

# Amongst the Listeners

This is the Listener's Corner. It is available for reports of receptions from individuals; the correspondence of Leagues of Listeners and reports of their proceedings; constructive criticism or suggestions for the betterment of radio in general and the consistent improvement of the service that broadcasting can render in our community life. We wish this page to be the meeting-place of listeners and officials for the better understanding of points of view and the problems of others. It is a "Service" page, and we invite you to make use of it. Address all communications: Editor, "Radio Record," P.O. Box 1032, Wellington.

## CANTERBURY LISTENERS' LEAGUE

The Canterbury Listeners' League was formed as the outcome of a public meeting held in Christchurch on May 31 last. This meeting was convened by two public spirited gentlemen, enthusiastic wireless men; Messrs K. M. Gresson and D. C. W. Cosgrove.

The Mayor of Christchurch, the Rev. J. K. Archer, presided and explained the objects of the meeting. At this meeting it was decided to form the Canterbury Listeners' League and a provisional committee was set up to go into the matter of framing a constitution and bring down same at a later date. This committee was comprised of Messrs K. M. Gresson, A. D. Ford, D. C. W. Cosgrove, M. Wright, L. Slade, H. B. Alleyway, and W. Green.

After the above committee had carried out its work, which by the way entailed some labour, a further public meeting was held on June 22 last, when ex-Councillor A. McKellar presided in the absence of the Mayor. The rules drawn up by the sub-committee were adopted with slight alterations and an election for officers was held.

One of the most important rules adopted at this meeting was that only holders of a current radio license could enrol as members of the league.

It was suggested that every listener be enrolled in the same manner as Auckland, but this suggestion was defeated. The Canterbury Listeners' League therefore is composed of licensees only and in any future dealing with the Government or broadcasting companies, their views must carry greater weight than if the league was composed of a mixture of licensees and unlicensed listeners.

As an appreciation of the public spirit displayed by Mr. K. M. Gresson in being one of the first to bring about the formation of the league, he was unanimously elected first president. Mr. B. J. Bell was elected vice president, and this appointment met with universal approval of all listeners, especially the children. Mr. Bell is the original "Uncle Jack" of New Zealand and his voice is well known throughout New Zealand. "Uncle Jack" of 3YA is loved and appreciated by thousands of children in this Dominion and hundreds of adults also regularly enjoy his splendid bed time stories for children, which have been and still are a regular weekly part of the broadcast from 3YA.

Mr. Bell is to be congratulated on the fact that he does this work for the love of the children, and although he has been at it every week now for a long time he receives no remuneration for his splendid work. No wonder the listeners of Canterbury applauded loud and long when his name was proposed as vice president of the league. It is needless to say he was elected unopposed.

Mr. H. V. P. Brown, well known amongst New Zealand amateurs as one of the pioneers of short wave transmission, was elected treasurer. Mr. A. D. Ford, a former city councillor of Christchurch, was elected hon. secretary and the following committee were appointed for the ensuing twelve months:—

Messrs R. A. McLellan, R. Sargeant, J. B. Bobby, H. B. Alleyway, W. J. Green, M. Wright, L. A. Morrison, D. C. W. Cosgrove, R. M. B. Brownrigg, G. N. Hill, T. A. Austin, and E. W. Smith.

The committee up to the present have held only one meeting, when it was arranged that a demonstration of a twelve valve combination should be given some time about the middle of July.

Another important motion agreed to was that the broadcasting company be approached with a view of getting relays broadcasted from Australia, so as to enable crystal set holders to hear overseas stations.

The committee are hoping for success in this direction, and if successful the crystal owner will be more than compensated for his annual subscription which is 1s. and juniors under 18 years 6d. per annum.

Although the Canterbury Listeners' League has only been in existence one month, it has started to make good progress.

The committee of the Canterbury Listeners' League advises every licensee, never mind where he lives, to join up with some Listeners' League.

It is only by the formation of Listeners' Leagues backed up by a large membership that the licensee who finds the 30s. fee per annum, can make his demands in the proper quarters with some knowledge that his requests through his league will be heeded by the powers that be; whether a Government Department or a broadcasting company.

Radio has made rapid strides in Canterbury. Situated as 3YA station is on the flat plains of Canterbury its note reaches well all over the Islands, both North and South.

Cheap crystal sets get good reception at New Brighton, Sumner, and even as far north as Kaiapoi.

Station 2YA, whose opening we are celebrating, when testing recently was heard on crystal sets in Christchurch. So far it is not known how far south of Christchurch crystal reception can be had but even from Wellington to the Canterbury city is a satisfactory feat.

## PALMERSTON NORTH RADIO CLUB

This club was formed on July 9, 1924, with a small membership, which has gradually grown, until there are now forty members, although this is very small for a town the size of Palmerston. However, the enthusiasm for the work is present, just the same.

The first secretary was Mr. B. Hunter, who was followed by Mr. J. Johnson, and during this time many meetings were held and interesting lectures given. Besides a successful Radio Exhibition, demonstrations have been given also.

The club built its own 5-watt broadcasting station, and this was operated by Mr. Kyle and Mr. Johnson.

The next step was the establishing of the present 50-watt station, 2ZF, which is a private station run entirely by the club. This station has been on the air four nights a week since November, 1926, and many reports have been received from all over New Zealand.

The studio, although small, is well draped and furnished, and contains a piano and gramophone.

The station is situated on the top of Collinson and Cunningham's buildings, Broadway.

The members hope to be able to raise enough money to install landlines to various places of entertainment shortly, and an energetic ladies' committee is also working to help towards this.

A children's session is now conducted every Monday by Uncles Ken and Jim, and an early musical session has been started also.

On May 29 and June 5 the club, in co-operation with Mr. W. A. Waters, successfully relayed the New York station 2XAF for over two hours, and then, on the morning of June 3, relayed PCJJ, Holland, which is claimed to be a record.

The club has broadcast quite a number of studio concerts organised by local artists.

The recent meetings of the club have been very large, and it is hoped this will continue.

The station 2ZF is on the air Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Thursday nights each week, and reports will be appreciated. The club officials are:—

President, A. H. Wright; committee, K. Collins, C. Lawson, S. Eustace, C. Penny, S. Childs; treasurer, F. J. Swindell; secretary, I. N. Leet; operators, L. Hansen, K. Lane, R. Tanner.

All the work in connection with the station is given free by the operators and announcers.

## ROTORUA

The Rotorua Radio Club opened their new club room on the 13th instant with a full house of enthusiastic members. After a general discussion on radio matters the members listened-in to items—musical and otherwise—from New Zealand and Australian stations.

The reception was particularly clear, and on the whole, the programme from the New Zealand stations (1YA and 3YA) were of better quality than usual. It has been noticed that programmes have improved during the past fortnight, and it is hoped that the Broadcasting Company will not fade away in this respect, but continue to increase their efforts towards a still higher standard of efficiency: a matter that all listeners are out to claim as a just right for their fees.

Last week Mr. J. M. Prentice, "Uncle Jack," late announcer to the 1YA station, visited Rotorua as the guest of our club. We found him a man of distinction and charming personality, and, during the social gatherings in his honour, he displayed a versatility of knowledge—both entertaining and educative—which amazed the members of the club. Undoubtedly "Uncle Jack" is a man of many parts, and a man whom it was an honour to entertain.

## AUCKLAND

The Auckland Listeners' League was formed by a few Auckland radio enthusiasts, and the first general meeting was held on June 2. The league was incorporated, and everything put into legal shape. The following were the officers elected:—

President, A. C. Jacob; vice-president, G. McB. Salt; secretary, Trevor W. Stringer; treasurer, C. Knowles; and the following committee: Messrs. C. W. Brandon, G. T. Jones, A. A. Hintz, R. D. Sangster, C. M. Taylor, E. T. Drayton, and one representative of the radio dealers, to be appointed by the Dealers' Association. Mr. H. Nimis was subsequently appointed under this head.

The first work of the league was to endeavour to co-operate with the Broadcasting Company. The league also asked for a conference with the company re the Prentice question, but the company refused to discuss the matter.

In an effort to effect improvement, the executive, after a great deal of discussion and inquiry into the English system, definitely adopted board control on the English basis as its policy, and called a public meeting. Over 650 people were present, and resolutions were passed:—(1) urging the Government to assume immediate and complete control of broadcasting on the basis similar to that now obtaining in Great Britain; and (2) expressing regret at the loss of the services of Mr. J. M. Prentice to broadcasting in

New Zealand, and a desire that his services should be retained in Auckland.

At the conclusion of the meeting the executive was cheered, and the policy of the league met with the approval of every person present. Rotorua, North Taranaki, Nelson, Hastings, Stratford, and Palmerston North have all joined Auckland in its policy, and Wellington is doing all it can for the same cause. Considering that the A.L.L. was formed only six weeks ago, the membership of just on 1800 is a wonderful response, and applications for enrolment continue to pour in. Besides the public meeting, interviews have been held with Mr. McNamara, Ministers and M.P.'s, the Prime Minister, etc., and the Auckland executive is working hard to gain the objective of its 1600 members.

(1) While busily engaged in organising the first comprehensive broadcasting scheme introduced into New Zealand, involving the construction of three, and the organisation of four, stations, the company has not had the time to devote to conferences with clubs, but has now been able to appoint a special liaison officer to co-operate with listeners' leagues and radio clubs in all parts of the Dominion, and, if desired, attend meetings.

(2) The Prentice question was not open for outside review. (3) The Wellington Society is not supporting the Auckland policy, having deferred consideration. See their report.—Ed.]

## WELLINGTON

Last Monday evening a general meeting of the Amateur Radio Society of Wellington was held in the Dominion Farmers' Institute Conference Hall. The president, Mr. J. H. Owen, occupied the chair, and about three dozen members and others were present.

The executive's endeavours towards the formation of a Dominion Listeners' Council were endorsed. There was a desire expressed that all the New Zealand radio bodies would affiliate immediately the rules were ready to be approved by the various bodies.

A motion that the meeting endorse the executive's aims towards the broadcasting service being taken over from the Broadcasting Company and placed under a Board of Control somewhat similar to the English system met with opposition. It was pointed out that the members of the British Board were all appointed by the Government, and this was not thought desirable. Another suggestion was made that the Broadcasting Company be given a chance to make good and that consideration of the matter be deferred for three months. Eventually the meeting decided to defer consideration of the proposal of a National Board of Control until the formation of the Dominion Listeners' League's Council had been completed. This decision was a marked rebuff to the executive, which had already made the setting up of a National Board of Control a basic plank in their case on the occasion of their recent conference with several members of Parliament. The National Board of Control had been submitted by the Wellington Society's executive as a panacea for all the ills of the broadcast service. On Monday evening the members practically told the executive to "lay off" the National Board of Control agitation in the meanwhile. Then again, the Wellington executive had heartily endorsed the Auckland League's agitation for State control. Apparently the Wellington Society's executive and the rank and file of the members are out of tune with each other so far as the urgent need for pushing the State control case is concerned. "It can wait" was the dictum of the meeting.

The meeting agreed that the society again urge upon the Broadcasting Company the necessity of engaging the services of a competent expert radio engineer from overseas to supervise the technical side of the broadcasting service in New Zealand. It was also decided "That in order that the transmission of programmes

from 2YA, 1YA, 3YA, and 4YA, New Zealand broadcast stations, may be received by listeners with a minimum of distortion, it is absolutely necessary that competent musicians be engaged to attend to the monitoring at each station."

## THERE ARE OTHERS!

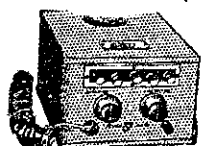
### A LISTENER'S VIEWPOINT

#### THE COMPLEXITY OF PROGRAMMES.

We are all apt to regard broadcast programmes from our own narrow point of view. The man or woman who dotes on dance music grumbles because there is not enough dance music included in the programmes, the listener who worships the twanging melodies of the Hawaiian steel guitar demands more space in the programmes for his pet items. And so it goes on right through the whole gamut of broadcast entertainment. A broadcast audience is unlike any other, the members of this audience pay for a certain entertainment service, and they expect to obtain complete pleasure from it. A theatre audience comprises people who can attend or stay away, just as they desire. They are not compelled to bestow their patronage. Simply, there is no compulsion for payment to the theatrical company. With a broadcast audience it is quite different; the listener is compelled to pay for the entertainment whether he or she likes the bill of fare or not. Very well, it is only logical, then, that the listener should feel that he or she must obtain the fullest enjoyment possible from the broadcast programme. Shall we grant this? Yes. It is quite a reasonable aspect of the case.

But there is a circumstance which places a broadcast audience in quite an anomalous position—utterly different to that of a theatre audience. For example, a person who delights in listening to dance music, and does not appreciate pianoforte solos, is not likely to pay to hear Paderewski, or a Dickensian recital. Even if that person decides to try a change, and goes to hear Paderewski or a Dickensian recital, he cannot upbraid the management of either entertainments on the basis that he, or she, does not enjoy piano solos or the recitals of excerpts from great authors. The broadcast audience represents those who pay, by compulsion, for many phases of entertainment which provide no enjoyment for various sections of this audience. This must be accepted as a simple, incontrovertible fact.

The broadcast director recognises this at the outset, and, sensibly, does not hope to please everyone all the while. He, however, aims to cater for each particular taste in direct proportion to its importance. He recognises that his audience comprises the widest and most comprehensive range of tastes possible in a civilised country. Various methods have been devised in other countries to ascertain the popularity, in their relative degree, of the various kinds of items which are embraced in a broadcast service. Newspapers have printed coupons to be filled in by the listeners, who are required to indicate their choice of the various types of broadcast items in the order of choice—a kind of preferential voting. As these coupons are printed in several days' issues of the newspaper, those who show the most persistence in forwarding the coupons back are apt to carry the day as against those who have less time or opportunity to vote so often. This is, therefore, not an ideal method of gauging the various tastes, in their relative proportion. If each licensed listener were restricted to one vote, and a large proportion of licensed listeners actually recorded their votes, then the broadcast director would have a substantial basis on which to compile his programmes so as to please each section of the listeners in their due proportion. This, no doubt, would not eliminate the person who complains that there is too much high-class music and not enough jazz, or, on the other hand, the person who growls that there is too much jazz and not enough classical music. Let us regard the matter from a less selfish, or self-centred, outlook. Under our present complex social system we all have to make sacrifices for the common good of the community, and the same applies to broadcast listening. We should remember the other fellow. If a classic item bores us, or a jazz number annoys us let us make allowances for the other fellow who is relishing what is disliked by us.



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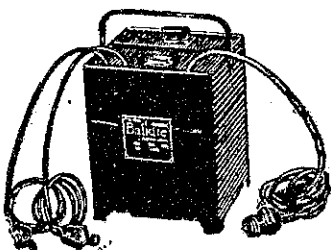
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