



HRSA SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Volume 28 No.2 Oct-Nov 2018

From the President



My fellow members, here we are coming to the close of another year. This year has been busy and an interesting, and next year should be an even better one. Our new webmaster Ian Smyth has revamped our website. If you have a computer, have a look at the website and give us your opinion.

The Christmas luncheon is at the Maid of Auckland Hotel, 926 South Rd Edwardstown. This will be our last meeting for the year and I hope you all enjoy yourselves. I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Chris Ratcliff



Coming Events

8th December 2018 Christmas lunch at the Maid of Auckland Hotel.

27th January 2019 Sale Day at the Saint Cyprian Hall

The committee is meeting in early December to plan and discuss the events for 2019. Once we have established a time table you will be emailed the details.



HRSA SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Our auctions never fail to draw members to the meetings and the October auction was no different with keen eyes all hoping to find that special item to add to the collection. There were some bargains and some items that fetched even more than their owners expected. This is the first auction where we trialled the paddles displaying member numbers. Warren did point out after the auction that it would help if the paddles went up and down so that he could work out the progressive sequence in the bidding.



The September meeting included three presentations, all of which were very interesting. Paul Lawson was first and shared some interesting stories about the ABC. He talked about using a 10 metre long blimp that had been purchased in America to make measurements for broadcasting, and how the ABC antennae was pointing in the wrong direction for about 10 years. Paul had enough material to continue for the entire meeting had it not been for the other presenters. We may need to bring him back in a future meeting.

BELOW LEFT: Paul Lawson

BELOW RIGHT: Graham Dicker



The next speaker was Graham Dicker who spoke about tape head alignment. Graham explained that the alignment can be done optically or with audio. Graham rang a workshop where you could have a "hands on" experience trying out both methods. I took Graham up on his offer and tried it myself and found it interesting even though I do not own any recording equipment.

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The July AGM and auction ran smoothly and we finally have the mystery box(s) of components from AHARS pictured below. It was good to see that the entire contents of the boxes disappeared before the end of the meeting, with a little help from Alan.



ABOVE LEFT: Alan Trying Out The Tape Head Alignment



ABOVE RIGHT: Chris Ratcliff



LEFT: Some of Chris's Valve Adaptors

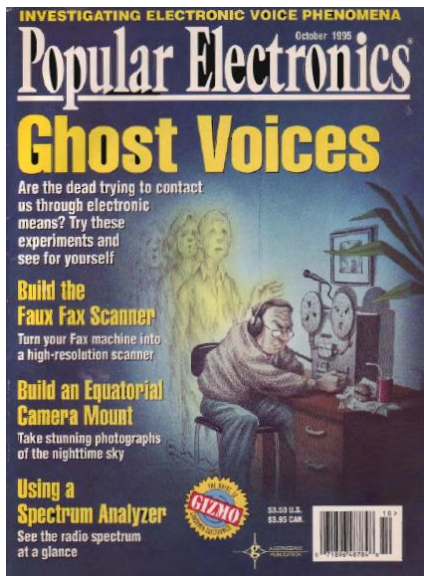
Chris was the final speaker with his presentation on valve equivalents. Chris explained that a variety of valves can be used in place of the original, as long as you check the specifications and heater voltages. He made a number of adapters to maintain the size and pin configuration of the original valve. He also pointed out that valves are far more versatile than you may think.

FROM THE HENDON FILES:

Beware of the dark:

The inventor of the resonant dunny and the aquatron was one of the most creative pranksters and one day he connected a light dependent resistor across the Active & Neutral pins of a three pin power plug before plugging it in to a power point in a darkened store room in TCA. He switched the circuit on in darkness and carefully retreated. The next person who entered the store room and turned the light on was greeted by a flash and a bang as the LDR resistance dropped dramatically in full light.

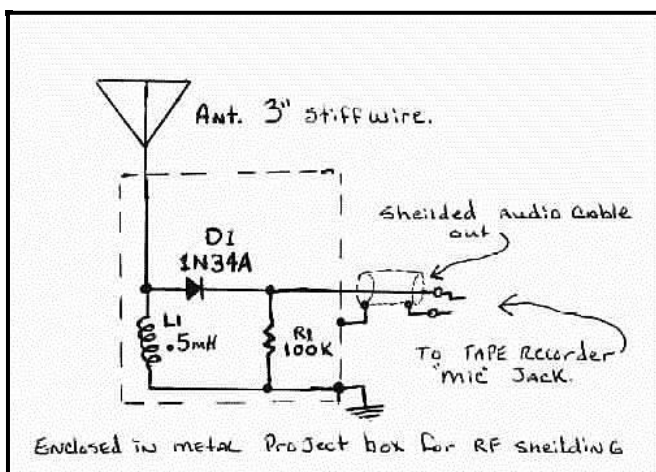
HRSA SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Electronic Voice Phenomena or EVP as it is better known has been around for quite a long time. I first remember seeing it in either Electronics Australia or ETI around the early 70s. The article explained that if you run a tape recorder for a period of time, say 30 minutes, then play it back, you sometimes record voices that cannot be explained. Sometimes a single word and sometimes several words together or even your name. The article had a drawing of a recorder and used a diode detector feeding into the input and from memory it was something like an OA81. If any of you have the article, I would like to have a copy of it. I suspect the author tried to make the article not too serious by throwing in names like "Ghost Filter" and "Zombie Choke." Being the person that I am I could not wait to try it and found a cassette player, went into a quiet area and started recording.

Sure enough there were voices on the tape when I played it back, however it was difficult to make out the words. I told my friends about the idea and we made more recordings, sometimes with a few muffled words and sometimes with nothing at all. Once in a while we would get a clear word and then the hairs on our back stood up when we heard the name of a person that was in the room.

Now that we have the internet, you can type in EVP into your search engine and you will find that there are a large number of people still experimenting with it and have uploaded the recorded voices. All you need is a tape recorder of any kind, even the digital recorders seem to work. You don't even need to have any kind of sensing device. So the question is what is being recorded? Theories range from the voices of the dearly departed to picking up an overlap from a parallel dimension, or maybe it is something less interesting such as a part of a radio transmission. We may have just entered the twilight zone. May you sleep well tonight.



LEFT: The circuit was taken from the above magazine. Some researches claim that this can help record voices from higher frequencies. If this interest you I have the entire article and the internet has lots of stories, circuits, recorded voices and theories.

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Radio in Schools by Joshua Boxer

The following article sent to me from Joshua who is interested in contributing articles to the newsletter. I hope this will encourage other members to do the same.

Back in the early 1950's, "Radio" was seen as the new "must have" educational tool in schools. The Federal Government (through the ABC) commissioned a number of educational radio programs, intended for use in all Australian schools. Problem was most schools back then didn't actually have the technology required to receive those broadcasts!

By the late 1950s, the Australian government had begun to provide grants to the states in order to allow them to buy radios for their schools. Initially these were just normal radios available on the domestic market however it was soon realised that these did not meet the needs of the education sector as they were also way too expensive to be able to buy multiple units with one for each classroom.

Instead, the states used the Federal money to set up a dedicated electronics division inside their existing state owned "public works" departments (PWD's), each electronics division was charged with finding the most cost effective way to equip state schools with radio receiving equipment so that the National ABC broadcasts could be heard in class rooms and then used as part of the education curriculum.

The most cost effective way to do this in the 1950's was to buy one high power radio / PA unit for each school and then install speakers in each class room, wiring would then be installed to connect speakers back to the master radio unit in the front office. In a method that was customary for the day, government tenders were then offered for the supply of the equipment. The tenders were invariably answered by local electronics manufacturers. Bland Radio was chosen as the South Australian Manufacturer of choice for all the State Schools but also supplied quite a few Independent schools as well. Philips also provided units in SA but mainly appears to be in regional areas.

An interesting side note was that all schools that wanted to use this new Radio technology were still subject to the requirement of a "Broadcast Listeners Licence" which was designed to fund the ABC. A suitable unit would then be designed and added to their existing production line. Back in those days import duties on electronic equipment imported from overseas was prohibitively high so a locally manufactured option was always the most favoured. The annual Federal grant money was split. Around 40% would go to the ABC for production of educational radio programmes, the rest would filter down through the state PWD's and into local manufacturers in each city.

The ABC produced numerous programs that would include books for students and primers for the teachers. These programs for the most part were produced by the individual states to suit their own requirements. As most ABC studios in the capital cities also had multi track studios as part of their production inventory producing these programs, it was not difficult and just added to what the ABC could provide to the public. The ABC also had access to talent within the ABC and also local Talent within the state.

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1961 Bland Radio unit
from Elizabeth South
Junior Primary School



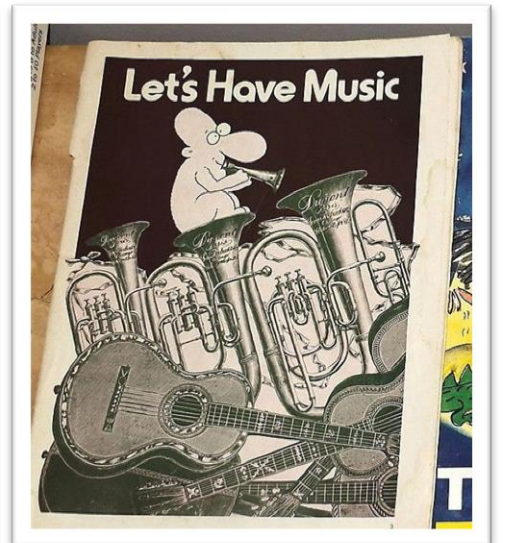
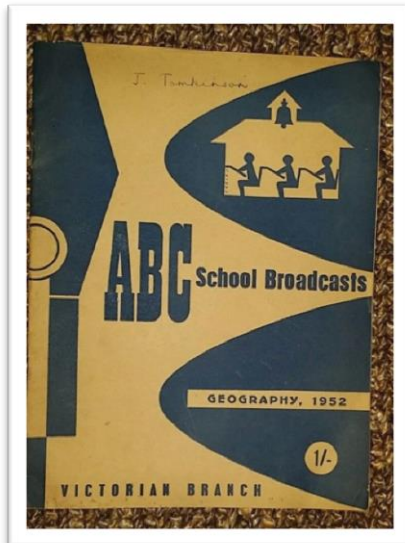
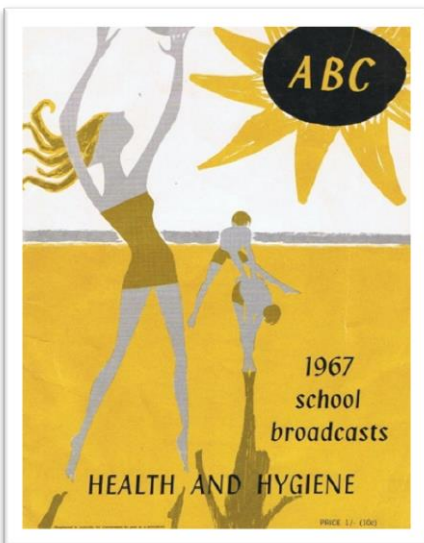
Bland Classroom Speakers



Bland Outdoor Horn Speaker using 8 Inch Speaker

The ABC in Adelaide also has access to the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra which gave them access to all the musicians it would ever need to produce its music programs. The ABC would also produce recordings involving the State Schools Choirs. Amongst the performers used for the "Let's Have Music" Program in the 80's were local Radio and TV personality Keith Conlon and Children's entertainer Peter Combe. The ABC when Cassettes became readily available made up kits for schools as an alternative to the live broadcasts.

Before long of course, it was discovered by many school principals that these "radio systems" were useful for far more than just piping ABC broadcasts into classrooms! By adding outdoor horn speakers and a microphone, these "installations" created a very capable and useful School PA system!



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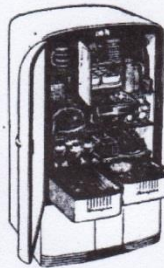
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MORE FROM THE HENDON FILES:

Rites of passage:

As a general rule the skilled personal at the Hendon works were very generous in passing on their skills to any enthusiastic apprentice who asked for guidance. There was however a number of tradesmen who took great delight in playing tricks on the younger lads. One that comes to mind in particular was the halfpenny trick. Ross would produce a large industrial funnel and a hand full of halfpenny pieces before asking the apprentice if he was any good at the halfpenny trick. None of the lads had ever heard of it but generally didn't want to admit they couldn't do something. Well Ross would demonstrate by looking straight up and placing a halfpenny on his forehead while holding the funnel about belly button height. The object of the game was to slide the halfpenny off your forehead so it didn't get deflected by your nose and hopefully ended up falling into the funnel. For every halfpenny you could get into the funnel you won two halfpennies. Once the lad had been convinced that skill was required he was pre-occupied with this and put all his attention into mastering the trick. Ross would then say "Look, just because it's your first try, I'll let you stick the funnel down your trousers to free up your arms for balance." Well you guessed it, halfpenny on the forehead, Funnel in trousers, full attention on sliding the halfpenny to avoid the nose, and Ross empties a glass full of ice cold water into the funnel!

Easy money:

Somehow Ross came by a torn off piece of ten shilling note so using a hoist he raised a heavy pallet load of steel parts and lowered it onto the piece of bank note so that the corner clearly protruded and was in clear sight of anyone walking by. A considerable number of people struggled to recover the note during the day and the fellow who eventually jacked up the pallet to get it was very disappointed to discover that it was only the corner of a ten shilling note.

Committee

Members of the public are requested to direct all enquiries, including those regarding membership, information on radios (wireless sets) and the estimated value of radios (wireless sets), to the Public Relations Officer please.

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