



Featured Radio



The Zenith Royal 500H

In the fall of 1961, Zenith introduced what would be known as the Birth of a Legend. With its large oval speaker grill, this very recognizable radio would go on to earn the reputation as being the finest sounding pocket radio ever produced. Collectors who study this stuff agree that it has “unbeatable performance.” But what makes this particular radio stand out from all of the other thousands of makes and models?

Here are some facts:

- ✓ The 500H was the most highly engineered transistor radio of the period and was produced during a time when all other radios were focused on being low cost competitors. At a time when most transistors were selling for \$20 or less, the suggested retail price of the 500H was \$59.00
- ✓ It features a large 3” x 5” elliptical shaped “extended range” speaker with an off-set voice coil for crisp highs and distinctive lows
- ✓ The speaker also utilized an innovative ceramic magnet which became the standard for later speakers
- ✓ The 8 transistor chassis produced 200 milliwatts of undistorted output,(400 peak), 4 tuned IF circuits, RF stage, inverse feedback circuitry for improved tone quality, Vernier tuning for precise station selection.
- ✓ It was designed to retail for \$75, but market conditions when it was finally introduced forced the suggested retail price to be lowered to \$59.95 However, I have seen sales receipts that prove the dealers were willing to negotiate discounts to \$49.00
- ✓ A must have for any transistor radio collector
- ✓ Readily available for new collectors on the internet.

Featured Article- Happy Birthday WWW

March 12th marked the 30th anniversary of the World Wide Web. The WWW is a global information medium which serves users so we can read & write to the internet using computers. It is something that we all take for granted these days, and it has certainly become a large part of our lives. For instance, when is the last time you looked up something in an encyclopedia or ordered something from the Sears catalog? Just try to imagine a day without emails, Wikipedia, Google, Amazon, eBay or PayPal? It certainly has become a big part of our hobby too, with information about any radio readily available on www.radiomuseum.org, and www.antiqueradios.com, finding a quality radio to buy is made easy on www.radioattic.com, and learning how to repair radio videos are on www.youtube.com

But how did the web come into existence? Here is a quick look back at the 30 year history that made the internet possible.

- 1980-91: Invention and implementation
- 1992-95: Growth of the Web
- 1996-98: Commercialization of the Web
- 1999-2001: Dot-com boom and bust
- 2002-Now: The Web is everywhere

For the complete story, visit https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_World_Wide_Web.com



Featured Collector

Gary Ball - Minnesota

In each issue, I will share information about some of the friends I have made in the hobby and their interests and expertise. But to kick things off, I thought I would share some things about myself. Please feel free to submit your information for a future issue. (continued on page 2)



Featured Collector (continued)

Born & Raised: Mid-Michigan

Career: Project Manager (retired)

1st radio: GE Duel speaker AM/FM table Model

1st Radio Purchased: Magnavox 2AM60 1960

Started collecting: 2003

1st Radio in Collection: Channel Master 6515

Focus of Collecting: Zenith Royals

Favorite Radio: Zenith Royal 800 Portable – 1956

Active Radio Clubs: NARC – Minneapolis, ARCI – LaGrange Park, IL MARC – Detroit, NEARC – New England Stratham, NH

Offering radios for sale on www.radioattic.com and on my website www.garysradios.com



Image courtesy of Gary Ball



Editorial Comment

by Gary Ball

– Leaking Batteries –

When you read the documentation that came with the earliest transistor radios, they all instructed you to be sure to take the batteries out of the radio when not in use. This information was always printed in the users manual or operating guide, and sometimes on the label inside the battery too. Zenith warned:

“If the receiver is to be stored or unused for long periods of time, do not fail to remove the batteries since if batteries become exhausted, the chances of their leaking and damaging your receiver are increased. However, even new batteries may leak because of slight imperfections. It is recommended that you occasionally check the batteries for signs of leakage.”

This was good advice for the owners of expensive new radio purchases back in the 50’s and 60’s. Batteries produced during that time were unsealed

General Purpose or Heavy Duty varieties. Also available were Mercury batteries for longer life.

The next generation of batteries were “Sealed” or even “Double Sealed” to help avoid the leaking of damaging battery acid. Despite these warnings and improvements, we all have seen old radios with corroded or even broken battery contacts.

Technology has come a long way since the 60’s. We now have Alkaline and lithium batteries. These modern batteries offer extremely long life, even up to 10X the life of the old General Purpose batteries. I for one enjoy listening to my radios, so it is not uncommon for me to have a dozen radios around the house in use. One is set to 830 WCCO for the Twins games, another is set to 1130 for talk radio, a third is on AM740 Zoomer Radio in Toronto for night-time oldies, and another is on 900 Faith radio, and so on.

However, despite these improvements, during the past few years, I have experienced leaking batteries in my vintage transistor radios. And in talking with other collectors, I am not alone. It seems that mass production in China has taken its toll on quality. Even the once reliable “copper top” batteries are leaking with regularity. So be aware, even if you regularly use your radio, these batteries can leak, even before you have exhausted their power!!





Featured Radio Club

This month's featured radio club is my home club here in Minneapolis, Minnesota...The Northland Antique Radio Club.

Founded in 1970, we currently have 180 members. Our next show is May 17-18 and it is our big Radio Daze. It features a large auction on Friday evening followed by an all day swap meet on Saturday with guest speakers after lunch. It is attended by collectors from all over including from New Jersey to California. It is well worth the trip, so mark your calendars. For more information, visit the website <http://www.northlandantiqueradioclub.com>

Note: This is not intended to be my newsletter, I want it to be yours. It's goal is to provide a way to bring the avid collectors of transistor radios together. It can be a vehicle to facilitate the information and knowledge that resides in the minds of all the great people I have had the pleasure of talking to in our habit....er, I mean hobby.

I am soliciting contributions for any of the featured categories within, and I am also open to ideas for new sections or features, so please, send them along. Thank you, Gary