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## OLD RADIO

### The Hallicrafters S-1

One of the best known and respected names in ham radio is Hallicrafters. Founded in 1932 by William J. Halligan, the company name was chosen as a composite of the two words: "Halligan" and "handcrafted." "Handcraft Makes Perfect" was the first logo of his enterprise.

In 1933 Halligan acquired the use of the bankrupt Silver-Marshall company's name, factory, and most important, the use of their RCA license. With the help of Kendall Clough, former engineer from Silver-Marshall, they designed the first of a new line of ham radio receivers. First announced in the April 1934 issue of *Radio News*, the "S-1 Skyrider" sold for \$39.95, about the same price as popular kit radios. A few were built in small production runs of 50 or 100 sets. Each one was handcrafted and signed by the assembler.

To become a successful manufacturer in the Depression, cost had to be kept to a minimum. The 4-tube circuit was a tried and well-tested design. It had one stage of tuned RF (using a 6D6), a regenerative detector (another 6D6) and two stages of resistive-coupled audio (a 6C6 followed by a 42 in the output). The set was built in a small cabinet complete with a speaker and a built-in ac power supply using an 80 tube.

The S-1 introduced several innovations into ham radio receivers. Most receivers up until then had plug-in coils. Alternatively, the S-1 offered band switching. Four positions covered from 1.6 to 22 MHz.

Micro-vernier, anti-backlash tuning was introduced with a reduction ratio of 18:1. Tuning was accomplished by turning the lower left horizontal tuning knob with your left thumb, the rest of your hand wrapped around the left side of the cabinet. It is a comfortable tuning position for a right-handed person. This allowed the other hand to be used for adjusting the dual controls for RF sensitivity and audio gain.

The antenna input circuitry was designed for use with standard antennas, or to utilize the advantages of "doublet" antennas. An additional ground wire was provided for easy attachment.

Because so few S-1s were built, not many survive today. I'm happy to tell you that my Old Radio Museum will have the S-1 on display starting late this fall. For more information, you can read a radio magazine



engineering report on the S-1, see additional photos and some early Hallicrafters S-1 advertising on my Web site: <http://www.eht.com/oldradio/arrrl/index.html>.

The S-1 model was quickly followed by the S-2, which added a bandspread control and a send-receive switch to the front panel. The S-1 through S-6, made in small quantities, took Hallicrafters into 1935. By late 1935, they started producing communica-

tions receivers with the name "Hallicrafters" in their new factory. The 1935-36 SX-9 "Super Skyrider" was the first model to be produced in significant quantities. By 1938, Hallicrafters had produced 23 different models.

*My thanks to Chuck Dachis, author of Radios by Hallicrafters, for his personal help with the history of this radio and the Hallicrafters company.—K2TQN*

#### Old Radio Auction

Every so often, you hear about radio auctions. This is a short report on one.

I just returned from the annual Antique Wireless Association meet near Rochester, New York. It is held every year around Labor Day. You will always find a large 3-day flea market, interesting radio presentations, an old equipment contest, seminars and two auctions there.

The first auction is the Communication Equipment Auction for ham radios and boatanchors only. AWA Museum Curator "Col" Ed Gable, K2MP, is the Auctioneer.

Radios and their selling prices in the accompanying, are from left: an RCA ACR-136 went for \$70; the National NC-57 with the slant base and meter went for \$22 and the Howard 663 went for \$47. That's Ed taking the bids in the accompanying photo.

The second auction is the main auction, held in three parts. First, there is a vacuum tube auction, then a paper collectables auction, and last, the general auction. Here you will find rare and expensive items, as well as early ham radio gear.

If you are interested in the results, check my Web page.



QST