

It is said by some that there was an

earlier station in Milwaukee, which information appears to be doubtful. This supposed station was supposed to have been located atop the Schlitz Brewery up on Third Street. Old Schlitz employees have no recollection of such a station, but it is advisable that we check further

before we definitely drop that matter.

There was another early radio station operated by the United Wireless Company, in Whitefish Bay, prior to 1914. This station used a power of 30 Kilowatts which even today would be considered a large radio station. The existence of this station is an established fact. The exact location, as yet, we do not know.



Here is a photo of the tower set up by the American Marconi Company. The date is June 1st, 1903. The location is just north of Lake Park. The event is the first successful transmission between Milwaukee and Chicago. Participating were the mayor of Milwaukee and the mayor of Chicago. Even by standards of that time, this is a slender tower. Two hundred forty feet tall. It seemingly is made of two poles welded or bolted together. Is it the first radio tower in Milwaukee? Maybe not, but more on that in a future issue.

FROM THE EDITOR

I want to thank everyone for their participation in the last meet. Especially appreciated was John Enigl bringing in the Nunn-Landau radio and Vera Tischau having the Nunn recording.

I'd like to make a correction in my article on Irving Nunn. Ulka Trischau informed me that I had the wrong location for the Nunn-Landau factory. As some of you know, almost all the addresses in Milwaukee were changed in 1930. I was aware of it, but was wrongly informed by a librarian as to the new address for Nunn-Landau. The correct address is in the 2800 block of North 4th Street. As Glenn Trischau indicated, it was right behind the factory for Nunn Bush shoes, his father's factory.

Recently, I came across a voluminous amount of information on the Milwaukee Journal Radio and TV stations. Since John Enigl wrote something on the early Journal history, I'll be doing the same thing on their experimental work with AM radio, FM, fax, and TV in the future. John Enigl has also indicated he interviewed Phillip Laeser after he retired. He was an engineer involved in all of the early broadcasting experiments for the Journal.

Finally, those of you who are familiar with other Wisconsin radio makers, let me encourage you to write something about a Wisconsin company or at least let us know what you know about them so that other members of the club can enjoy Wisconsin's rich radio history.

The Dynamic Microsphere

Various inventors had developed dynamic or "moving coil" microphones between 1917 and 1930. Unfortunately, the dynamic microphone was a little ahead of its time. The main problem was the very low output voltage, which required amplification.



Figure 1
Estimated

The telephone industry had developed the carbon microphone, which was not only a microphone but an amplifier as well. It would deliver much more power output than was derived from the sound waves striking the diaphragm, due to the battery in the microphone circuit. Since the microphone at that time was being used primarily in voice circuits and close talking applications, noise and frequency

response were not major factors.

As we approached the mid-twenties, the radio industry was growing rapidly and in need of amplifiers and better quality microphones. The recording industry was transferring from mechanical to electrical recording.

The movie industry was being pressured into talking motion pictures, as public address systems were on the rise as equipment became available.

Western Electric engineers had developed loudspeaker drivers in 1928 using a special dome shaped diaphragm with aluminum alloy and aluminum ribbon wire for the voice coil. (Their model 533 received a This same

basic design was used in their first dynamic microphone. A small number of these microphones were made for engineers involved in broadcasting, public address and movie equipment. These microphones were tested in all these areas before they put the design into production.

Western Electric introduced this microphone in 1931 as the model 41A moving coil microphone. It was the first dynamic microphone produced for commercial use. Figures 2, 3 and 4 show a few photos of this microphone in its manufactured version.

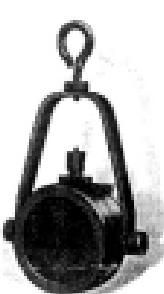


Figure 2



Figure 2



Figure 4



WANTED

700

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Membership

If your membership has expired, please send in
the renewal form with your dues payment of
\$12.00.

If you are current in your membership, please give the enclosed membership form to another collector.

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Welcome to the Beta Club

Page 1

Sunday

March 25, 2001

8a.m. - 12:00p.m.

(all items must be removed from the premises by noon)

WISCONSIN ANTIQUE RADIO CLUB SWAP MEET

BUT - SELL - TRADE RADIO EQUIPMENT AND RELATED ITEMS

Richfield Chalet:

1231 Hwy 175

Hubertus, WI 53033

All you can eat buffet 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

(Take Highway 41/45 to Holy Hill Road (147)

to 175 south 1.1 miles to Chalet)

This is an indoor/outdoor meet in the meeting hall and parking lot.

(There are no states to get from the parking lot.)

Reservations: none

Officers (2001): \$7 for members \$10 non-members per space

Indoors: Space = 1 table, Outdoors: space = 1 parking stall
2 chairs included with each indoor space.

Admission: (non-sellers) \$1.00 adults, children free

Food: Food and beverage service available at Chalet.

Brunch 10-3, \$9.00 all you can eat.

Club: Membership dues are \$12 per year (January 1 to December 31)

Information: For information contact: Dave Boyce,

■ Milwaukee, WI 53224(414) ■■■■■



Disclaimer: Neither the organizers of this event nor the owner of the property are responsible or liable for any personal injury, property damage or loss by theft or other means or any merchandise brought into the building by attendees of the swap meet.

MILWAUKEE GOT AN EARLY START IN BROADCAST RADIO

By John Wells

The book, *The Milwaukee Journal, An Informal Chronicle of Its First 100 Years*, by Robert J. Wells, gives an excellent summary of the history of Milwaukee radio stations, especially of WTMJ.

WTMJ was not Milwaukee's first radio station, according to Wells. The Wisconsin News beat the Milwaukee Journal by putting a small station on the air in the early 1920s, broadcasting from a rented room in the Pabst Hotel.

Journal publisher Harry J. Grant (whose lunch had saved him from a trip on the Titanic) was impressed, but cautious about his paper putting into radio. Still, other newspapers were doing it; the Chicago Daily News put WMAQ on the air with classical music and educational programs in 1922. Milwaukee listeners also listened to WTMJ in Elgin, Illinois, which broadcast dance music.

Gimbels put WAAK on the air on April 26, 1923, to convince people to buy radios. This encouraged Grant to ask Walter Dunn, the Journal's talented advertising expert, to line up a program for WAAK, which featured Lionel Barnstone, who happened to be playing at the Raymond Theater. The program was played over loudspeakers at several places, including the downtown Journal building, where people

who didn't have radios could hear it.

On June 16, 1923, another station, WCAV, began broadcasting in Milwaukee, and two weeks later, Marquette University put WHAD on the air. (Note that these call letters are now used by the state radio network station in Beloit; many radio station call letters have been moved around the country, with no connection with the company that previously used them.)

WHAD grew out of experiments in the MU physics lab. The Milwaukee School of Engineering also put a station on the air starting out with the call letters WHAD, then changing to the more fitting call letters, WSOE.

Incidentally, all stations east of the Mississippi were assigned call letters beginning with a "W", and all stations west of the Mississippi were to use call letters beginning with a "K". But at least two stations had their call letters established before that rule went through. That included of course, KDKA, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and one you may not have heard of, because it has very low power: It's KHZ in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, still on the air after three-quarters of a century, at 1170 on the dial. So if you're driving near Fond du Lac, and pick up that station, don't ask where the mountains are. You're not out West.

By 1924, there were 12,471 radio sets in Milwaukee. The Journal had started regular broadcasts over WCAV, which had moved to the Amherst Hotel, then changed its call letters to WKAF. The Journal started a

radio section in the paper, and held its first annual Radio Exposition at the Amherst. On January 25, 1925, the Journal took over the programming of the Marquette University Station, WHAD.

On April 20, 1927, with several years of radio experience under its belt, the Journal dropped WHAD and bought WKAF. The problem had been, the paper couldn't do any advertising on the university owned station. Since advertising is the lifeblood of a newspaper (and most radio stations), a change had to be made in order to pay the bills. Immediately, the call letters were changed to WTMJ, which perfectly fit the newspaper's name. To this day, the paper, now the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, is a blood brother of the radio stations, which now includes WTMJ and its fm. counterpart, WKTI.

You are encouraged to read Robert J. Wells' book, which is probably still available from the Journal Sentinel, since it gives many more details of the development of radio in the Milwaukee area.

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712

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Below are some excerpts from a Milwaukee Journal publication from 1928. The original publication is 16 pages and surveys Milwaukee residents' preferences in radio. It includes crystal sets, speakers, "A" & "B" supplies and the number of tubes in sets Milwaukeeans were buying in 1928. The surveys were cited in National magazines at the time, and articles and books by Milwaukee Journal writers.

Number of Tutors

REFERENCE to the chart below, showing the number of sets used in radio sets, indicates the greatest increase in the statistic model. Comparison is shown covering a four-year period, giving both percentage and number of sets coming under the various classifications.

One-fourth of the total number of families which do not own a radio set at the present time indicated their intention to purchase a set, however, during 1939. This means that more than 2000 families are already in the market for radio sets, and a prediction that a radio

use of sales during this year should be obtainable with greater exactness by combining the figures of the two years.

CHARTS. Report the division of Greater Pittsburgh into radio and writing facilities relative to the principles of rule of various numbers of cities, as at date of 1910, was compiled by Jan. 15 of previous year.

Finally, despite the absence of *Brucella* transmission risks and growing literature, research on seroprevalence and incidence among users of animal products is still limited.

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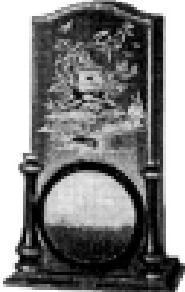
Decorative Lamp Radio Reproducer

ANSWER

The registered representative, known as "Wanda Lamm," is made by the G. H. Webb Co., 1015 Madison Ave., Milwaukee, Wis. The skirt is 1½ in. in diameter, 11 in. long, hand gathered or not covered. It is decorated with a 1½ in. wide, bunched ruched panel in the back. Another ruched band is on the "V" neck. A small pleated panel is a double width and flounces over, ruched, gathered and gray. Embroidered roses are on the skirt.

Gone

Marceline
Myerseller



Classified Ads

Wanted: Zenith radio, table model No. 6-2-223. John Leon, [REDACTED], Milwaukee, WI 53220 (414) [REDACTED]

Wanted: Flyback Transformer for 1968 Zenith table TV Zenith part #5-48664. Also wanted: Allied Catalog from 1960. Thanks! Dave Springer, [REDACTED], Wausau, WI 54401 (715) [REDACTED] before 9PM Central Time. Collect calls o.k.

For Sale Free RCA Color TV Chassis CTC16E Not working. Full of brand new tubes. I will help you load it, if needed. Ken Ayer [REDACTED] Mequon, WI 53060 (262) [REDACTED]

2001 Calendar Wisconsin Antique Radio Club

Please note: The newsletter is the reliable source for dates of your club's swap meets.

Wisconsin ARC

March 25 Outdoors/indoors

Sum - 11am

Illinois Meets

April 1st

Radio Resources

Antique Radio Classified has announced their expansion to the net. Classifieds Online, the ad reads. If you are a subscriber you will find your password on the label of the publication.

ARC's web site is www.antiqueradio.com

The website for Antique Electronic Supply is www.tubesandmore.com

Other addresses & web sites:
Antique Radio Club of Illinois
[REDACTED]@aol.com

Northland Antique Radio Club: www.goweb.it/com/televisions/city/14344

This Newsletter is published quarterly
in March, June, September &
December. Deadlines for ads and
articles are the 1st of the month of
publication. The club welcomes letters
and comments. Address them to:

Ralph Larsen c/o Wisconsin
Antique Radio Club, Inc.

Milwaukee, WI 53202
[\[REDACTED\]@hotmail.com](mailto:[REDACTED]@hotmail.com)

President: Bill Ingalls (414) [REDACTED]
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Treasurer: Jim Gossomino (262) [REDACTED]
At Large: Ralph Larsen (414) [REDACTED]
Honorary Secretary (414) [REDACTED]

Wisconsin Antique Radio Club Inc.

Purpose: The Purpose of the club is to preserve the history and enhance the knowledge of radio, television and related disciplines.

Wisconsin Antique Radio Club, Inc.

At: Ralph Larsen

Milwaukee, WI 53202

