

Southeastern  
Antique  
Radio  
Society



WINTER 1997

**JOHN F. RIDER PERPETUAL  
TROUBLESHOOTER'S MANUALS ON CD-  
ROM.** A review by John Pelham

Radio Era Archives is now putting the Rider's manuals on computer CD-ROM. You can then search for specific pages with a search engine, view the pages on your computer screen, and print the pages. The format is as follows: There are four Rider's volumes on each CD-ROM: 1-4, 5-8, 9-12, 13-16, 17-20 and 21-23 (oops, only three on that last one!). Each CD-ROM costs \$85, or the complete set is available for \$450. Only the first three CD-ROMs are shipping now; the remaining volumes were scheduled for release in December 1996 (they're late). The product is supplied on the gold-colored write-once CD-ROMs. Apparently the sales volume is not sufficient to justify the regular kind of CD duplication. (Radio Era Archives is also releasing back issues of QST magazine on CD-ROM. They have started with the most recent issues and are working their way backwards, eventually to reach to first issue and encompass the whole run of QST. I have not yet seen their QST product, although I plan to buy some of them in the future.)

What is on the CD-ROMs? Mostly, scanned images of all the Riders pages. This is good in itself, but what really makes it useful is the indexed database of the contents of the pages, and the search engine for locating the desired data. This search engine is a Radio Era Archives program called RadioView. It is a Microsoft Windows(tm) program, and it's supplied on each CD-ROM along with an installation program which installs it, and the associated database of Riders pages, onto your hard drive. The database installed on your hard drive doesn't contain the scanned images, only the keys to what data is on what pages, so you must put in the appropriate CD-ROM to use the system. I have all the currently available CD-ROMs, encompassing Riders volumes 1 through 12, and the size of the material installed on my hard drive is about 10 megabytes. I've tested the RadioView program on three different computers (all running Windows 95) and the installation and operation of the program has been problem free — a rare feat in the world of computers!

So how good is it? With this type of implementation, the "goodness" of the software depends on two things: 1. The quality (amount and accuracy) of the data that re-

sides in the database as keys and is searchable. 2. The quality of the scanned images themselves.

1. The database search capabilities are very good. It's quite easy to find all the Riders data on a particular set. By filling in four search fields, searches can be run by manufacturer name, model number, description (sort of a "special notes" field), or volume number. Wildcards can be used. For example, you can enter "zen\*" in the manufacturer field, and "9\*" in the model-number field, and get a list of most 9-tube Zenith radios. (Actually, what you're getting is all Zenith model numbers that start with '9.')

These four fields allow lots of flexibility in searches. If you want to limit your search to a particular period of time, you can enter a particular Riders volume to search in. If you know the model number but not the manufacturer, you can search by model number only. The only values you can search on are the four fields noted above. While I've found this to be more than adequate, and much faster and easier than searching the cumbersome manuals themselves, you can't do searches for data that's not in these search fields. For example, if you want to search for all radios that use a particular tube type, or that have a particular tube line-up, you're out of luck, because the Riders pages have not been indexed by these parameters in the database.

I would rate the quality of the scanned images as very good. Once your search has brought you to some displayed Riders pages, you can view them on the computer screen, and print them out if you wish. There are a couple of options available to tailor the display quality to the particular computer hardware; tweaking these produced excellent displayed images. (Unfortunately, RadioView doesn't remember the tweaks. Every time I start a new session I have to readjust the parameters. A minor annoyance.) You can click a button to make the database-search fields go away and expand the Riders-page display to full screen. The image size can be changed for magnification. If the whole image doesn't fit on the screen, the default scrolling method, which doesn't use scroll bars, is very intuitive and natural to use. Overall, it's a clean, fast, and effective program.

Printed images are actual size. That is, a Rider's page fills a single 8.5-by-11-inch sheet of paper. I've tried printing on everything from an old Canon bubble-jet printer to a 600-dpi HP laser printer. The quality of the printed image depends on the quality of the printer used. The 600-dpi laser printer was best; the inkjet printers

tended to blur fine details on ordinary paper. Coated paper for the inkjet printers gave better results, although still not quite as good as the laser.

I have excellent clear photocopies of many Riders pages that I obtained from schematic services in the past. (Since I've never owned any real Riders manuals, whenever I obtained a new radio, I would order the schematic from a service.) I've found that the quality of the CD-ROM images is very close to the quality available from these photocopies. Where the Riders manual has a clear schematic, the CD-ROM schematic is likewise clear and easily legible. If the Rider's schematic is poor (like the Atwater Kent 145, for example), the CD-ROM is no better; in fact it might be slightly worse. The process of digitizing and printing the image has to have some loss, no matter how fine the dots-per-inch used. All in all however, the CD-ROM schematics are very good, and very usable.

Since the scanned images all reside on the CD-ROM, I thought it'd be neat if I could access them directly and then be able to modify them in a Windows graphics program. Two things make this impractical. First, the files have meaningless numbers for filenames. The database knows which file is which image, but I don't, so finding the right image would be a tedious process of trial and error. Second, although the files have ".TIF" extensions, the software I've tried can't read them as TIF files. Apparently they're in some type of compressed or encrypted format.

I've had a few questions on using the RadioView software, so I've used Radio Era Archives' technical support, via e-mail. Terry Muncey, the man behind this product, has in each case responded quickly, accurately and helpfully. Another rare feat in the world of computers.

One more note: The user license for this software is really hard-nosed! It prohibits the CD-ROM buyer from installing the RadioView software on more than one PC. This means I can't have it installed at home for convenience, and also on my computer at work, to be able to take advantage of the high-quality network printers available there. It also prohibits any use of the schematics or data by anyone other than me. This means I can't print a schematic copy for a friend to use. I realize that the author is trying to protect his significant investment in scanning time, etc., but to me this is a significant, and somewhat unreasonable, limitation.

In summary, I find the Radio Era Archives materials to be excellent overall. I don't regret my decision to purchase these CD-ROM discs instead of collecting the manuals themselves. The cost of the two approaches is about the same, but the CD-ROMs have two big advantages: Searching for data is easier and faster, and they're so much more compact — six tiny CD-ROMs vs. eight feet of big heavy binders on a sagging shelf!

For more information, Radio Era Archives is at 2043 Empire Central, Dallas, TX 75235, (214) 358-5195. They have a web site at <http://www.flash.net/~tsm>.

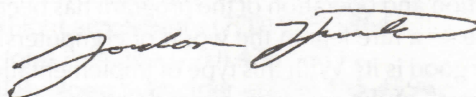
## PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Happy New Year to you all. I hope that this year is successful for us in our personal and business lives, and also in our enjoyment of radios and our friendships with each other. What a wonderful winter season we're having so far. We've had some terrific meetings in the last couple of months — well attended, and very interesting and informative. The attendance has been increasing and the show and tells seem to get better and better. It's one thing to read about certain radios or to see pictures in books, but it's really exciting to be able to see up close and to touch these great radios that our members proudly own and display. The diversity and quality of radios that are collected, and the expertise of our members is truly astounding. I'm truly honored to be a part of it all. Please don't miss the meetings in the next few months. We're going to have some special guest speakers that you will thoroughly enjoy in addition to our business and show and tell. In March of this year there will be a celebration of a landmark in Atlanta's radio broadcasting history — the 75th anniversary of WSB (750 AM - "Welcome South Brother"). I am hopeful that SARS might be able to contribute to this celebration, if WSB will let us. It could be fun and exciting, and it could bring us a little notoriety. I'll be making some contacts, and if anybody in the club would like to help out, please let me know.

And speaking of notoriety, the Atlanta Journal and Constitution finally published the article about our club that reporter Helen Cauley had been working on since our October radio show and swap meet. I think that it came out quite nicely. (You never know what the media will do with the information that you give them!) As a result of article, and since I gave out my telephone number as a contact point for the club, I've received over 35 calls seeking information about our club, or about information for repair work on radios owned. I've talked with some interesting people and we'll see some new members as a result. It's always amazing to me to realize that there are probably hundreds of people out there that we haven't heard from yet who are collectors, big or small, who would love to share their interest if they only knew about us.

March will also be an important month for us in that we will hold our annual Spring swap meet on Saturday, March 15th. That will kick off the year for us and will be followed the next week by the big swap meet up at Charlotte, NC. Dust off and clean up those old radios that you don't want and get ready to sell them or swap them for some new treasures. I look forward to seeing you there. Stay tuned...

Gordon



## SCRIBBLES FROM THE SECRETARY

from Joe Howell

This edition will have a synopsis of two monthly meetings. If my energy level holds out and Gordon and John stay after me, a "triple" should be in the next newsletter. November 11 — Picadilly Meeting Room. Gordon called the meeting to order at 7:15pm; There were 17 attending (including two new faces - welcome). Discussed fall meet; either last weekend of September or first in October - same location (Senior Center). Discussed changing day of month for meeting - no consensus. Marty R. reported on Swedish high-frequency alternator, "Alexanderson", circa 1921-1947, broadcast on October 23rd from Grimdon, Sweden (he could not receive). Show and Tell National Ham Receiver/SW3 - Marty R.; Packard Bell 100A ("stationized dial") - Barry E.; Philco 46-131 - Dave R.; Philco 40-158, Philco 54 mantel radio, Philco 52-548 transistor - Gordon H. Next month's theme - Novelty radios.

Adjourned at 8:40.

December 9 — Picadilly Meeting Room. Bill J. called the meeting to order in Gordon's absence. Asked Joe H. for minutes of last meeting - "published in newsletter." Larry S. gave Treasurer's Report - \$1500 in bank (a new high); mentioned info on a Swiss radio auction (1,000 radios). Next swap meet scheduled firmly for last weekend in September (25th/26th); discussed one versus two days; Charles P. favored two days to maintain draw; Steve D. suggested 1/2 day Friday with some activity (Hosp. suite, Atl. Radio Players, etc.); more discussion and Bill tabled the subject for specifics to be filled in later.

Show and Tell Fifteen novelty radios ranging from "Moving Lips" to Oriental Bamboo to Charlie McCarthy to "The Lone Ranger" — provided by Barry E., Blake H., Charles P., Gordon H., Johnny H.

Bill re-opened discussion of spring meet and announced January show-and-tell theme: Transistors. Norm S. and John P. requested more newsletter material. Updated membership list/info requested - Charles P. and Joe H. to update expiration dates, telephone numbers, interests and import into a new PC package. (Note to members - let me know of changes in any pertinent data and suggestions for additional info - JH). Again two new faces - welcome; second month in row. Some discussion on annual renewal policy

### A Note from your Newsletter editor:

I'm happy to edit your Newsletter every month, but I refuse to write most of it! I =know= that all of you have tales to tell about antique radios and antique-radio subjects. So get out pencil and paper, or sit down at your computer, and write it down! If you're worried that producing a polished piece will be too much work, don't. I have worked as a technical writer and editor in the past, and I don't mind taking an article or short piece and cleaning it up as needed.

Suggested topics: An interesting circuit, an interesting radio's history, a restoration hint, a visit to an antique shop, a lucky find, 'for-sale' or 'wanted' ads (we all need stuff!) ... I could go on, but you get the point. C'mon guys and gals!

### Help your old radios COPE WITH TODAY'S AC LINE VOLTAGES

A Restoration Hint by John Pelham  
Help your old radio handle with today's high AC-line voltages, and protect it from turn-on power surges to boot! Most old radios were designed for the old ranges of AC line voltages, anywhere from 110 to 117 volts. Modern line voltages are typically higher than this. Measured periodically over a period of years, my home line voltage varies from 120 to 125 volts. Plugging an old radio into a high line voltage like this will unnecessarily stress all the components, causing slightly increased power dissipation and reduced operating life.

My solution is to add, under the chassis and in series with one side of the AC line, a Keystone Thermometrics CL-90. This is a largish disc-capacitor-shaped part with unusual characteristics. CL-90s, I believe, are intended for inrush-current limiting in modern switching power supplies. The CL-90's resistance varies inversely to the current through it, and it has a great deal of thermal lag; that is, its resistance starts out at a very high value on turn on, and stays high through the inrush current phase. (Radios typically draw a rather high pulse of current when they're first turned on. At this first instant, tube heaters are cold, and at their lowest resistance. Also charging filter capacitors draw peak current at this instant.) The CL-90's high initial resistance limits this current, providing a nice "soft start" that's much gentler on the radio. After turn-on, the CL-90's resistance gradually drops as the radio's current increases when it warms up. Even when the radio is fully warmed up and drawing its full current of 1/2 or 1 amp, the CL-90's resistance is non-zero, and it still drops 2 or 3 volts across it. Thus, it reduces the AC line voltage seen by the radio as it operates, bringing the line voltage more into line with what the radio was designed for.

To further protect the radio (and my house), I almost always install a fuse in every radio I restore. I typically use a 3/4 or 1-amp fast-blow fuse. In combination with the CL-90 to limit the turn-on current, I haven't had one blow yet. Even my 12-tube Zenith console draws considerably less than 1 amp. The fuse has the added benefit of dropping a bit of voltage across it also, further reducing the high AC-line voltage.

To avoid drilling holes in my precious original radio chassis, I mount the fuse block to a clear area inside the chassis with superglue. I make sure both surfaces are clean and flat. I've not had one break loose yet. The fuse block also provides the extra terminal point that's needed for hooking up the CL-90, so the two modifications go hand-in-hand.

To quote a letter I received last year from Antique Elec-

tronic Supply, "Never add a fuse to a radio that didn't originally have one. To do so will severely reduce its value." Needless to say, I strongly disagree with that statement.

I am grateful to Ken Owens, writing in the May 1996 issue of the AWA Old Timer's Bulletin, for the CL-90 idea. CL-90s, by the way, are available from Mouser Electronics, 800-346-6873, at \$2.35 each. Mouser Electronics stock number 527-CL90.

### **AN ANTIQUE RADIO COLLECTOR'S LAMENT**

Anonymous

What is it about old radios, anyway? It seems that two things happen: 1. "Martha, it's time to paint. Let's get out all the radios and use 'em for dropcloths." 2. "Martha, we don't need this old radio anymore. Lets save it in the attic. But first let's remove and discard the knobs."

**SUPPORT YOUR CLUB!** The Southeastern Antique Radio Society holds monthly meetings. They are the second Monday of each month, and they're held at Picadilly Cafeteria, 3400 Holcomb Bridge Road, Norcross, GA. Meetings start at approximately 6:30 PM. Most members arrive and eat before the meeting. In addition to club business, meetings have a Show and Tell feature, where members bring items to display and discuss. All are encouraged to participate in this fun. See the schedule below.

### **SARS 1997 SHOW AND TELL SCHEDULE**

January: Transistor radios

February: 'R' radios (RCA, Remler, etc.)

March: Reproductions

April: 'D' and/or 'E' radios (DeWald, Emerson, etc.)

May: The oldest radio in your collection

June: 'F' radios (Fada, Firestone, etc.)

July: Radio paraphernalia

August: 'H,' 'I,' 'J,' and/or 'K' radios (from Howard to Kadette, and more!)

September: Non-radio antiques (lamps, clocks, jewelry, etc.)

October: 'L' and/or 'M' radios (Lafayette, Majestic, etc.)

November: Anything goes month!

December: 'O' and/or 'P' radios (Olympic, Pfanstiehl, etc.)

### **ATLANTA SPRING SWAP MEET**

Our annual Spring swap meet will be held on Saturday, March 15th in the parking lot behind the Fairfield Inn located at 11385 Haynes Bridge Road in Alpharetta from 8:00 AM until 1:00-PM. It is very easy to find. It is just off Exit 9 and one block west of Georgia 400 about 15 miles north of 285. This will just be an informal swap meet with no entry fees or organized program. The Fairfield Inn has agreed to provide out-of-town guests with a special weekend rate of \$49.95 per night that includes a continental breakfast. At this time we have no alternative site in case of inclement weather, so be prepared for rain or shine or anything else. For any further questions, call Gordon Hunter at 770-474-0713.

## Classified Ads

Free to SARS members

**WANTED:** Radio lamps of any kind, also grandfather clock radios, and also Guild radios (Buccaneer chest, tea pot, etc.) Gordon Hunter. 770-475-0713.

**WANTED:** Knobs for Emerson 636A plastic table radio. See Bunis 3rd edition, p. 75, or Baby Boom vol.2, p. 177. Also need special reversed volume control for RCA T80 (Bunis 3rd edition p. 202). RCA part no. 33512. I'll buy an RCA RC416 chassis to get this part. John Pelham, 1185 Bend Creek Trail, Suwanee, GA 30174. (770) 476-0473. E-mail: john\_pelham@msn.com

**WANTED:** Emerson 107 and GE A-51 wood table radios, Emerson 645 portable. Any condition, complete or incomplete. John Pelham, 1185 Bend Creek Trail, Suwanee, GA 30174. (770) 476-0473. E-mail: john\_pelham@msn.com

**WANTED:** Handle for Zenith K412R (maroon) 1953 portable radio. Or, whole K412 (any color) case. John Pelham, 1185 Bend Creek Trail, Suwanee, GA 30174. (770) 476-0473. E-mail: john\_pelham@msn.com

**MESSAGE:** John Pelham wants everyone with World Wide Web access to visit his web site and see his radio collection. Point your browser to <http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/w1ja>

**WANTED:** Original knobs for 1950 Emerson 636A ac/dc table radio (see Bunis 3rd edition, page 75). Zenith 1937 10-tube chassis (#1004, as used in 10S130, etc.), any condition. Zenith S4419 antenna coil and S4420 detector coil for 1937 #1004 chassis. 25L6G and 25Z6G vacuum tubes. John Pelham, 1185 Bend Creek Trail, Suwanee, GA 30174. (770) 476-0473. John\_Pelham@msn.com

## Support your club!

Meetings each second monday of the month at Picadilly Cafeteria, Holbomb Bridge Road, Norcross, GA. 6:30 P.M.

### **SOUTHEASTERN ANTIQUE RADIO SOCIETY**

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