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**December 2020**



**S.A. GROUP  
NEWSLETTER**



**THE "HEMAC" PURETONE PEDESTAL WIRELESS SET**

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

Web Site: [www.hrsasa.asn.au](http://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

President:	Chris Ratcliff	0419 834 502	<a href="mailto:pres@hrsasa.asn.au">pres@hrsasa.asn.au</a>
Vice President:	Keith Ellison	0407 304 028	<a href="mailto:vicepres@hrsasa.asn.au">vicepres@hrsasa.asn.au</a>
Secretary	Ian Smyth	0488 488 776	<a href="mailto:sec@hrsasa.asn.au">sec@hrsasa.asn.au</a>
Treasurer:	John Crawford	8344 4978	<a href="mailto:treas@hrsasa.asn.au">treas@hrsasa.asn.au</a>
Editor:	Tony Bell	8269 4095	<a href="mailto:editor@hrsasa.asn.au">editor@hrsasa.asn.au</a>
Public Relations	Alan Taylor	0417 859 074	<a href="mailto:alantaylor47@bigpond.com">alantaylor47@bigpond.com</a>
Shop Keeper:	Rob Olding	8365 3168	<a href="mailto:shop@hrsasa.asn.au">shop@hrsasa.asn.au</a>
Web Master	Ian Smyth	0488 488 776	<a href="mailto:sec@hrsasa.asn.au">sec@hrsasa.asn.au</a>
Valve Bank Manager	John Crawford	8344 4978	<a href="mailto:ybm@hrsasa.asn.au">ybm@hrsasa.asn.au</a>

### Planned Forthcoming Meetings (some are tentative)

Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> January	1300 “My Biggest Lemon... or Bad Radio Day” at the NMVM, 10 Sturton Road Edinburgh
Sunday 28 February	1300 Auction at the NMVM, 10 Sturton Road, Edinburgh.
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> March	Instruction Day. Venue to be advised.
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> March	1300 One Valve or One Transistor Radio Project. NMVM, 10 Sturton Road, Edinburgh.
Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup> May	1300 Visit to the ETSA Museum, 31-33 Broughton Avenue, Kurralta Park
Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup> May	1300 Home Visit. Looking for a volunteer.
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> June	1300 Technical Film Day at the NMVM, 10 Sturton Road, Edinburgh.
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> July	1300 AGM and Auction at the NMVM, 10 Sturton Road, Edinburgh.

### Component Corner

A new section in your Newsletter. 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** (See the Directory above). We are working towards a publishable catalogue,

**AZTRONICS**, 170 Sturt Street, Adelaide. Houses the HRSA-SA Group valve bank and modern components,

**HRSA Melbourne** (see *Radio Waves*) Houses the HRSA valve bank and odd passive components and kits.

**AZTRONICS**, 470a Main North Road, Blair Athol for modern components.

**WES Components**, Sydney. The catalogue is viewable on-line and orders through the Shop Keeper or Secretary, as the SA Group has an account.

### Retiree's Luncheons

Luncheons are held for retirees and those that can escape work. After a trial everybody that attended enjoyed

the last luncheon at the Reepham Hotel on the corner of Churchill and Regency Roads. Perhaps the only downer is that it is biased towards the north. To overcome this, it is suggested that we have 4 per year at the Reepham and 2 at either the Earl of Leicester in Parkside or Maid of Auckland in Edwardstown or perhaps one at each of these two venues. The Editor welcomes feedback on this proposal. Meeting time is 1200 for a 1230 luncheon. All members, including those from interstate, are welcome. Forthcoming luncheons are:

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021 (at the Reepham)

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021

## **Committee Meetings**

The tentative dates for committee meetings are given, not that you are expected to attend, but if you have anything that you wish to have discussed by the committee. The dates are 21<sup>st</sup> January, 18<sup>th</sup> March, 20<sup>th</sup> May and 22<sup>nd</sup> July.

## **Front Cover**

The “HEMAC” Puretone Pedestal Receiver must surely take the prize for the greatest height versus width aspect ratio. The Receiver was manufactured by H.E.A. McCarthy, Ltd of Waymouth Street, Adelaide in late 1927 and early 1928, the complete period has not been determined. The 6 valve receiver occupies the slender part of the ‘cabinet’ and the power supply in the ‘plinth’. The original cost of £45 equates to \$3,702.25 in ‘last year’s money’. With a basic wage of about £4/5/- for adult males and £2/5/11 for adult females per week, it was certainly only for the rich. Thanks to Miles for permitting it to be photographed and to Rob O. for the loan of *The Broadcaster*. The advertisement appears on page 4. **Ed.**

## **Editorial**

The late member, Ian Pepper’ estate auction went very well in mid-November with many bargains to be had. His wife, Debra, was “very happy that Ian’s remaining collection has gone to other collectors” and does hope that everyone is happy with the results, she certainly is. Fortunately, the event avoided all the COVID-19 restrictions.

Although page 2 indicates proposed forthcoming meetings, some ‘juggling’ may be necessary following the disruptions caused by COVID-19. The President of the *Military Vehicle Preservation Society* closed the Museum on the day prior to the complete lock-down for the following two Sundays, the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of November, Hence the Sale Day had to be cancelled or postponed. There are rumours that some of the committee would like to see the Sale Day rescheduled as a second meeting in a month early next year. It must be remembered that we are scheduled to have an auction at the end of February.

At the Christmas luncheon I sat opposite to our two new members, that are also members of the Broadcasting, Radio, Electrical Industries Fellowship (BRIEF) and they were quite enthusiastic in BRIEF joining us in the Century of Broadcasting in South Australia commemoration in 2024. They suggested that our Secretary write a letter to the BRIEF Secretary, which Ian has agreed to do. Watch this space for further developments.

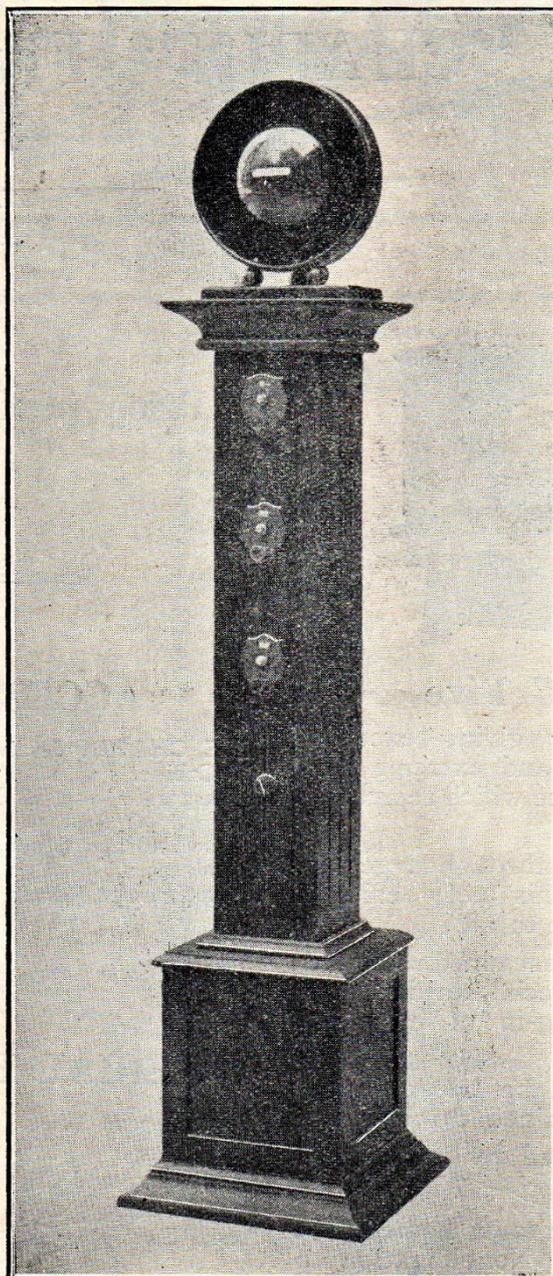
Although our President is still a little “jittery”, he has entered the 21<sup>st</sup> century and you can now contact him, if necessary, by email.

For those retired, you are reminded that January is a Retirees’ luncheon month at the Reepham Hotel.

Finally, on behalf of the committee, I wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and happy and safe New Year. May COVID-19 not dictate events for 2021 Ed.

# The "HEMAC" Puretone Pedestal Receiver

  
A  
UNIQUELY  
BEAUTIFUL  
RECEIVER  
BOUGHT  
BY  
LOVERS OF  
APPEARANCE  
NO LESS  
THAN  
PERFORMANCE  
AND  
QUALITY.



  
UNSURPASSED  
IN ANY  
PARTICULAR.  

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A  
REVELATION  
IN RADIO  
ACHIEVEMENT.  

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WILL CONVINC  
YOU THAT  
RADIO IS  
SIMPLICITY—  
A PLEASURE—  
NOT AN  
ANNOYANCE.

**PRICE COMPLETE, NO EXTRAS, £45.**

Built under Patents (Commonwealth of Australia), Nos. 6513/3 and 7328/27.

Sole Manufacturers and Patentees:

**H. E. A. McCARTHY, LTD.**

**RADIO DEPARTMENT  
45 Waymouth Street, ADELAIDE**

Telegrams: "Hemac, Adelaide."

Telephone: Central 6026.

INQUIRIES INVITED FOR AGENCIES AND RESALE DISCOUNT.

## President's Report

Fellow members the year has not been good for many of us. But our Christmas luncheon went down well. If you will pardon the pun! Let us all hope for a better new year in 2021.

I would like to remind members, that the club was set up for use by us, for you and me. It is intended to be an organisation in which we buy and sell BETWEEN members, family and close friends. It was never intended to be used for COMMERCIAL interests, that is: to buy from the club, for resale in other markets.

I wish you all a MERRY Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Christopher Ratcliff (President)

## HRSA-SA Group Assets

In the early days of the SA Branch (we were a Branch before we became a Group) in the 1990s, we established a library and the Branch possessed a coil winder, which, from memory, was donated. The member holding the library effectively resigned from the HRSA due to increased work commitments. The committee of the time decided that the Branch should not have any assets other than Branch records and thus the library books and coil winder were sold to members.

Jumping forward some 20 years, Victor started an assets register when Secretary and presumably passed it on to the present Secretary. The Group has recently been given some Marconi School of Wireless course notes and offered some aluminium transcript discs, prior to microgroove i.e., pre-early 1950s. These items and more which are likely to come our way are important in the history of radio, but who is going to store them and what happens when that person moves to the big radio studio in the sky? To further complicate matters, donations often come with conditions, typically that the donation will not be sold.

The question also arises whether SA Group member should be encouraged to list important historic items and documents that they hold, so that a register can be prepared and access can be requested, should the need arise. Perhaps the biggest problems in this are the time it would take for members to find and list the documents and who decides what is of historical significance. All too often, one hears of significant collections of information ending up as scrap paper when the collector passes on. The committee have yet to discuss these matters, but they are presented to get Group members thinking. Oh, how the State needs a technology museum!...**Ed.**

## Getting “Bang for your Buck” with a Restoration.

A few months ago, a member of the public dropped off a rusty old blue no-brand metal box at my house. It had a couple of knobs and binding posts that kind of resembled a school amplifier..... like the one we had at my Primary School in the 1960's.....

....It sat in my shed for a few weeks until it struck me that Joshua Boxer might be able to (a) recognise it, and (b) do something constructive with it, so we arranged to meet at the September “Retirees Lunch” and take a look. Joshua was happy to take it off my hands as it was destined to become a boat anchor if it stayed at my place much longer. My wife was happy as its one less item cluttering up “our” shed!

A couple of days ago I got this email response from Joshua that I HAVE to share with you....

*Dear Ian,*

*Have done the components on the Nomis amp and it presented an interesting challenge.*

*I reckon it's a mid-1940's Nomis 15W, 6V6 based amp and I am thinking this may be one of the earliest incarnations of what would become their most common design.*

*While replacing the capacitors I came across a paper capacitor with a red end. Not thinking too much about its place in the circuit, I replaced it just as I thought it had come out.*

*I then finished tidying it all up, and finally powered the amplifier up! - 10 seconds later that capacitor disappeared in a cloud of smoke, apparently that's how long it takes for reverse voltage to fry a cap!*

*Long story short - the red end on the original capacitor was negative!! So, I wired in a new one (the right way around) and put in a new 5Y3 and away it went.*

*BOTTOM LINE: Never replace a cap without considering where it is in relation to the circuit L.O.L. (Translation: "Laugh Out Loud".)*

*I have got a few more things to change and a heap of cosmetic work to do and it will be great! Here is a link to this Nomis - working very well now..... (Click on the link below to see it in action.)*

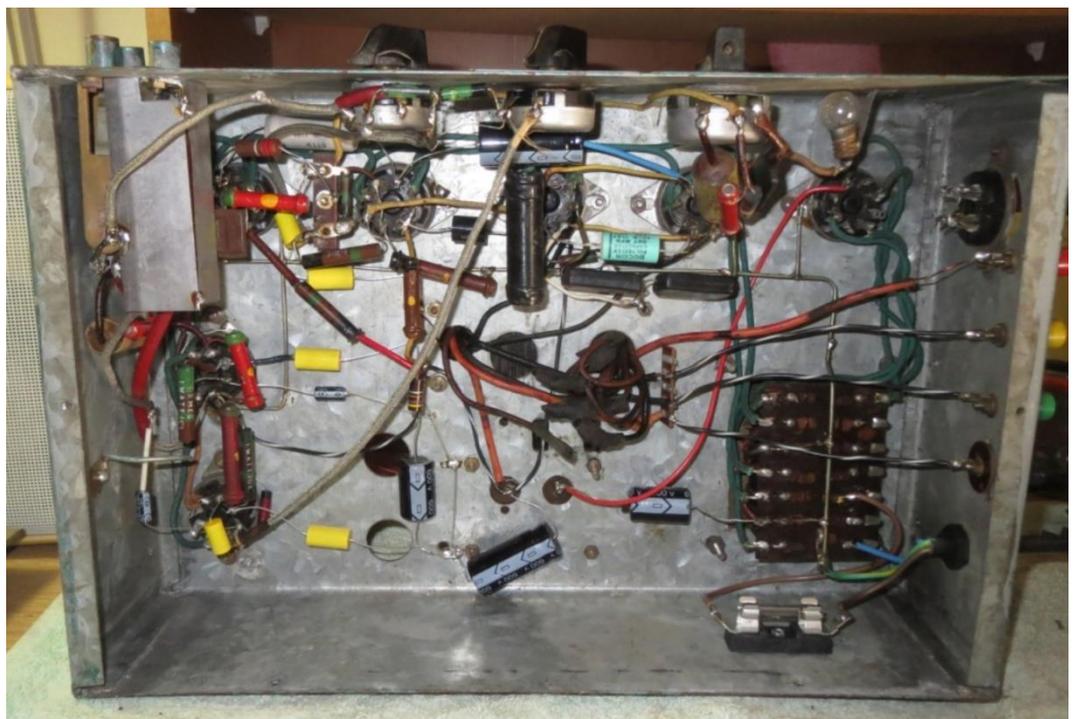
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2TXn9aQxeo>

*Cheers Josh.*



**ABOVE:** The Nomis before re-capping.

**RIGHT:** The Nomis after re-capping.



Ian Smyth (Secretary).

## Photo Gallery



**TOP:** Retirees luncheon at the Reepham Hotel in November

**CENTRE:** Christmas luncheon at the Maid of Auckland inner table looking south

**BOTTOM:** Inner table looking north.



**TOP:** Window table looking north.

**CENTRE:** Window table looking south.

**BOTTOM:** The 'overflow' window table.

