



OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE COLLINS COLLECTOR ASSOCIATION

Collins S-Line Promotion Van Returns to Dayton '08

by Bill Carns N7OTQ

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Jim Stitzinger, currently a CCA Board member, has announced that he has a treat for all of us at Dayton this coming year (Dayton Hamvention 2008). He is again bringing his restored Collins S-Line promotion van from California to the convention.

I would venture that there are many of our members that have not even heard of the Collins Van. It appeared for a very brief period of time and passed into "Collins History" to be resurrected again by Jim some 30 years later.

Collins started the traveling promotion tradition in the 50s with a trailer



that they pulled to various events around the country. The trailer was outfitted with a "mobile" 75A4, KWS-1 and SC-101 set up. In the 60s, when the S-Line started going strong, Collins purchased a 1964 Ford Econoline Van and had it custom painted, and

tricked out to contain and display the complete S-Line including a KWM-2, 75S-3B, 30L-1, 62S-1 and a complete array of power supplies and station controls as well as a 180S-1 tuner and a bevy of antennas.

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Collins Addiction

by Gerry Fasse W8GF

Recently I had a chance to buy a Collins winged emblem 75S-3B via eBay. The photos indicated an exceptional sample of this Collins masterpiece. After a frantic bidding session, I won the auction. But, when it arrived, things were not all that grand. Yes it was very well packed in a huge amount of bubble rap with no chance of any damage in shipment short of a real disaster, but a number of operational defects were apparent immediately. This was not the end of the world because I have had

extensive experience repairing Collins gear over the years. Disappointing? Yes, but not despair. Sometime around 1965, having never owned a really good HF receiver, one of the locals here in southeast Michigan offered a 75A-3 for sale. This piece of Collins gear was a gem! It was very clean, no rust or corrosion, modified for use in SSB mode with the addition of a product detector (plugged into the FM adaptor socket), crystal calibrator, 800 Hz CW filter and that most important

item, a vernier main tuning knob. My cost? \$285.00! After operating with this unit, any CW operator worth his salt realized that it was by far the best CW HF receiver around. The 1 kHz dial calibration and crystal filter, backed up by the 800 Hz mechanical filter, made CW weak signal operation easier by an order of magnitude. The crystal phasing control provided amazing flexibility with its ability to peak an incoming signal while rejecting interference at the same instant. Many, if not



From the Editor's Desk

by Bill Carns N7OTQ and Co-Editor Joe Nyberg W1LJN

Several months ago I was asked by several of the CCA Board members if I would consider being the Editor of our **Signal** Quarterly Magazine. As many of you know, I am just completing a somewhat complex and ongoing move from Arizona to Texas. When first asked, I declined because of the time I needed to commit to my move completion, building a shop and getting settled. I did not want to do half a job for the **Signal**.

I have had, for some time, some very definite feelings about where I would like the **Signal** to go.....More technical and history articles.....Broader scope.....A more personal feel.....In short, a bigger contribution to our hobby and passion. I knew 6 months ago that I did not have the time to commit to that vision.

I have now made significant progress, although I am still not on the air, towards getting settled in and the shop/shack is coming along with completion early next year. When asked again recently to reconsider, I knew that I wanted to do the job and knew that it had to be done well. I accepted with the understanding that we would recruit a co-editor. This has now been done.

This short background leads me to introduce Joe Nyberg who will be sharing the Editorial duties and writings with me. Joe is a retired airline

Captain, has several degrees, including a Ph. D. in Economics and is a published author and currently writing a rather large book on Civil War history. He is a gentleman and I know you will enjoy hearing from him and working with him. Meet W1LJN.

Now we get to the fervent plea for help from the net membership. I know from history that there are many very technically competent members out there who have a great deal to contribute to those with less experience or experience in a different area. Folks....Let's Trade.

As you will see below in this column, achieving our vision and the Board's desires for where we would like the **Signal** to go is going to take a lot of work (and fun). The way to get that done is to have a broad base of contributors so that just a few people do not get overloaded every issue. I am asking for help. Help writing articles. Help contributing to the S-Line (See below). Help with ideas and feedback..... Just plain old participation.... Particularly, if you are into the technical and can write plus spare some time, I promise to do this in a way that will not overload you andLet's talk.

The way we see it working is this. You all give us ideas for what you'd like to see. If you can write, give us ideas on what you are interested in writing about. My intent is to reach out in time and start getting a list of future articles. And, then

start doing a schedule at least 3 issues ahead, so you all can work at your own pace, but meet your commitments, and then we will settle in and have some nice flow in the pipe. In order to do that, we need to talk, do tentative schedules, lock it down as we get closer in time and you get closer to completion. Then there will not be a big panic each issue.

We are committed to expanding the **Signal**, both in size and in technical content. The scope of the feature articles will be expanded to include the military, avionics and commercial broadcast portions of the product lines. This should bring us some new members too and help make our organization more diverse and stronger.

Amateur radio equipment will still be the focus. Collins started out as an amateur radio and then broadcast equipment manufacturer, but swiftly evolved into a major player during World War 2 in military design and manufacturing. Many people do not know that Collins played a significant strategic role in winning the war when they developed the first auto-tune transmitter and receiver re-channeling scheme. This was a wonderful combination of electrical and mechanical inventiveness that justifies its own place in our magazine.



From the Editors' Desk (cont'd)

Then there followed a disastrous venture into the computer market, but that is another story. Art was often ahead of his time.

Next quarterly we will be starting a series of articles on the history, evolution and technical side of military HF gear which crosses over nicely to amateur service. It was the military perspective, Art's network with the government from WW2 and the need by the Air Force to be able to reliably recall our cold war nuclear bombers with HF communications, that led to the development of Single Sideband communication as we know it today.

It is very common for non-amateur gear to cross over and get applied in the amateur field. We all know that Collins broadcast equipment makes great HF AM gear. Then there is the occasional commercial 2-way HF set like the 32MS-1 (I'll write on that one - I love it). But, who knew that Collins made 2 meter communicators. Bet you didn't.

Well, in the era after WW2, when VHF was coming into use in commercial and military air traffic control, the VHF aviation communication band was defined as 118-152 mc. (Yes I use mc when talking about the "old ones"). It was AM of course in that era. The FCC dictated a "hole" in that range for the amateur 2 meter band and eventually, with the advent of UHF, the aviation VHF band in the U.S. got reduced to 118-136 mc. But, for many years in the 40s and 50s (Even into the 60s), the Collins aircraft transmitters and receivers covered 2 meters and they make great Collins "AM ama-

teur communicators".

Behind all this product development and inventiveness were a marvelous group of people. We will be talking more about them by periodically featuring what I would call the "Stars" of Collins Radio.... And there are many.

We will also be featuring more of our CCA people by expanding the "In the Shack of N#YYY" and also running biographical summaries and pictures of each author who writes an article or column feature. In addition there will be write-ups of local sub-groups of CCA members whenever you all have an event or get-together. Write it up and turn it in.

We are trying to identify these local groups, so if you have one, even though no current activity to report, let us know. Wayne, when is the next party?

Net News will be expanded to include more visibility for the Net Manager, Net Controls and the Net Results.

We will also be reinstating a past feature called the Service LINE (Or S-LINE for short). This will be a column with invited contributors of high technical caliber who will help us all be better custodians of our gear. The focus here will be on tutorials aimed at maintenance and restoration. The intent is to have several contributors and have only one or two contribute each issue so

that the average workload is low.

In addition we are starting to republish articles, data, brochures and previous technical writings from Collins Radio and Rockwell. Rockwell has given the CCA formal approval to republish any material that we feel is appropriate. You will be seeing things like equipment introduction brochures or supplements, data on mechanical filter part numbers, articles from the Collins Radio Signal, applications notes as well as previous CCA Signal writings from the past where needed.

Let me close by being redundant. I am excited about the future of our organization and the CCA **Signal** Magazine. We have talked with enough people to know that the ideas we have are good and generally desirable. But, it will not happen without you all helping. We need inputs, feedback, comments, participation and we need writers. Give me a call or an email. We would be happy to listen any time.

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Let's Go!



CCA Website Update

by Brian Sokol KA9SRK

Now that Summer has finally ended, Fall is in full swing and it's time to start thinking more about radio again, and of course the CCA web site.

There are some requested additions and a few necessities to be worked on before bringing out the next revision. In the meantime, the previous version of the site is still available. You can find it at <http://www.CollinsRadio.org/html/archives.html> or by scrolling down on the home page to the "Links to Old Material" news post dated 7-27-2007. These pending changes/additions are shown below.

- **Finishing the equipment archive section**

There are a number of pages related to looking up information on the various equipment models that need to be converted to the new format. Its original incarnation was the Equipment Index that can be seen in the old site.

- **Updating the PDF Files**

Many of the current PDF files appear to have default titles of "Untitled". We will be going in and editing these files to reflect their proper name. This will come in especially handy when using a search on the site, be it with Google, Yahoo or other site search engines.

- **Providing a Site Search**

Our good friends at Google provide the ability to add their world class search algorithms to any site. We will take full advantage of their technology and implement a Google search box on our site.

- **Beefing up the Forums**

We'll flesh out appropriate sections for the forums, such as a "For Sale" section, as well as others that seem appropriate. We want to keep it fairly simple and straightforward so that everyone's posts don't get lost, but we also want to provide the best possible service. We'll also see the realization of the CCA Members Only forum.

- **Photos of Your Ham Shack**

At Dayton this year, I was approached about the possibility of providing a place where everyone can post pictures of their shack - the layout, equipment, towers, etc. We'll add something for that ability and see what we can do to make it as slick as possible.

As always, if anyone has any suggestions, questions or comments, please do feel free to email me at sokolb@gmail.com.

TNX & 73,

Brian, KA9SRK

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Collins Van (cont'd)

The van hit the promotion trail between May 1964 and April 1965 when it returned to the factory and was sold to Ed "Hoss Trader" Moory, who owned a Collins dealership at that time. In 1966 it went to Dayton to promote Collins and Ed Moory's dealership. It eventually retired to Ed's driveway, the equipment was sold and the van languished until Jim discovered it and purchased it from Ed in 1993. Jim completely restored, re-equipped and repainted the van and it returned to Dayton the year following its completion. Needless to say it was a big hit. Now Jim will be bringing it back to Dayton for its third visit and for all of us to enjoy. This alone is good reason not to miss Dayton this year. One of the pictures in this announcement shows me at the controls during the second trip to Dayton and that could be you enjoying the ambiance and writing your name in the log book of a very historic van. Enjoy.



Dayton 2008

By Tony Sokol W9JXN

At the summer time activities draw to a close, most of us are beginning to think about getting ready for those cold winter nights with the warm glow of our cherished rigs and nice quiet winter band conditions. It will not be long though and we will making plans for our annual pilgrimage to Dayton. Why do we do that? Well, for many of us, it's people and the camaraderie of the many friends we have made over the years and seldom get to see in person. Sure, it's fun to look at all the new goodies and talk to the various reps about their latest offerings. It's also fun to browse through the flea market looking around under the tables for that bargain goodie to take home.

But, if you are like me, you probably have an accumulation of "goodies" and do not really need anything that you cannot find on the Internet.... So why go? Well, for one thing, how about sitting down over a Pizza (diet of course) and a pitcher of the refreshment of your choice and talking with a bunch of friends about your latest treasure? How

about bringing some pictures of your latest shack arrangement, or maybe your newly refurbished boat anchor, for some first class show and tell? We might even talk about something other than our equipment...nah...but then again, who knows? The CCA gives us the opportunity to experience this aspect of Dayton in many ways. We have again reserved a hospitality room at the Holiday Inn North for Thursday and Saturday nights. On Friday night we will be hosting our annual banquet with good food, lots of neat prizes, and a good program. During the day when your feet start to get really tired (and they will) you can stop by the CCA booth and sit a spell. What a great way to meet since eventually just about everybody comes by to say hello.

Start now by marking your calendar for May 16, 17, and 18 of 2008. You can already make reservations by calling the Holiday Inn at 937-278-4871. Remember to tell them that you are a CCA member so you can get the special rate. Also, keep an eye on the reflector and the website for more details as they develop in the coming months. Dayton really does have a lot to offer so don't miss out on all the fun. See you there!

Collins Addiction (cont'd)

most, laud the A-4, but I'll take the A-3 any day.

From that point on, I was hooked and, as my family matured and my income grew, I had a few more shekels to spread around. In 1975, at one of the local swaps, a young fellow was trying to liquidate his Dad's estate (W8ZKJ). Among various items were three 32V-3s all in near mint shape. His collection of National receivers was easily sold, however no one showed any serious interest in the other equipment. I gave the seller my telephone number and told him I would give him \$300 for the whole lot if no buyers turned up. After a call early the following Monday, I was the owner of a bunch of equipment including the three 32V-3s.

That was just the beginning. During the next few years my Collins gear ownership expanded near exponentially. First was the acquisition of a Gold Dust pair. The KWS-1 was from the estate of W6SN. The 75A-4 was from a local ham that seldom used it and was in pristine condition and equipped with all the bells and whistles including 3 mechanical filters, the noise blanker and the 4:1 vernier knob. Then I got into the S-Line gear. This included an immaculate 75S-1, a beat up 75S-2, a 75S-3B in near mint condition and, a little later, a 75S-3C/32S-3 round emblem combination purchased from the estate of Don Wallace, W6AM. Then a W1 ham who turned up at most of our Michigan swaps in those days sold me a 75S-1/32S-1 combination that was in near perfect condition. Other Collins gear was added as time went on including a modified 30L-1 linear equipped with 572Bs.

The KWS-1 was used nearly every evening as I checked into the Michigan QMN on 3663 kHz. Kilo-watt signals were on the rare side then and my KWS-1 was heard near and far. But it was frequently in failure mode and kept me busy replacing vacuum tubes, capacitors and other assorted parts. W6SN must have used this piece to pieces, and to put it in accounting terms, it was fully depreciated. To my sorrow now, sometime around 1985 all of the Collins gear was sold piece-meal and replaced with Japanese rice boxes. My main station wound up being a Yaesu FT1000MP Mk 5 with a Drake C-Line and FT847 as backup. Many Japanese iterations led to that final setup.

I just can't seem to stay away from the Collins though and several months ago a fellow in California was trying to liquidate his Father's estate which included a 75A-3. His Dad's call had been W8GF, my call now, and that radio called out to me. The A-3 was purchased at a price far beyond its actual market value. Looking over this 75A-3 was a major disappointment. It was in very poor condition with much rust and corrosion evident. To tackle this restoration job was way beyond my level of ambition these days, so it was re-auctioned on eBay (at a substantial loss by the way). Most fortunately, the original seller had included a throw-in item, a rare 1918 double lever Vibroplex keyer. This later was sold for substantial cash saving the day.

But, I was hooked again, so back to the new arrival, the 75S-3B mentioned earlier. As noted it was fraught with problems including a serious 120 Hz hum. Taking it out of its enclosure, it was noted that someone had shunted fresh electrolytic capacitors across C59A, B and C without removing same. This

is a no-no. Checking with Antique Electronic Supply in Tempe, Arizona, it was noted that an exact replacement was available for C59, but at a dear price (part number C-EC50X3-250, 3 sections each at 50 mF, 250 WVDC, cost about \$30.00). After removing the original C59 and the previously shunted in filter capacitors, C59 was replaced and the hum disappeared. This can be a vexing repair, but if the fuse holder and the audio transformer are first removed and the SSB crystals moved aside, it is not all that bad.

Other problems included three totally worn out RCA jacks that were replaced, a broken octal power plug assembly and several weak tubes including a shorted 6BF5 (V10) audio output amplifier. Also the slug tuned coil rack was completely misadjusted. Add to this a couple of seized ceramic trimmers and you have a major repair job.

It was worth it. All the work has been completed and now I find it a joy to tune around the ham bands with this unique piece of American made radio equipment. I added an 8-pole audio band pass filter which improved CW performance materially. What is amazing is that Collins equipment is still in high demand world-wide. It is easy to see why and I remain..... addicted.



Figure 1—Collins Winged Emblem 75S-3B

In the Shack of Jim Green, WB3DJU

As I hope you all know, Jim is the Treasurer of the CCA and current Board Member. He holds an Advanced Class license and can most commonly be heard operating his S-3 line and his KWM-380, although all the gear pictured is brought on line regularly.

Jim was first licensed in August of 1976. Initially, as a Tech Class licensee, he converted commercial 2-way gear for his amateur use. At a local ham fest he saw a brochure for the KWM-380. In 1981, he purchased one and this was swiftly followed by the acquisition of a KWM-2A/312B-5/30L-1 package that was "too good to pass up". He claims this led to his downfall. These pictures do not show the full extent of his collection which

wife Millie are avid campers and motor homers. He also enjoys woodworking as evidenced by the beautiful furniture in the shack which is his design and construction. It is modular and breaks down for moving. This, I think, follows from his 30 year career as a building specialties supply contractor. The furniture is made from Cherry from one of his own trees and Jim promises to write an article about his collection and this furniture design in the future.

Nice Shack Jim!

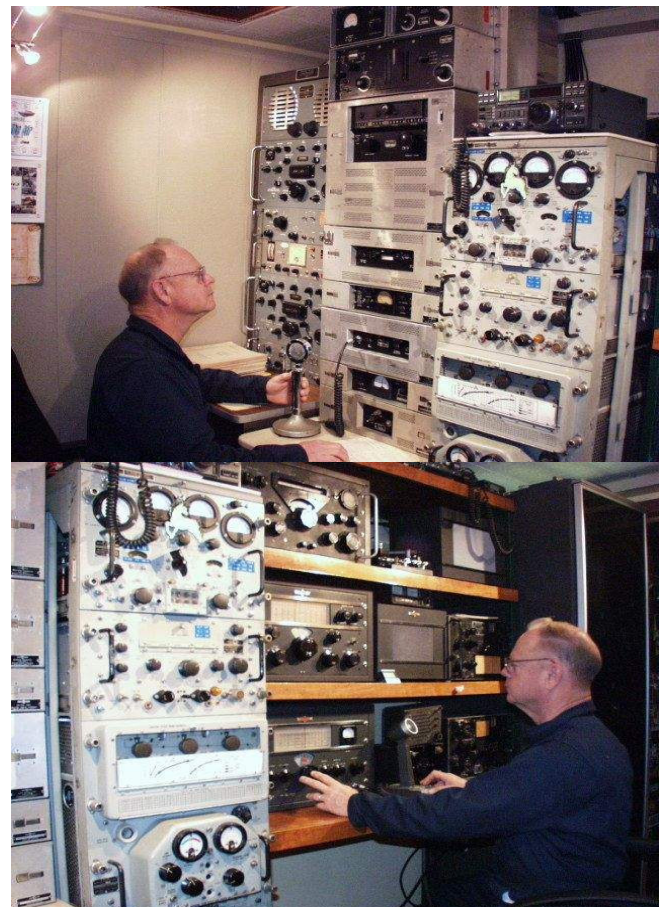


spans the Amateur and Military history of Collins including manuals for all gear, tube stock and parts.

His favorite piece of equipment ("the one that gives him the most operating pleasure") is the URC-32, a digitally synthesized HF Transmitter/Receiver which has a PA design very similar to the KWS-1. Look for a feature article on this rig in the near future.

Since he is a retired LCDR in the Naval Reserves (Submarine Service), he says he comes by his love of the URC-32 honestly. The URC-32 was the mainstay of the on board submarine communication network for many years.

In addition to his Collins passion, Jim and his



From the President

I would like to thank all who have supported the CCA this past year. I hope that you are starting to see movement toward our (the CCA Board of Directors) goal of making your participation in the CCA more enjoyable. Please note that these changes could not have been achieved without the dedication of our Net Managers, Reflector Moderators, Web guru, and **Signal** article contributors to name a few. Also, with the addition of Bill Carns as our new **Signal** editor, we are looking forward to more content in our **Signal** publication in 2008 and beyond. I am personally excited about the changes planned for the **Signal** and hope that you are too. It is only with your participation and contribution of material, that these plans can be brought to realization.

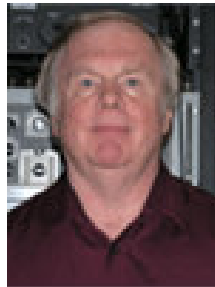
Enclosed with this issue of the **Signal** is the Ballot for

the director position currently held by Jim Green. Jim is running uncontested but our by-laws state that the ballot for the board member(s) election must include a line for a write-in candidate. This is the reason for the enclosed ballot. Please send your ballot to Walt Barczak in the enclosed color coordinated envelope.

Lastly, the Board of Directors and I, personally, would like to wish each of you a Happy and Safe Holidays.

Thanks and the Best 73s.

Jack Mory, KE3WV



Silent Key

From Jacques Augustowski, PY1HY, in Brazil, we received the following notice of Joe Vicente's passing.

"Deceased the 13th of November José Vicente, PY2AUC, at the city of Campinas, State of São Paulo, Brazil. He worked with Art Collins for many years, helping to develop the 75A4 , KWS-1, KWM-2 and 618-T2. Later he went to work with Harris and then for NASA as a member of the Apollo XI project."

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