



The Loudspeaker

The Newsletter of the London Vintage Radio Club
London, Ontario, Canada

<http://lvrc.homestead.com/>

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Cancellation Notice

Due to the global COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, The 2020 London Vintage Radio Club Annual Fleamarket originally scheduled for June 2020 at Hammond Manufacturing Co. Ltd. has been cancelled.

Protecting the health, safety, and well-being of our members, families, and other attendees is paramount and serves as the reason for the decision to cancel the Annual Fleamarket.



Year 2020 marks the 100th anniversary of radio broadcasting in Canada. To celebrate this occasion, we would like to do a virtual Show and Tell in the next bulletin. Please submit photos of a radio and a brief description of how you obtain the radio. Thank you.

www.pc.gc.ca Parks Canada

Early Commercial Radio Broadcasting in Canada, 1918-1932

Commercial radio in Canada began with Montréal station XWA. From its first broadcasts until the creation of a public system in 1932, a radio craze swept the country, establishing a new mass communication industry that would dramatically alter the way in which Canadians consumed news and entertainment. With new French and English-language stations going on the air and thousands of radio receivers sold across the country, private broadcasting in Canada quickly became a dominant cultural and economic force. French and English-language private radio stations established during this period provided the initial infrastructure

for national radio in Canada, and greatly influenced Canada's public broadcasting system, starting with the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission in 1932. By transmitting in both French and English, radio brought social and political discussion and debate into Canadian homes, merging public and private spheres to engage a wide cross-section of Canadians.

Commercial radio in Canada got its start with the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of Canada in 1918. From its Montréal facility, this company experimented with wireless broadcasting and received a

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licence for station XWA in December 1919. A year later, the station started a regular schedule of transmissions.

From that single station grew an industry that over the course of the next 12 years ushered in the modern era of mass communication. By 1922, there were 39 radio stations in Canada. This 'radio craze' captured Canadians attention, as radio shifted from a medium dominated by hobbyists to one with a significant commercial presence. Between 1922 and 1932, the number of commercial radio stations nearly doubled to 77. That growth was matched with radio sales, as 52,500 radio sets were sold in Canada in 1928. By 1931, that number had jumped to 173,200. Even in the midst of the Great Depression, the radio industry was growing.

With the expansion in the number of stations and radio sales across the country, national programming became a possibility in the late 1920s. The Canadian National Railway (CNR) built a national network using

a combination of its own stations and 'phantom' stations to provide entertainment to passengers on board its trains. The network used telegraph and telephone lines along the railway to connect its stations. With that as a model, commercial stations connected to provide national coverage of major events. The most prominent of these occurred in July 1927 when CFCF (formerly XWA) served as the anchor station for the coast to coast broadcast that marked Canada's Diamond Jubilee.

The Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, Canada's first public broadcaster, was established in 1932 and with it the era of exclusively private radio came to an end, but it was a period that would establish the basis of Canadian broadcasting for the 20th century. In a little over a decade, radio had gone from a niche hobby to a major cultural industry



Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford at CKAC studio (microphone in lampshade), 1922.

Credit: Library and Archives Canada / PA-139111

[Marian Scott, Montreal Gazette, January 16, 2020](#)

The station that would become CFCF made radio history 100 years ago in Griffintown



Heavyweight champion Jack Dempsey speaks into the microphone of a Marconi YC3 unit at CFCF in 1922, the year the station started using those call letters. Library and Archives Canada / C-066695

On May 20, 1920, a large group of Canada's most eminent scholars gathered in the ballroom of Ottawa's Château Laurier Hotel for a live concert.

The twist was that the performance was taking place in Montreal.

Two hundred kilometres away, in experimental radio

station XWA on William St. in Griffintown, soprano Dorothy Lutton sang two ballads that were "quite distinctly heard in all parts of the hall" in Ottawa, the Montreal Gazette reported the next morning.

Canada's radio age was underway.

A century later, an association of antique radio aficionados and the Musée des ondes Émile Berliner are presenting a series

**WIRELESS CONCERT
GIVEN FOR OTTAWA**

— — — — —

Royal Society of Canada
Heard Songs From Mont-
real Last Night

— — — — —

THE NEW TELEPHONY

— — — — —

Contact Was Established, But
Noises of Montreal Frustrated Complete Success
From Ottawa End

— — — — —

A concert, which was staged in the top floor offices of the Marconi Building on William street, was given last night for the benefit of an audience which was assembled over one hundred miles away in the Chateau Laurier, Ottawa. Later in the evening there came the message from the Chateau that the concert had been heard, and congratulations were offered. The occasion was an experiment in wireless telephony, which, although it has been successfully operated on short distances, has not in a public way been demonstrated

LONDON VINTAGE RADIO CLUB

Dedicated to the collection, preservation, and restoration of antique radios and related items.

Meetings are held at the 427 Wing premises, 2155 Crumlin Road in London Ontario. Doors open at 12:00 p.m. for Silent Auction setup. The meeting commences at 1:00 p.m..



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of activities to mark the 100th anniversary of radio broadcasting in Canada.

In 1919, XWA — for experimental wireless apparatus — began transmitting from a studio in the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Co. factory in Griffintown, according to media historian Mary Vipond in *Listening In: The First Decade of Canadian Broadcasting, 1922-1932* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992).

That makes the station — which became CFCF in 1922 — the first in Canada, and possibly the first in the world, says Alain Dufour, a member of the Société québécoise des collectionneurs de radios anciens.

"The Americans will say they had the first," said Dufour, a retired economist who became fascinated by early radio after falling in love with art-deco consoles.

Pittsburgh, Detroit and San Jose are among cities that have laid claim to the title.

KDKA in Pittsburgh went on the air on Nov. 2, 1920, transmitting results of the landslide victory by President Warren Harding. It evolved from an experimental station founded by Frank Conrad, an electrical engineer at Westinghouse, in the garage of his home in 1919.

However, some say the radio era started earlier, on Christmas Eve 1906, when Reginald Fessenden, a native of East Bolton, Que., broadcast carols and Bible verses from the Massachusetts coast to ships at sea. (The date has been disputed.)

Others date the first broadcast to January 1910, when inventor Lee de Forest transmitted the Metropolitan Opera to various locations in New York City.

But Vipond and others note that the May 20, 1920 demonstration was the first regularly scheduled broadcast, making XWA possibly the world's first broadcasting station.

In 1919, Montreal ragtime pianist Willie Eckstein — also known as the Boy Paderewski and Mr. Fingers — made history by giving the first live radio performance in North America on XWA.

The groundwork for the radio era was laid by the invention of the telegraph in the 1830s, telephone in the 1870s and wireless telegraph in the 1890s. In the early 1900s, Guglielmo Marconi sent the first radio message across the Atlantic and built coastal stations for ship-to-shore communication by Morse code.

In the same way that few people realized 30 years ago how cellphones and the internet would transform daily life, almost no one in the experimental radio era foresaw its future as mass media, Dufour said.



Musée des ondes Emile Berliner director Anja Borck gives Alain Dufour a look at a vintage 1960s stereo system. The museum and Dufour's association of antique radio aficionados are presenting a series of exhibitions and activities to mark the centenary of Canadian radio broadcasting. Pierre Obendrauf/Montreal Gazette

"They didn't know they were writing a page of history," he said in an interview at the Musée des ondes Emile Berliner, dedicated to the history of sound recording and transmission.



A 1941 report on the early days of radio features a 1919 photo from XWA's Griffintown studio, upper left. City of Montreal Archives

"They knew they had this new technology, but they didn't know what it was going to be used for."

Radio was conceived for two-way communication, where both parties could transmit and receive messages, Dufour noted.

The fact that anybody with a receiver could listen in was initially seen as a liability, rather than the opportunity to reach millions of listeners it turned out to be, he added.

"In the beginning, the concept of broadcasting didn't exist," Dufour said. "It was more like the cellphone you have today."

Aside from the merchant marine and navy, most of the people communicating on the airwaves in the early days were ham radio operators — many in their teens — who built their wireless sets from kits.

Experimental stations like XWA allowed manufacturers to demonstrate wireless sets to potential customers. Initially, broadcasters recited the alphabet or counted to 100. To break the monotony, announcers at XWA started borrowing gramophone records from the Layton Brothers music store on Ste-Catherine St., which then got free publicity on the air.

In 1920, Marconi opened a shop on McGill College Ave. to sell radio sets. By the winter of 1921-22, the radio craze was in full swing. Newspapers — including La Presse, which founded CKAC in 1922 — and department stores got in on the act, setting up radio stations in their buildings.



Anja Borck and Alain Dufour chat about vinyl records from the early days of radio. Pierre Obendrauf/Montreal Gazette

Because U.S. stations took up so much bandwidth, early Montreal stations had to share the same frequency, by occupying different time slots, Dufour said.

In April 1922, the federal government issued 21 licences to stations for “private commercial broadcasting” — a number that grew to 58 by year’s end (not all of which actually went into operation). By 1932, Canada had 77 commercial stations.

By 1928, 400,000 receiving sets were in operation across the country. Sales of radios jumped from 52,500 that year to 173,200 in 1931.

The first radios were utilitarian objects that looked a bit like a safe, Dufour said. “It was a dark, rectangular box with three dials. You had to adjust all three dials at the same time to tune in to a frequency.”

Marconi’s Model C, issued in 1921, retailed for \$195 — about \$3,000 in today’s currency, he said. CFCF — “Canada’s first, Canada’s finest,” as one



An undated photo of a CFCF studio. The station moved numerous times over the decades. Library and Archives Canada / PA-044182

of its slogans went — was among the most popular destinations on Montreal’s radio dial for decades. It moved to the Canada Cement building in Phillips Square in 1922, to the penthouse of the Mount Royal Hotel in 1927, and many other locations, including its longtime home at 405 Ogilvy Ave., where it was based from 1963 to 1989. It switched to 600 AM in 1933, and stayed there until 2000. CFCF-TV was licensed in 1960.

CFCF Radio featured top talents like Gord Sinclair, Ted Blackman and Dave Boxer, who introduced Top 40 radio to Montreal in the 1960s. It also broadcast games by the Expos and Canadiens. However, it declined in the 1990s, becoming CIQC in 1991, then CINW in 1999, and trying out country music, talk radio, all-news and oldies formats. Owner Corus Entertainment closed the station in 2010.



Dave Boxer introduced Top 40 radio to Montreal at CFCF in the 1960s. Montreal Gazette files

While some say radio is a dying medium, Dufour says it’s just undergoing a transformation. “Radio made today’s smartphones possible,” he said.

It also led to radar, television, air traffic control, microwaves and Wi-Fi.

Radio shows were the model for podcasts, which make it possible to listen whenever you want, Dufour noted.

“Montrealers should be proud, because the city was the first in Canada (to have a radio station) and also because radio changed the way we live and the way we get information,” he said.

“It democratized information. It democratized the arts.”



Alain Dufour is a retired economist who became fascinated by early radio after falling in love with art-deco consoles. Pierre Obendrauf/Montreal Gazette

SALE/TRADE/WANTED

IMPORTANT! All member's ads are to be emailed to lvrcreditor@yahoo.com or snail mailed to *The Loudspeaker*, 34 Bromleigh Avenue, London, Ontario, Canada, N6G 1T9. Email is the preferred option and typed or well printed notes otherwise. All ads should reach *The Loudspeaker* no later than one month preceding the meeting.

WANTED

Looking for MARCONI chassis model #161 or #171...or a complete radio. Call Charlie Duncan at (705) 549-7837 or cduncan@xplornet.com

Looking for the Addison model #41/43 knobs as shown below. Outside diameter is 1 inch (25.4 cm). Prefer the lighter ones. Please reply to "belfountain50@yahoo.com" Thanx, Howard.



Wanted 1955 Zenith Royal 500 - 7 transistor Owl Eye pocket transistor radios in all colours. Call Howard @519-673-3115

Heathkit PS-4 or IP-32 with manual, General Radio 688 tube sockets, 6SJ7-GT. Cash or trade. Will pick up. doug.brighton@yahoo.com or iPhone 519-364-1652

Looking for two interstage transformers as shown below. Each measures about 2.5" w x 2" h x 2" d. Please contact lvrcreditor@yahoo.com or 519-471-6229. Thanks. Nathan



Realistic audio amplifier model SA-102. Please call 519-357-9046 or Box 914 Wingham Ont. N0G2W0. Thanks, Don Mckague.

Kennedy console or table model radio. Can be rough needing work or restored if price is right. Phone The Olde Tyme Radio Centre (www.Oldtymeradio.ca). garyandnellieclayton@tnt21.com or (519) 357-4304.

Original correct knobs for 1949 Admiral television Bakelite cabinet model # 19All; Glass dial face for 1947 Philips table top Bakelite radio Type CM221; 2PC band selector knob for RCA floor model radio A-38; 1 white knob for 1948 RCA model # 66X2. Please E-mail Dan at: family.nantais@xplornet.com

FOR SALE

High Voltage Electrolytic Capacitor Kits for tube radio restorations. Axial leaded, high temp 105C rated Ecap Kits available at 160V, 250V, 350V, 450V and 500V. Pre WWII sizes and Post WWII uF/MFD sizes. Free Shipping with all kits. Please contact Dave Cantelon, 6 Ferncrest Gate, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada, M1W 1C2 ; Email: justradios@yahoo.com or see Kits at <http://www.justradios.com/capkits.html>

Rogers radios including models 120, 220 and 420. They are reasonably priced with good tubes. Call Brian at 1-905-827-0958.

Large assortment of portable, table

model and floor model radios for restoration or parts. Priced to sell. Also a few 1950's TVs. Call Pete Raidt at (519) 482-5742.

Variety of old ham tube equipment. Quite an assortment of ham magazines, 1970-1990s. Battery radios from 1920s, no horns but complete. Variety of transmitting tubes: 807, 866, 832, 815 etc. Portable Bakelite and wooden TVs early 1950's. 1955 Lowrey double keyboard organ selling as is made in USA model MS Loaded for that time period 55 tubes in total \$400.00. Phone The Olde Tyme Radio Centre (www.Oldtymeradio.ca). Hwy #4, Belgrave, Ontario N0G 1E0. Contact Gary & Nellie Clayton at (519) 357-4304 or oldetymeradio@tnt21.com.

Two to three hundred radios at least including seventy tombstone and cathedral radios, many mantel, table top, and floor model radios, several DeForest Crosley grandfather clock radios and Westinghouse Columnaire clock radios. Quantity of good tubes and new parts. Tube testers and other equipment. Call John at 705-424-0560 or email johnsoldtymeradios@hotmail.com

