

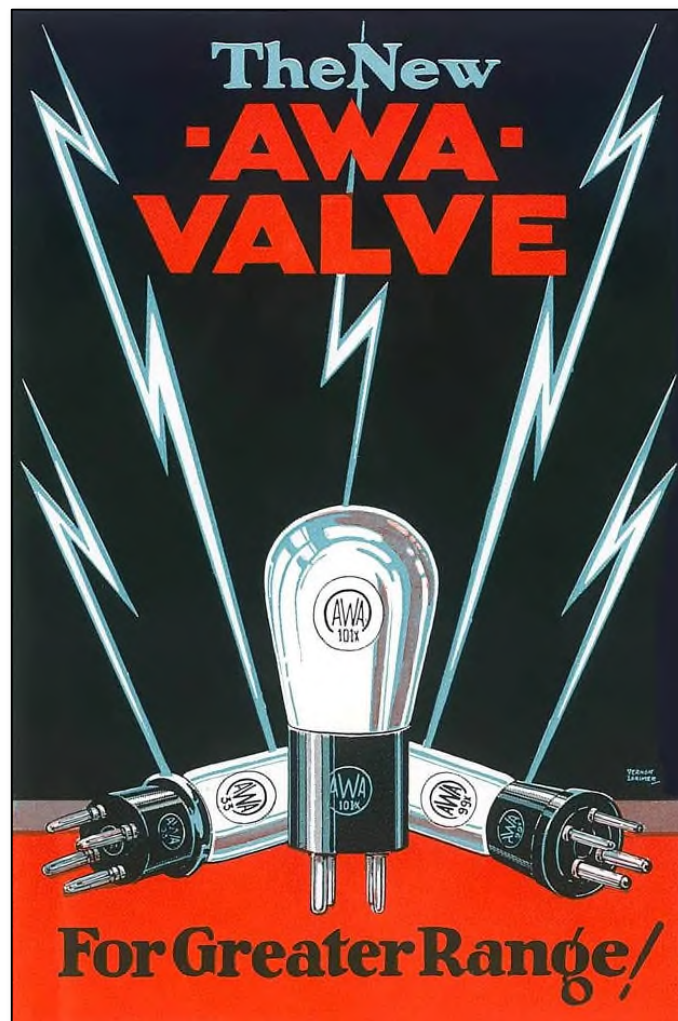


Volume 32 No. 6

June 2023

S.A. Group Newsletter

**This month we celebrate the contribution made by AWA over 103 years,
and report on our AWA themed meeting in April 2023.**



A beautifully designed advertisement that harkens back to AWA's heyday.

Historical Radio Society of Australia Inc. – S.A. Group

Web Site: www.hrsasa.asn.au

All correspondence should be addressed to the Secretary, HRSA-SA Group, 2-13 Chester Street, Glenelg South, S.A. 5045.

Committee for 2022-23

President:	Graham Dicker	0414 323 099	pres@hrsasa.asn.au
Vice President:	Keith Ellison	0407 304 028	vicepres@hrsasa.asn.au
Secretary:	Ian Smyth	0488 488 776	sec@hrsasa.asn.au
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Committee Member:	Warren Lane	0400 272 556	warren@hrsasa.asn.au
Committee Member:	Peter Howard	0424 563 732	peter@hrsasa.asn.au

Co-Opted Additional Members/Responsibilities:

Centenary of			
Broadcasting in SA:	Tony Bell	8269 4095	antony.k.bell@gmail.com
Shop Keeper:	VACANT		shop@hrsasa.asn.au
Valve Bank Manager:	John Crawford	8344 4978	vbm@hrsasa.asn.au
Newsletter Editor:	Ian Smyth	0488 488 776	sec@hrsasa.asn.au
Website Editor:	Ian Smyth	0488 488 776	sec@hrsasa.asn.au

Planned meetings for the next few months:

Sunday 25 June

1:00pm to 3:30pm

Home Visit – John Wagener

We will be visiting John's home to look at his workshop and collection.

Please bring something to share for afternoon tea, and a chair to sit on.

To be held at:

28, Sylvan Way,

Glenalta, SA, 5052

Wednesday 12 July

12 noon for 12:30pm start

Members Lunch

Our regular bi-monthly luncheon for members

To be held at the:

Reephram Hotel, 273 Churchill Rd, Prospect, 5082

Sunday 16th July

1:00pm to 3:30pm

Tutor Assistance Workshop

(B.Y.O. project and get help)

Please contact the Secretary to book your place.

To be held at:

St. Cyprian's Church Hall, 70, Melbourne Street
North Adelaide

Sunday 30 July

1:00pm to 4:00pm

Annual General Meeting and Auction

Your chance to elect the committee for next year and grab a bargain!

To be held at:

St. Cyprian's Church Hall, 70, Melbourne Street
North Adelaide

Sunday 27th August

1:00pm to 3:30pm

Practical Soldering Workshop

Do's and Don'ts – Hints and tricks (eg using baby oil to solder aluminium) - reflow soldering – types of soldering stations that might be useful.

To be held at:

St. Cyprian's Church Hall, 70, Melbourne Street
North Adelaide

Wanted to Buy, Sell, or Exchange

Are you looking for a hard-to-get part? A strange knob, or a replacement coil? Have an item that you'd like to sell? Why not place a free, classified advertisement on our website? Go to the TRADING POST page of our website at: <https://hrsasa.asn.au/page-16/> and have a look at what's on offer right now and help a fellow member. It changes frequently. *Why not make use of this resource yourself?*

You could also place a free classified advertisement in the "yellow pages" section of our National HRSA Magazine "Radio Waves" and reach an Australia-wide audience. Just contact the Editor, Ian Batty on 0402 736 527 or send it in by email to: ianbatty311@gmail.com

.... When hobbies take over.....



This is the latest add-on for a Technician's workshop..... just in case we haven't got used to the smell (or too smug to remember!)

HRSA-SA Group Valve Bank:

As you may be aware, the SA Group Valve Bank, containing our stock of 10,000 to 15,000 valves has had to be relocated from the current AZTRONICS Store at 170 Sturt Street in Adelaide where it has been for the past 7 years or so.



Note the Google Maps distortion of the spelling?

The new AZTRONICS Store, will be located right next door in the red brick building. However, there is not enough room to house the whole collection and provide us with a room where we can sort and test the valves we sell.

AZTRONICS will continue to be our “retail outlet” (and point of collection) for valve sales to members and the public. The stock held at the shop will be topped up from the reserve stock that is now being sorted and collated at 3 different locations – two of them being country locations of members!

AZTRONICS shop will re-open at the new location in the first week of July 2023.



This Month's politically incorrect story.... It's from an old 1960's 5KA program prep book.

A man walking along a road in Wallaroo comes across a shepherd with a huge flock of sheep. “I’ll bet you \$100 against one of your sheep that I can tell you the exact number in this flock”, he says. The shepherd thinks it over, and because it's a big flock, he takes the bet. The man says, “1973.” The shepherd is astonished because that's exactly right. The shepherd says, “Okay, I’m a man of my word, pick a sheep.” The man picks up a sheep and begins to walk away. “Wait!” cries the shepherd, “Give me a chance to get even. Double or nothing that I can guess your occupation.” The man agrees, “You’re an accountant” says the shepherd. “Amazing”... says the man, “you’re exactly right, but how did you work it out?” “Well”, says the shepherd “put down my dog and I’ll tell you.”



President's "Banter"!

From our President, Graham Dicker.

President's monthly stories from the past (and other ramblings)



My story this month has a different spin. Usually, I write about somewhat humorous things that have happened over the years, but this month's story is a current, first-hand one demonstrating that the thread of our passion for collecting and restoring vintage electronic gear extends worldwide.

As most will know, my interest is in restoring tape recorders, mostly ROLA and pro-studio machines, which extends to big green things from EMI. My current project is reverse engineering the sound of Joe Meek and his studio. Joe was the genius engineer that recorded many hits like "Telstar" and "Have I the right." He used EMI tape machines, so to reverse engineer the sound, you need some authentic restored and working identical tape machines i.e., a TR50 a TR52 and a BTR2.

About two years ago I purchased an EMI TR50 which was in a very sad state (see photos below.) The amplifier section had been removed which was also in a terrible state and the mechanics were even worse. These were domestic machines that were sold mainly for the UK market, but some ended up here, and other countries.



Despite trying to find a schematic for the last two years and coming up blank, I had recently set up an artificial intelligence ChatGPT search bot that found a TR50 for sale in another country which included a manual. The owner was our age and downsizing. He was an interesting person to chat with about collections. With no scanner, and not being able to travel due to poor health, he was kind enough to take a few photos of the schematic with his mobile phone and send them to me to stitch together. I now have a schematic!!!!



It turns out that the owner, like us, had been a collector of green machines since the 60's and had acquired quite a few over that time and was quite helpful to a strange Aussie request about the manual that went with the TR50 for sale. In his own words:

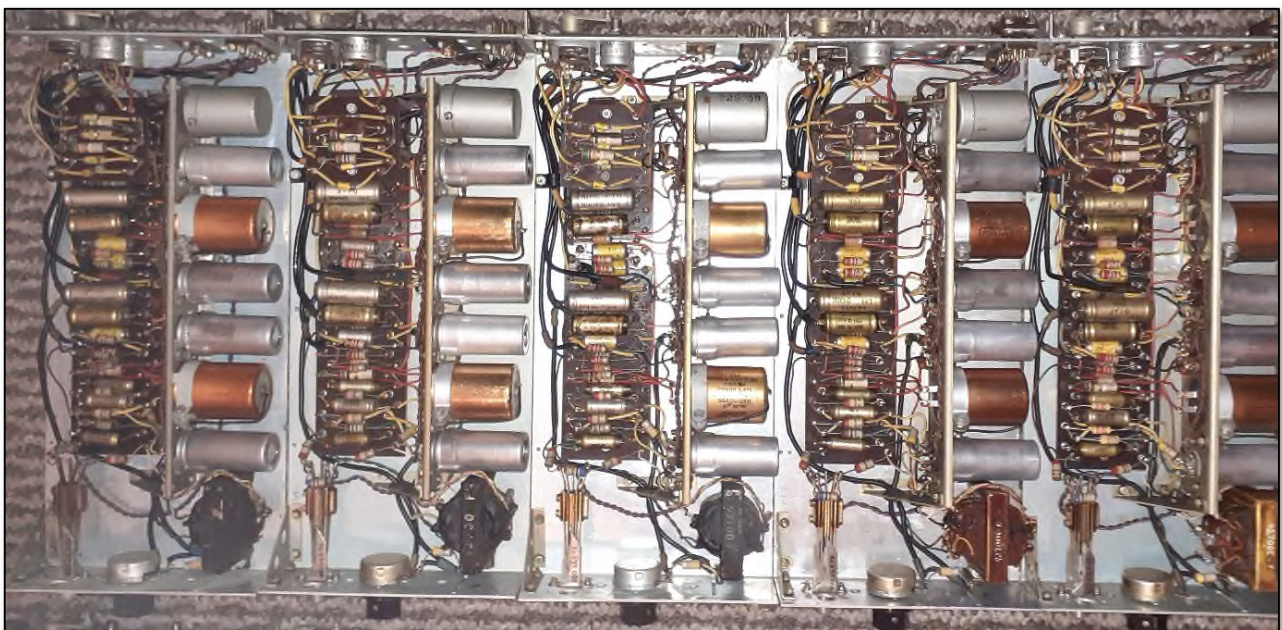
"Thank you, Graham, for your kind words, it is nice to know that I have been a very small help in the restoration of your TR50 project. I have no doubt that it will be a wonderful machine once finished. As for Joe Meek, well that's a name to conjure with. Not heard that name since my early youth. I have had a few enquiries for the TR50 and TR51, but they all want me to post them. I am not in the best of health these days, so I just don't have the time, and to be honest, the energy to post anything. So, collection is the only option and that limits their desirability. I also have a working TR52, (or it was last time I used it a couple of years ago.) I have had many 50's 51's and 52's over the years and they are without doubt marvellous machines. I have so much stuff, valves, transformers, amps, spares etc etc etc that has to go, as it is a bit overwhelming."

There is no particular story to the EMI's really. I became aware of EMI in the late seventies when I picked up an RE-301 machine for a few Roubles. Over the next 40+ years I took every opportunity I could to pick up more, along with any other reel to reel machines. It's a bit of an obsession to be honest. I never used them professionally or semi-professionally. I just collected them and used them for my own recordings. It got to the stage where I simply did not have the space to keep them all and the wife, bless her, was by that time, none too happy with the situation.

I decided it was time to start disposing of it all. Which I have slowly been doing for the last 10-15 years. I am on the last leg now, hopefully! During the lockdown periods I dismantled many of the machines, mainly for the space, and for something to do. The cases were past saving, but OK for parts. I vaguely remember stripping some EMI's but they were 52's. I am in need of a pinch roller for the TR51 that I have, as the original has completely disintegrated. Over the last 2-3 weeks I have been going through my stuff but have not come across any as yet. I have found the record replay modules of the 52's but nothing else. Anyway Graham, I wish you all the best with restoration and any future endeavours."

My overseas friend then sent me a couple of photos (below) and went on to say:

After the covid "strip and chuck", I ended up with 32 x TR52 record play modules that I could not bear to part with, I suspect that you will not see so many modules together at one time, and I doubt that EMI ever had that many at one time as well.





This sounds like a common problem we all have with our collections, driven by the urge not to throw out anything that is part of our history. Unfortunately, most of our wives are at the point of pressing us into disposing of ALL of our collections, and for some reason, do not share our passion for collecting. Whatever you do, never let our wives get together to discuss things. It will most likely take me 10-15 years to reduce my collection, something to think about !!!!!

To me it was refreshing to make contact and exchange bits of our collections and projects. A bit like a modern version of a pen pal, and great to see that passion for saving our past, and some of our values of the HRSA being carried out in other countries.

- **Graham Dicker.**

Component Corner

Many new members are probably wondering where to obtain components and valves. The following is a list in order of preference:

HRSA-SA Group Shop: We are working towards a new arrangement for our store. In the meantime, contact our Secretary, Ian Smyth on 0488-488-776 to enquire, or place an order. Ian's email address is: sec@hrsasa.asn.au

AZTRONICS, 170 Sturt Street, Adelaide. Houses the HRSA-SA Group valve bank and modern components. They will source components for members. Great supporters of the HRSASA.

HRSA Melbourne (see *Radio Waves*) Houses the Victorian HRSA valve bank and odd passive components and kits, plus resource books written especially for members.

WES Components, Sydney. The catalogue is viewable on-line, and orders can be placed through the Shop Keeper/Secretary, as the SA Group has an account, through which we get "trade discount". Go to: <https://www.wes.com.au> to see all their products.

AWA “Show and Tell” Meeting – Sunday 30th April 2023.

This was the third meeting of a series with a focus on a particular brand of radio product. The first meeting featured EDDYSTONE transceivers and receivers. The second of the series, was focussed on ASTOR radios and TV sets. At these meetings, we try to construct a timeline of exhibits from the 1920's to the present, to highlight the development over time, of these brands. This year, our focus was on AWA products, their diversity and development over time.

- Photos by Stephen Parker.



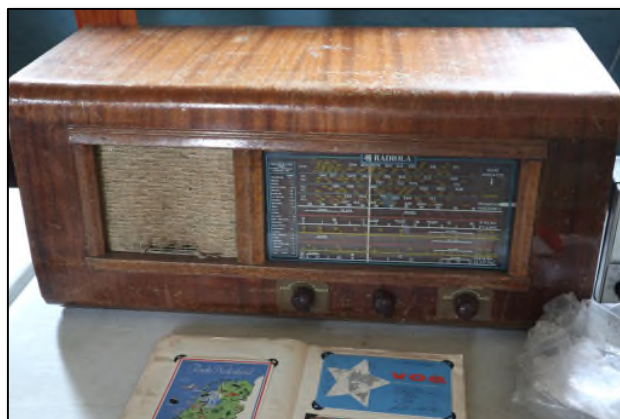
Left: John Crawford got things underway with his exhibits.



Above: John's AWA badged Distortion and Noise Meter – showing that they made more than just radios and TV's.



Above: John's AWA VOLTOHMYST – A versatile instrument, used to measure both +ve and -ve DC voltages; DC current, resistance and AC voltages.



Above: John's RADIOLA 7-Band Comms Receiver. In the foreground is his collection of QSL cards – swapped with other users worldwide as confirmation of contact.



Above: Chris Ratcliff's AWA Mains/Portable Radiola showing batteries



Above: Front view of same radio with re-packed batteries in plastic ready to go into Eveready boxes.



Above: Chris Ratcliff demonstrating his three AWA exhibits



Above: Tony Bell brought in a Beat Frequency Oscillator and a Crystal Calibration Unit.



Above and Right: Phil Flaherty demonstrating his WWII Australian Airforce Comms Receiver



Above: Graham Dicker brought in an AWA Multi-input pre-mixer/amplifier he rescued from the ABC studios.



Above: Joshua Boxer brought in a very early P.A. system and a "mystery" speaker in a wooden box!



Above: Two photos showing the amazing collection of AWA transistor radios brought in by Tony Bell – The AWA 581P (far left) was the last portable valve radio made by AWA in 1957.



Above: Darryl Sampson's recently acquired Radiola "New Champion" model 449-MA



Above: The Australian designed aircraft "distance measuring equipment (DME) was used worldwide.



Above: From 1966 – The uniquely designed AWA B-15 was one of the last 5-valve mantle radios. Using the same chassis and case, AWA developed an all-transistor portable model, the B-23. This one was badly damaged and has been extensively restored.

ADELAIDE HILLS AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

**BIG ANNUAL
BUY AND SELL**

SATURDAY 15TH OF JULY

MARION RSL – 31-39 NORFOLK ROAD MARION SA 5043

SELLERS ARRIVE AT 8:30AM - \$10.00 PER TABLE (INCLUDES 2 TICKETS)
EMAIL GEOFFB.100@BIGPOND.COM TO BOOK YOUR TABLE
BUYERS WELCOME AT 9:30AM - ADMISSION \$5.00

SNACKS AND LUNCH AVAILABLE FROM THE KITCHEN
CHIPS, SOUP, BACON & EGG SANGERS, SAUSAGE SIZZLE
HAM, CHICKEN, & SALAD ROLLS
TEA AND COFFEE, AND THE BAR WILL BE OPEN



ADVANCED NOTICE: Another Private Sale coming up in September:



Recently, we were asked by a family at Willunga to assist with disposal of a collection of 20 to 30 radios which were brought to South Australia by a New Zealand family. The radios were featured as décor in the “Farm Café” at Willunga owned by the family. Earlier this year, the café was closed, and the radios moved to the family garage (some of the radios are in the picture on the left).

The family wish to dispose of the collection and HRSASA members will be given the first opportunity to purchase them at a “Sale Day”, to be held at the family property in Willunga, probably in September this year.

We will keep you informed when the date and location are finalised, but these are all in excellent condition and complement our Australian radios.

FEATURE ARTICLE: THE AWA Story

(Reproduced by kind permission from Kevin Poulter. It was first published in March 2014.)

AWA (Amalgamated Wireless of Australia) became Australia's largest radio company, manufacturing radios for homes, huge transmitters for radio stations and wireless communications for cross-country to cross-continent communications, as well as for ships and the military.

Radio was huge in the '20s, '30s, '40s and '50s as one of the few entertainment sources, and it seemed every other home in Australia had an AWA 'Radiola' Console or Mantel Radio, plus many homes had a powerful AWA Radiogram. The radios were well-made and became the hub of entertainment for the family. Many had very attractive cabinets, so they became a talking-point when visitors arrived, and the owners showed off their 'best furniture in the house'. As rumours of war hovered, the shortwave versions became important for listening to the sabre-rattling in Europe.

The head of AWA, Sir Ernst Fisk started with Marconi Wireless UK, spending time in Canada, before coming to Australia to sell overland and marine transmitters. When the Titanic sank, a Marconi transmitter saved many lives, by hailing ships in the region for assistance — this convinced many marine operators to purchase a transmitter. Australia's massive distances were also being bridged by radio at the time.

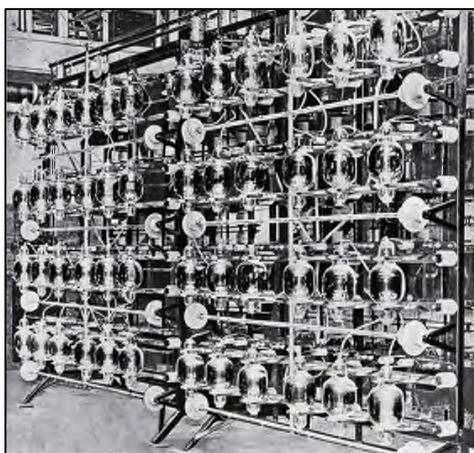
Fisk was also good at politics, convincing governments that the future was in radio. The public agreed and purchased millions of AWA radios. When Bakelite became available for the radio cases, AWA was the first to release a magnificent radio case in 1932, with superb mouldings, textures and patterns to enhance any home.

AWA radio staff celebrated 100 years of AWA last year (though the AWA company website says AWA has been here for 105 years, it depends on whether you count an earlier iteration of the company in the total). Many of the AWA staff from the '50s onwards now collect, restore, and display the fine AWA radios, with many being members of the Historical Radio Society of Australia (HRSA).

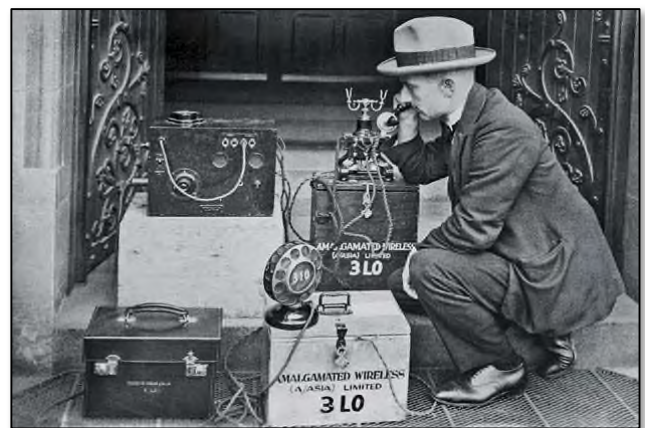
I have several AWA-brand vintage radios, and I used AWA and Marconi test equipment in several companies, including PYE and Philips, over the years.

AWA enthusiasts feel a sense of sadness and empathy for the current employees — though they worked at the earlier AWA Radio Company — as this mighty company again is in difficulty.

All images copyright [Kevin Poulter](#).



Above: This Marconi transmitter in Carnarvon, northern Wales, was used to communicate with Australia.



Above: AWA equipment was used to send a broadcast of street noises on St Paul's corner in Melbourne in 1920



Above: This ad spruiks a radio "encased in a handsome imitation granite cabinet" created by "expert designers and skilled workmen".



Above: Vintage advertisement for the AWA portable Radiola.



Made in the 1930s, this 'Empire State' radio had a casing made from the newest plastic, Bakelite, and is now highly collectible.



A Woodward's Electrical mobile service van, packed up for a job, promises "speedy service".



The AWA Transistor 7 Radiola. Says Kevin Poulter: "The transistor was my first radio at age 14 and it changed my life, with the freedom of having music whenever I wanted and sparking a lifetime interest in radio".



The 1947 AWA Radiola B510M 5-valve, dual-wave Mantel Radio in a Bakelite case.



Meet Colin Windsor: (Part Three)

From time to time, we like to feature members that we've probably met many times but know very little about.

Now well into his retirement from work as a radio and TV Technician, he still has that mischievous twinkle in his eye, and many stories to tell.....

The story so far.....

After completing his initial training in Adelaide at W.R.E. (Salisbury,) and later at Woomera (also for WRE) Colin headed off to the “big smoke” in Sydney to find out a bit more about life.... and work!

He landed a job at **DIXON PRIMER TV** as a trainee serviceman straight away. Their aim was teaching the trainees the three stages of the business as they saw it, namely: (1) pickup and delivery of TV's (2) installation of antenna and systems and (3) repairing of faulty TV's. These young blokes spent about a month on each of these 3 jobs in turn, partnered with an experienced employee so they could learn the ropes. Last month we read about stage 1, “Pick-up and Delivery”, and stage 2 Installation of Antennas”, This month, we continue with stories from stage 3....

Tales from TV servicing in Sydney - 1958 (Part 3)

By Colin Windsor

I went to a job one afternoon at an old lady's place. The boss said “she's driving us nuts” because her Ferris 17-inch TV needs the tuner contacts to be cleaned every couple of weeks. This model of TV had to be dismantled to get to the tuner, which is a very painful job! Having cleaned the silver-plated contacts with Selly's RP7, a spray cleaner with silicon in it, I asked her if the other Tech's had told her about a “cleaning signal” that gets transmitted at 5:00 PM every Friday, especially for TV's that had her problem! When she said, “I've never heard of it”. I told her it was only new, and that if at 5:00 PM she was to swing the channel knob back and forth for 5 minutes, it would fix the problem. She called in rarely after my visit and saved us a boring hour-long job.

I found Sydney people to be very generous, even when their TV had to go to the workshop which meant no TV at all for a whole weekend if the job was on a Friday afternoon. A guy at Surry Hills (when I told him this) said, “well you did your best to fix it so here's £5 quid for the effort”, and that was quarter of my weekly wage.

One Friday night on late shift my last job was at a beachside suburb called Little Clovelly, which is near Bondi. It was an easy fix, and the customers were two young females all dressed up to go out. I remarked how good they looked, and they told me that the guys who were taking them out had not showed up. They said they had been “blue ducked”, which was not a term I had ever heard of before. They suggested that if I was free to stay a little, the three of us could drink the booze they had in the fridge and play some music or play cards. After a few stories and a few drinks, they suggested we play “Strip Jack Naked” – I stayed all night!

The same two girls asked me to a “housewarming” party as they had just moved in, and said, “bring a mate or two”, so I did, with two mates that I knew. The three of us duly arrived on the Saturday night to a full house with lots of booze. Inevitably, late in the night, a fight broke out and unfortunately, the flat was wrecked, and the girls were kicked out, but we stayed in contact!

Getting around Sydney is tricky and as a novice I was lost without my street directory. After a 9:30 pm finish at Vaucluse one night, I tried to get back to Balmain to the “Hotel Exchange”. My plan was NOT to open the street directory. I failed dismally!! Instead of a six-mile drive across town, I ended up in Sans Souci which is a southern suburb about 20 miles away!



A funny guy in the Balmain workshop was nick-named “Sexy Remy”. He was an ex-AB (which is able-bodied seaman.) He visited Gibraltar on the way back to Australia on one trip and “kidnapped” a monkey. He kept the monkey in his flat and it often sat on the mantelpiece, catching flies and eating them! The monkey also had a bit of a liking for beer, and he would fall off the mantelpiece when he had too much to drink. One day Rex announced that he was donating him to the Zoo, and would I like to accompany them. We duly delivered the little monkey, and they were very delighted to receive him - no questions asked!

A little trick we developed in the Balmain workshops was to quickly grab the “Ultar” lead off the back of a live TV picture tube, which carried about 15,000 volts, but very little current from a 1B3 or 1S2 rectifier valve. You hardly felt the small shock. However, if you were wearing ripple-soled shoes (very big in the 50’s) you would retain the voltage in your body and could walk around the wooden floor before it leaked away. If you were charged up, and then patted a guy on the shoulder, he would get a shock! Mario, the delivery guy in our workshop was terrified when he saw me walking towards him one day! The joke came to an end when in a charged-up condition, I grabbed a guy’s “Lurex Thread” tie (they had aluminium threads through them) and he nearly died of shock, so the practice was stopped!

Finally, just before Christmas, I was transferred back to Adelaide to a new job as NWS Channel 9 had started transmitting in 1959.

Colin Windsor.



Lionel Williams on the set of “Adelaide Tonight” at the studios of NWS Channel Nine, Adelaide, SA in 1959
(Courtesy: State Library of SA.)

HRSA-SA Group - Amateur Radio Call-Back Network



In 2020, when our HRSA-SA Group was unable to hold meetings due to Covid-19, a small group of licensed radio amateurs decided to hold a local call-back net.

The first broadcast was on the 26th of April 2020. Although the ban on meetings was soon lifted, the broadcasts have continued and as we approach the completion of our third year, we have had 147 broadcasts.

While the aim is primarily for HRSA members, non-members are also welcome, the more the merrier. The group has a small band of listeners who either do not have the required licence or do not have transmitting facilities. Topics generally centre around historic radio, or activities coming at HRSA events, plus a range of widely varying content, can be heard.

For those licenced amateurs and those that would like to listen to the broadcast and have the correct facilities the details are:

Wednesday Nights (each week) – Starting at 2000 hrs.

On VK5RHO repeater (Houghton/Anstey Hill) which has an input of 146.25 MHz and an output of 146.85 MHz

There are generally two full rounds and a quick “wrap-up” round.

New participants are most welcome.

So why not tune in and listen, or join in the conversation?