

**November 2013**



***NOTE FROM PRESIDENT TOM***

Hello, All!!!

This is the time of year that we give thanks for our families, their health and their future, among other things. Family traditions are important, but sometimes change due to conditions beyond our control. When my mother was living, our family would gather at mother's house in Anniston for a full day of food and fellowship. On occasion, my father and his friend, Red, would go hunting for a few hours in the early morning, and I was asked to go with them. I did not hunt, but I did enjoy the outings. When the feast was served, we all ate too much and catnapped while pretending to watch whatever football game was on the tube. Following mother's passing, our Thanksgiving traditions have not gained much traction, resulting in meals at a different location each year. So, if you have a holiday tradition or any tradition, work hard to keep them going, in spite of the changing world.

At the Alabama Historical Radio Society (AHRs), we have begun to establish some traditions. We have an annual gathering of radio and TV personalities we call the "Legends of Broadcasting." They come to the Shop, and we have coffee and light refreshments, a program and lunch. This year we used them as the program. Member Lantz Croft, with WBRC-TV, and member Ed Boutwell, retired from Boutwell Studios, recorded several hours of video of the dozen plus legends sitting around the conference table telling tall tales about their days in the radio and TV broadcast business. This is the third year to have this gathering. We have also been recording individual members of this group for our historical records. These videos and more are available for viewing in our new TV viewing area.



**Some of the “Legends” present at the 2013 “Legends of Broadcasting” Event**

Each spring, we have a Swap Meet at the Shop and open up the Shop for tours and the parking lot for vendors to sell their radio gear, new and old, and to have fellowship with folks with like interests. As our storage rooms fill with donated equipment and magazines, we are going to need several Swap Meets annually to clear out our excess stuff. There are dozens of pictures of our last two Swap Meets at the Shop on our website, ALHRS.org.

We have a tradition of attending the Birmingham Hamfest each year, setting up displays and selling surplus Society equipment and magazines to raise money to support our Museum, Library and Shop. We have drawn large crowds each year with five tables of displays and five tables of items for sale. The Birmingham Amateur Radio Club, who hosts the Hamfest, encourages us to set up interesting displays and to educate the public about our organization and its objectives.

While not necessarily a tradition, our monthly radio classes have become the place to learn about fixing old radios and electronics, in general. This past Saturday’s class was attended by 14 students, with all levels of radio knowledge, and each still eager to learn or to help others learn. Instructor, Robert Frye, did not disappoint with his lesson.

For the first time in class, we were able to show YouTube videos to supplement the class lesson. These videos provided re-enforcement of the topics covered. Thanks to Joe Minor for making this happen. We are getting the technology working better, so the class can be more about substance without delivery issues. Robert's next class is on December 7, at 9am at the Shop.



**Robert on SKYPE and YouTube video at left**

Again this year we will have our traditional Christmas Party for our members and special guests at the AHRS Shop in downtown Birmingham. This year's party is on Monday, December 30, at 6pm at the Shop. As the number of attendees has increased each year, we have to become more creative in our room setup. This is a good problem! For those new members or those who have not attended, the Society provides the ham, turkey, dressing and gravy, and all of the plates, utensils, cups, tea, coffee, water, soft drinks and the members bring "covered dishes" of vegetables, salads, deviled eggs, beans –green and baked, corn, greens, you get the picture. And desserts of all types! There has been "light" entertainment for the past two years and, hopefully, someone will be "picking and a grinning" this year. This is a member and spouse/guest event, as we do not have room for the children, too.

We continue in our twenty-fifth year as an organization, and we continue to ask members to write something about how they got involved in radio and in our Society. We have many boxes of historical records about our Society, and we are doing the research to use this historical information in our twenty-fifth anniversary book. If you can contribute to the memory of our first twenty-five years, please put something on paper. Don't worry about writing a perfect story, our editors will clean up the structure, but not change the story. As part of our twenty-five year celebration, we will attend the Radio Show at the Virginia Samford Theatre in Birmingham on February 22 at 7:30pm. The Society has a block of thirty seats, which have been spoken for. The Theatre may still have some tickets available. We will have several old radios on display in the theatre lobby for the Show's three-day run.

The Shop Committee consisting of Mike Lord, Ron Hall and Mack White have finalized the Donation/Repair Form that we will use to keep up with donations and repair items brought to the Shop. The purpose of the AHRS Form Shop #1 is to maintain control of equipment received by AHRS for either donation or repair, to account for the inventory of parts utilized in the repair of equipment received, to provide accounting for monetary donations received and to provide a tracking mechanism for tax purposes. The Society officers and Board members, in particular, those who are "key holders" to the building, will be charged with receiving any donations and/or any item to be repaired and properly filling out the Form. As a general member, you need to know that there is a Form needed for donations and repairs. One additional requirement is to identify a piece of equipment or radio that a member brings to the Shop for repair. If it is repaired and taken home the same day, no Form is needed. If the item will be left at the Shop for more than a day, a Form needs to be filled out and attached to the item showing that it belongs to a member. Only a couple of lines on the Form are filled out in this case. We currently cannot identify the ownership of many of the radios and items in the Shop and use of this new Form should help solve this problem. We appreciate your help. If you have any questions, please ask members of the Shop Committee or an Officer.

We are setting up the TV viewing area to allow viewing of our many DVDs including a 1989 interview with Don Kresge, our founder, on the local cable show, Bits and Pieces. (See picture on following page.)





We are converting VHS tapes to DVDs and will have a growing library of interesting topics for members to view.

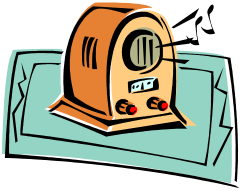
Our next Monday night meeting is on November 25, at 7pm. There will be a Board meeting at 6pm prior to the regular meeting. Please come have fellowship and support your Society. We are working on an interesting Program, TBA next week.

The FREEZE – FEST sponsored by the Blount County Amateur Radio Club is scheduled for January 4, 2014, at the Locust Fork High School at 155 School Road in Locust Fork, AL. Hours are from 8am until 2pm with a \$5 admission. This is basically a “tailgate” event. See [www.freeze-fest.com](http://www.freeze-fest.com) for more information.

*Tom Kjillian*

205-967-7000 or [music.tomdj@gmail.com](mailto:music.tomdj@gmail.com)

Our deepest sympathy to Dave Johnson, whose wife, Jan, passed away Sunday, November 10, 2013.



## **OLD TIME RADIO BITS**

*Faster than a speeding bullet!*

*More powerful than a locomotive!*

*Able to leap tall buildings at a single bound!*

“Look! Up in the sky!”

“It’s a bird!”

“It’s a plane!”

“It’s SUPERMAN!”

How many people over the age of thirty do not recognize that opening segment? Most people would think it began with the popular television series of the 1950’s. However that is not the case – it began in 1940 with a juvenile adventure radio serial called “The Adventures of Superman.” The series was so popular that it ran for eleven years, first in syndication, then on the .Mutual Network and finally on the ABC network.

As I was growing up, my favorite reading material was comic books, and my favorite comic book was Superman. How could a kid not love Superman? Nothing could hurt him but kryptonite (which I found years later is a real material) and magic. He could fly anywhere he wanted to go, which, of course, included other planets. He was so powerful that he didn’t require a sidekick to help him out. He could hide in plain sight in the identity of Clark Kent even though I could never figure out why people didn’t recognize him just because he wore glasses. And he was always helping other people. In today’s terminology he was a man’s man. Of course, I watched the television series and couldn’t quite figure it out when George Reeves, the actor who played Superman, killed himself with a gun. If no one else could kill Superman, how could he shoot himself?

It was only years later that I discovered old time radio and found the Superman radio series. Even though Superman doesn’t carry the same mystique that it did when I was a kid (I’ve moved to the Marvel heroes), the radio show is still interesting listening. In fact, I use the audition program for the radio series with one of the lab experiments associated with my Communications class at UAB. Some of the comments I receive from the students’ exposure to Superman might surprise you. If you would like to listen to that audition show, it can be heard by clicking this link – [Superman Audition \(Part 1\)](#).

If you are still interested and want to hear the second part of the audition show it can be found at this link [Superman Audition \(Part 2\)](#).

However, to get the full experience of the Superman radio show, one needs to listen to a complete set of episodes that follow a particular topic. One such set of shows would be the *Secret Letter* from 1946. It was a seven-part series with all of the things we have come to associate with Superman – the familiar opening, the Kellogg commercials, the cliff-hanger ending, and the line “This looks like a job for ..... SUPERMAN!” The links to the seven parts can be heard by clicking on each of the following links – [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), [Part 3](#), [Part 4](#), [Part 5](#), [Part 6](#) and [Part 7](#).

If you still have an interest or are looking for a different story thread, I have most of the surviving episodes on my website at this link – [Superman, The Adventure of](#). This series is one of the most downloaded shows that I have available.

As a word of caution – My version of the browser Chrome seems to have a bug that prevents it from playing files sampled at 22.050 kHz, which many OTR shows are. If any of the files will not play in your browser, just right click on the offending link, click “Copy The Link Location,” and then, using another browser, paste the address into the address bar using a right click and paste. The file should then play. If you have any questions, please send me an email, and I will be glad to help.

Have a good Thanksgiving holiday and find some time to pay a visit to the theatre of the mind.

*Larry Lokey*

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## **MEETING TIMES**

We meet every Saturday (unless a Holiday weekend) at 09:00 AM, at the one-story AHRS Shop at the corner of 8th Avenue North and 18<sup>th</sup> Street (1801 8th Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203). Use the rear (Southeast) entrance.

Also, we have opened the Shop on Tuesdays at 09:00 AM until around 11:30 AM when we go to Marilyn's Deli and Dog for lunch next door. Note that parking can be a problem on Tuesdays because it is a business day and the lot is usually filled, so you may have to find street parking occasionally.

**We meet on the fourth Monday night of each month, too, at 7:00 PM. Please come join us!**

## **FREE ELECTRONICS CLASSES**

One more great benefit from becoming a member of AHRS--free Electronic classes!

Classes are taught the first Saturday of each month (except when something special is taking place, then we agree on what Saturday).

We start from the beginning Ohms Law, inductors, resistor and Capacitors color codes, as well as what each component does within the radio circuits. We also teach how to use test equipment used in the repairing of radio. We teach troubleshooting radio troubles, as well as how to read a radio diagram. There are coil winding classes, and one-on-one repair help.

Come join these classes.



**DUES! DUES! DUES!**

Membership dues are \$25 a year, payable beginning in January. If you have questions about your dues, you can contact John Outland at 205-354-5258. **Dues can be mailed to AHRS @ P.O. Box 131418, Birmingham AL 35213.**

### **WHO TO CONTACT**

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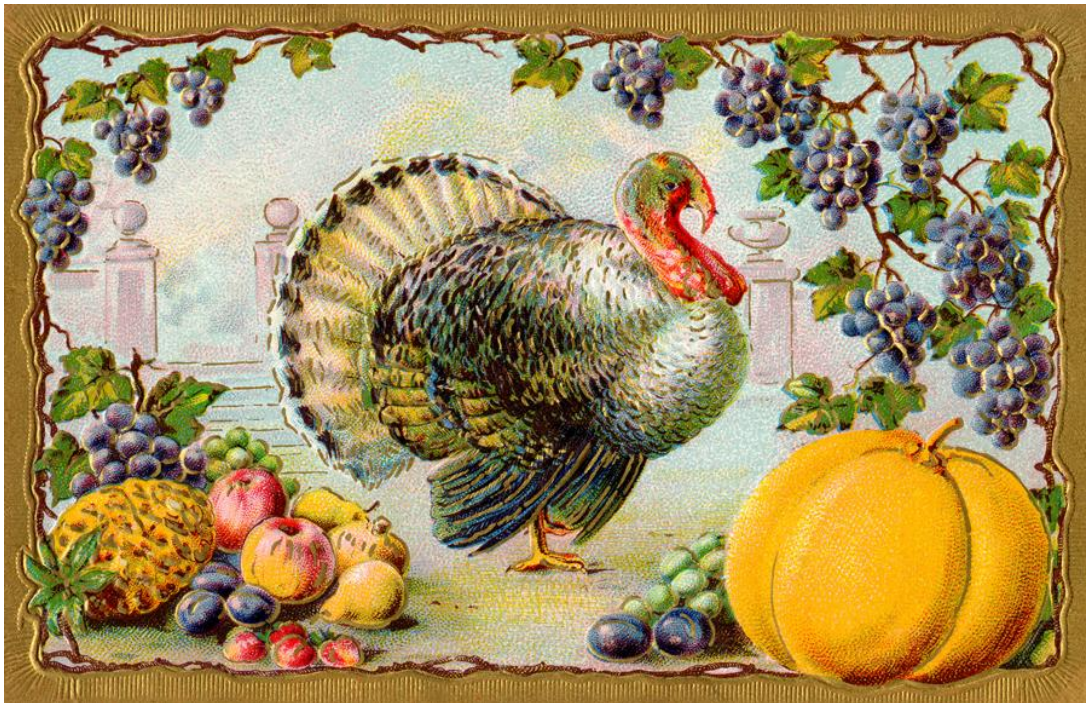
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**Happy Thanksgiving!**