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Title: The Radio Game

Author: John H. Dilks III, K2TQN

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OLD RADIO

The Radio Game

The first game of Radio I ever saw was at W2HBE's home about 10 years ago. My friend Bob Dennison had a display area in his radio shack dedicated to radio collectibles. It was an old wall mounted bookshelf located behind the door. On the shelves were crystal detectors of every type, unusual small radio parts, "Radio" brand perfume bottles, "Radio" shaped banks, and other odd and ends with the name "Radio" emblazoned on them. I was amazed at all the products with the name "Radio" on them that had nothing to do with radio. One really unusual item was a hot water bottle with, you guessed it, the name "Radio" on it.

Stacked on the lower shelf were several Radio Games in cardboard boxes of various sizes. One stood out from all the rest; it had a beautiful picture of a ham radio operator sitting at his station talking into an early microphone, probably to the ships shown sitting in the harbor, in the distance. This was by far the best radio game of his collection. It actually had a radio theme to the game. He had other "Radio" games there, but most where really "Bingo" games, where the word "Radio" had been substituted for the word "Bingo," and the rules were very much like Bingo.

I admired the one with the picture and at the end of the day when I was ready to leave, Bob presented me with a spare "Bingo" type game he had in his cellar. He said, "Here is your first 'Radio' game. See if you can find some others on your own."

Over the years I searched in antique shops and at radio meets. Most of the ones I found were the Bingo type, and I bought a few of them. I kept looking for the one I had seen at Bob's home that day.

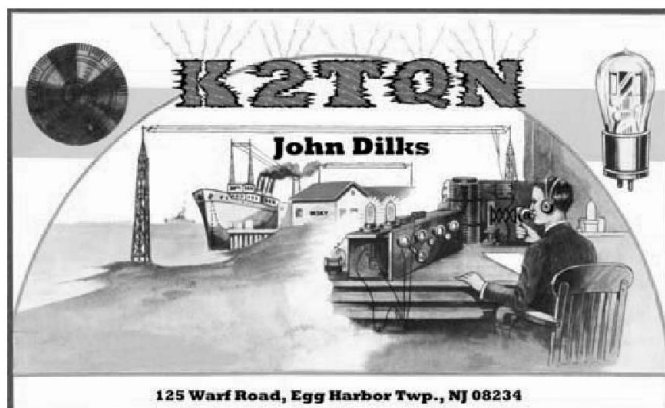
This past August I was at the New Jersey Antique Radio Club's Swap Meet that was being held at Infoage. Infoage is an emerging Science/History Learning Center and Museum, and is located at Camp Evans, an old US Army camp in central New Jersey. (Camp Evans was earlier known in 1914 as the Marconi Belmar Wireless station, which Marconi opened to provide worldwide wireless communications. The site played an important role in transatlantic communications during the First World War.) You can visit Infoage on the Web: www.infoage.org.

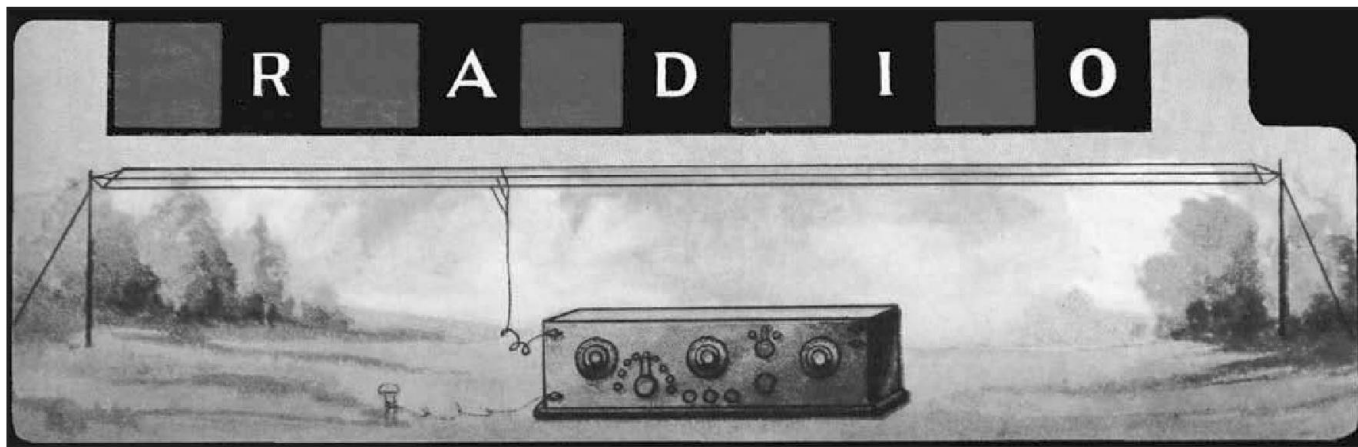
NJARC members Gerry and Marsha Simkin are booksellers and had a num-

ber of interesting items for sale that day, including a couple of "Radio" games. One of the games was the one that had eluded me for a long time. I purchased it immediately and thanked Gerry for bringing it with him. He really made my day!

Cleaning the Cover Art

The next few days I tried to clean the picture, which had become covered with years of dirt, grime and had a couple of light stains. I went slowly so I wouldn't remove any of the artwork. I was success-





ful. Most of the colors returned and the cover picture really started to look great.

Next I placed the box lid and bottom, separately, under a heavy pile of books to help flatten them, as they were when new. Age and time had warped them. The weights were somewhat successful after a week and I was now ready to scan them into the computer.

The box was slightly longer than the glass on my scanner, so I had to scan it twice and splice the result into a single picture. Several hours of retouching with my photo editor filled in the missing spots and darkened the colors where needed.

Making a QSL Card

After I printed out the picture file, it occurred to me that the "RADIO" in the picture had the same number of characters as K2TQN. So I searched for a font in my computer that somewhat resembled the one used with the exaggerated "RADIO" in the picture. Finding none, I decided to make my own characters. Several hours later I had all five. I edited the picture and replaced R A D I O with K 2 T Q N. Next I removed the word G A M E and replaced it with my name. I put my mailing address in the open area near the bottom. The proportions of the artwork reduced nicely to 5½×3½ inches, that of a standard old-time QSL card. Now I'll have to find a company and have some printed up. This part of the project was not planned, but it worked out nicely for me. And I will have a great looking QSL card to pass out in the near future.

Rules of the Game

Here are the rules of the game if you want to play.

May be played by 2 players.

Each player selects 5 counters of one

color, which represents messages.

The players place them on the black spots marked R-A-D-I-O in front of the antennas.

The first player then uses the Detector as a spinner. He then moves any one of his messages the number of spaces indicated on the spinner.

Messages are always moved on black spots diagonally and away from the player, as in Checkers, never straight.

A message may be moved to a side space and then diagonally out. Thus, a message may be jumped though it is on a side space.

If you can jump an opponent's message, his message is put back to any one of his starting points he may chose.

If either player can land his message on the same spot as one of his opponent's messages by an exact count, this causes a Radio disturbance, the opponent's message is out of the game and is removed from the board. Messages can only be moved to the opponent's antennae by an even count.

The player getting the greatest num-

ber of messages through to the opposite antennas first wins the game.

More on the Game

The Wilder Manufacturing Company of St Louis made the game sometime in the 1920s. There is a number 27 on the box, and that might be the year. Wilder was a well-known company back then for its games, having dozens of new and different games every year, covering many interest areas.

Imagine the thrill, or disappointment, experienced on Christmas morning when you opened your gift. It would be a thrill if you liked games, or a big disappointment if you were expecting a real radio.

I'll place the files on my Web page so you can download them if you want them. I'll have photos of several other radio games on my Web site as well. www.eht.com/oldradio/arrl/.

This month completes six years that I have been writing this column. Thank you for making it a success and for all your suggestions and e-mails. I'm looking forward to next year.—K2TQN



Bob Dennison, W2HBE.

W2HBE SK

While writing this column I learned that Bob Dennison, W2HBE, became a Silent Key in late September. Bob was best known as a prolific author over several decades writing about the radios he built in *QST*, the *AWA Old Timers Bulletin* and *Electric Radio* magazines. I featured Bob and his radios in my July 2005 "Old Radio" column. He will be missed. 