

# The Indiana Historical Radio Society



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## Verified Stamp RECORD OF RECEPTION

			
City <u>Terre Haute</u> State _____	City <u>Indianapolis</u> State _____	City <u>Evansville</u> State _____	City <u>Gary</u> State _____
			
City <u>Et Wayne</u> State _____	City <u>Valparaiso</u> State _____	City <u>South Bend</u> State _____	City <u>South Bend</u> State _____
			
City <u>Hammond</u> State _____	City <u>Valparaiso</u> State _____	City <u>Kokomo</u> State _____	City <u>Seymour</u> State _____

**See You In Kokomo - April 25 & 26!**

*Radios deemed unrepairable or not worth the time by most collectors have been the most appealing projects. Nothing can beat the sense of achievement after completely rebuilding a basketcase radio into almost brand new condition.*

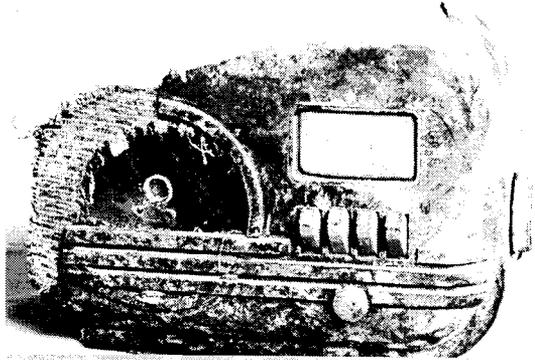
*J. Schotter*

## **Allowing a Delco Basket Case Radio to Survive!**

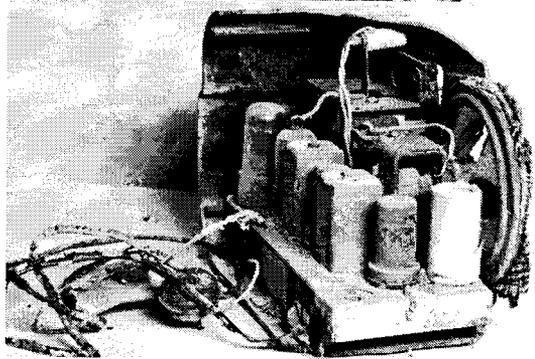
(editors title for Jeremy Schotter's Delco Restoration Project)

The history of this project began in Spring of 2007. Located deep within Elizabeth, Indiana is a large farm owned by some family friends. While doing some electrical work on the property, the family was cleaning out some of the many, packed to the rafters, old buildings. This gem was unearthed during that time. Upon first sight, my natural instinct to restore this radio came to life. Never before had I attempted a project of this level, or should I say in this level of decay.

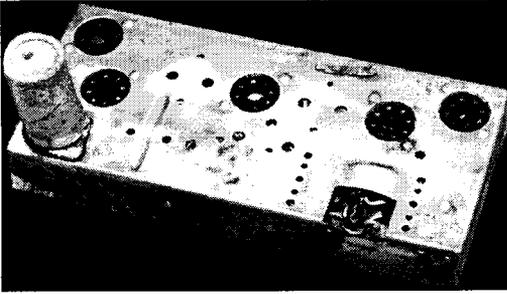
The wrath of time and the elements had taken their toll. Most obvious damage was the cabinet, with over 60% missing, and the remaining hulk riddled with cracks and chips. The chassis didn't look much more appealing, being covered in rust and caked with dirt.



While most collectors would simply pluck the knobs or other salvageable parts and trash the rest, that wouldn't do for me. This radio sat in storage until August of 2007 when the final leg of it's story began, with a trip to my workbench.



## Allowing a Delco to Survive (continued)



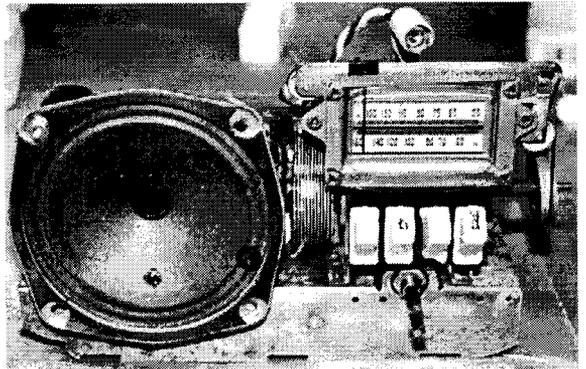
*Electronic Restoration* With the extent of water damage on the chassis, the best option was a complete tear down and rebuild.

Each component was removed, cleaned, tested, and then labeled for reassembly.

The radio was broken down to three main sections, the chassis, tuning condenser, and speaker. Next came the removal of rust and other corrosion. Naval jelly and brass wire brushes had the chassis looking much better.

Once the parts were all cleaned and tested, it was time for reassembly. A standard restoration approach was now taken. All capacitors were changed, and a new power cord was installed. Much of the wiring had damaged insulation, so it was replaced using modern cloth covered wiring. Other parts like the I.F. transformers, potentiometer, and different trimmer capacitors had to be completely disassembled and cleaned. While most of the irreplaceable parts were salvageable, the original PM speaker was not. A modern replacement of similar dimensions and coil rating was used. The final step included replacing most of the tubes, as the original were damaged.

Once everything was reassembled and double checked, the big moment had arrived, time to throw some power on this thing. Power was applied using a metered variac and an isolation transformer. With full power applied, some sounds were coming

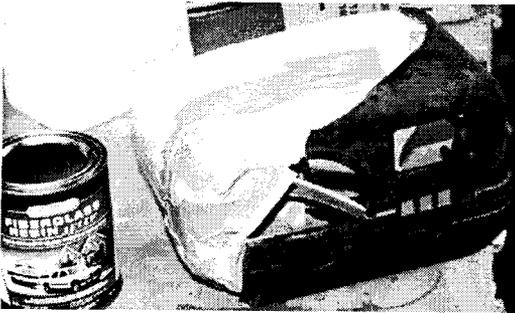


from the speaker, but many adjustments were still needed before any reasonable results could be obtained. After an alignment, and some repairs to the tuning condenser, several weak stations were coming in. The original

loop antenna was missing, so once a new antenna was rigged up, the radio was playing to my satisfaction.

A few minor repairs remained at this point. The dial pointer was too badly deteriorated to use, so a replacement was purchased from [Play Things Of Past](#). Somehow the dial scale and dial cover survived, and only required some minor cleaning.

*Cabinet Restoration:* Despite the rather straight forward electronic restoration, the cabinet would be no walk in the park. Never having personally repaired any Bakelite cabinets to this extent, new ideas would have to be utilized for success. The first step was a thorough cleaning, removing all dirt and grease/oils that would interfere with the rebuilding.



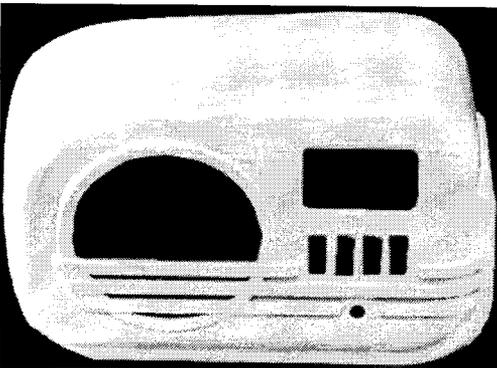
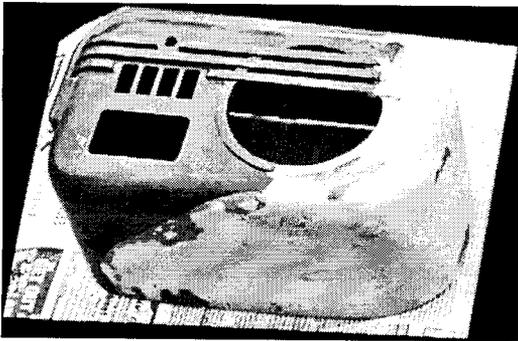
In the past Bondo has been used to repair broken plastic parts, so why couldn't some sort of Bondo be used to replace the better half of a cabinet?

Browsing the local stores, a fiberglass resin jelly by Bondo was selected to build the framework. Cardboard and

masking tape was used to build a form for the Bondo.

Once the fiberglass resin had dried overnight, it was sanded to shape using 60 grit sandpaper. Now a layer of red "body filler" Bondo was applied, giving a much smoother result. Once this was sanded to shape, several small pores and cracks were still visible, so some automotive glazing putty was used to achieve an even smoother surface.

Now this was starting to look like a radio again! To strengthen where the Bondo attached to the existing Bakelite, a bead of super glue was run down the joints.

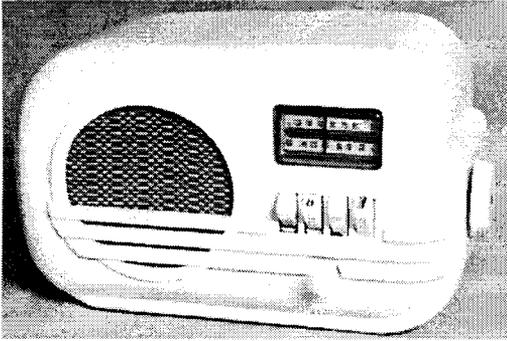


## Allowing a Delco to Survive (continued)

After a good cleaning, a few coats of gray primer were sprayed on, followed by a coat of Rustoleum Antique White paint. A similar approach was used on the knobs and pushbuttons.

After a few more layers of paint followed by sanding with 800 grit paper, it was time for a clear coat. Some gloss clear lacquer seemed to work out good. At this point the last remaining task was the grill cloth. Luckily a small piece of the original remained, and was matched up to some modern reproduction cloth.

While the Delco is now functioning and in a much more presentable



condition, it is still lacking a few things. The pushbuttons will someday have reproduction station call letters in them. A suitable back cover also needs to be located. So in the meantime, this radio will mostly likely be a static display, a good reminder of the crazy projects I take on in the quest of radio restoration.

*IHRS member Jeremy Schotter has been restoring radios for over ten years. His web site "Jeremy's Antique Radios and Other Interesting Stuff" is a show place for his restored radios. Jeremy also uses his web space to describe many of his restoration projects (the Delco Restoration for example.) Jeremy is on the air with KC9GIC as his call. When not restoring radios he works for Star Electric as an electrician and goes to school.*

You are up to page 26 in this issue of the Indiana  
Historical Radio Society Bulletin!

Have you checked the envelope to see if your dues  
are current? If your mailing label has 12/07, your  
dues have expired and this Bulletin is your last –  
unless, of course, you send \$15.00 to the IHRS  
treasurer – today!

Thanks for helping us keep a good thing going!