

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.

NORTH TARANAKI

At a meeting on August 23, the North Taranaki Radio Society passed the following resolutions:

(1) "That in view of the fact that Station 2YA is not giving New Plymouth listeners satisfactory service, this society urges that the Broadcasting Company of New Zealand Ltd., erect a relay station at New Plymouth at the earliest opportunity; meantime it suggests that the strength of 1YA be quadrupled in order to serve Taranaki listeners."

(2) "That this meeting of the North Taranaki Radio Society executive is of opinion that the recent activities of radio listeners, and the financial outlay involved in forming societies and leagues, have been more than justified, and draws attention to the improvements in radio broadcasting which has coincided with the general organisation of listeners, but stresses the need for continued activity and vigilance."

(3) "That the Government be asked to call a meeting of the advisory board at the earliest opportunity, that the meeting be open to the Press, and that the listeners' representative be afforded due recognition."

Our Mail Bag

Sunday Afternoons Wanted.

G.S.P. (Dunedin): May I suggest that many listeners like myself would appreciate some music on Saturday and Sunday afternoons? If each of your four stations took turns on these afternoons we could pick up that station and always have music on those two very desirable afternoons. As it is, all we can get on a Saturday is a football match, which every listener does not find attractive, although, of course, many do, I grant. The Christchurch Sunday afternoon oratorio some weeks ago was a real delight. Such music, of course, you cannot produce every Sunday afternoon, but gramophone records would be very acceptable.—[The interest in sporting broadcasts is remarkable, and the way they are handled by the Broadcasting Company makes entertainment even for those who do not follow outdoor games. We would suggest that Saturday afternoons be left to the sporting fraternity, without question. Sunday afternoon is different, and perhaps the Broadcasting Company would turn a sympathetic ear to you even at the risk of taxing an already overworked staff. So far there are no regular Sunday afternoon broadcasts, although some are put on as opportunistic offers. We hope more will be.—Ed.]

Diversified Tastes.

Satisfied (Hilton): "Your 'Radio Record' is greatly appreciated in my home. My youngest boy wants jazz, the oldest bands, the oldest girl or orchestral items, the wife hymns, myself sermons, and the baby howls. Could you arrange to have them all given at the same time, and we will get a loud-speaker for each? I thought it as well to enter the list of grumblers, but with the programmes from

1YA, 2YA, and 3YA we get a good selection to choose from and great results. We all sympathise with the officer in charge of 4YA (even the baby), and we hope it will not be long before his station can be classed with the others as A1."

A Crystal Enthusiast.

McN. (Lower Hutt) writes: "Being a radio enthusiast, I would like to tell you of the results I am obtaining from a 2 Brownie crystal set with a pair of 12s. 6d head 'phones. I have an aerial just short of 100ft., including the lead-in. My poles are 30ft. high, and by putting the head 'phones in two crystal tumblers I could hear, plainly, the sermon and band items on Sunday evening broadcast on relay by 2YA. As a matter of fact, the band music by the Port Nicholson Silver Band was clearly audible at a distance of 20ft from the set, as we must be more than two miles (?) airline from 2YA. I think this a very creditable performance, and would be pleased to hear of other amateurs who are operating crystal sets and the results they are obtaining. I have listened in to various stations throughout Australia while resident there, and honestly consider 2YA, both as regards volume and quality of programmes, second to none. Also, I am sure 2YA's announcers are really excellent. They are deliberate in their announcing, and always appear to take a very keen interest in their work. For a country the size of old New Zealand I consider we have an excellent radio service, and I would conclude by quoting a Bairnsfather motto to those who are crying about not receiving good service, 'If they know of a better 'ole, go to it.' Best of good wishes."

Too Much Classic Stuff.

A Listener (Island Bay): "All in our house appreciate very much the weekly paper that you are issuing—'The Radio Record'—and would like to comment very favourably on the reception of the items broadcast from 2YA. The only thing is that the—I might say, bulk of the—owners are catered for very poorly in the selection of items. It makes one tired to hear the number of old songs that everybody who thinks they have a voice will sing time after time. The number of lighter, popular items that are broadcast could be considerably increased. It seems that the arrangements of the programmes are catering for the classical song audience too much. I, and many of my neighbours, very often close down for a whole evening or perhaps just tune in for the cabaret and theatre orchestras; while the bulk of our time is spent in listening to Sydney and Melbourne. A good deal more of the items such as are being put over by Frank Andrews, Ronnie and Monty, and Billy Hart would not weaken the programmes by any means."

Great Improvements.

Radio (Pieton): "I must write you a few more words of appreciation in regard to the quality of the programmes and the general tone of the stations. The improvements which have been made by the B.C. of late are simply wonderful, I think. Even the most exacting can surely find something to their liking in the host of items broadcast. Since the 'Record' first came out I have found reception steadily increasing in quality and volume—seems to me to have almost doubled. But the progress made in the programmes is surely beyond the dreams of the constant 'snivellers.' Your paper, too, deserves more than a fair share of praise for its handy, constructional articles and items of general news. In conclusion, there is no need to wish the 'Record' every success any more, it is getting it."

What a Boon is Radio.

M.C. (Faulding) writes: "I should like these lines to give you some idea of what a blessing wireless is to some of us. We have had our set about four months, and never fail to listen in. I am slightly deaf, and therefore never cared for concerts and such like, but with the head 'phones I can hear everything. The first Sunday we had our set I listened to the church service from Christchurch, the first service I had heard for twelve years. My hearing has improved immensely, and I can hear music in California without 'phones. I have a friend who is very deaf; I persuaded her to come and try the head 'phones. She heard everything, and said she had not enjoyed anything so well for many, many years. She has her own set now, and her hearing is greatly improved. Soon she hopes to hear the music without the 'phones. In conclusion I wish the Radio Broadcasting Co. every success, and thank you for the bright and cheery times you give us all."

Paparoa Reception.

An interested listener at Paparoa supplies these notes on local reception of various stations:—
Daylight.—1YA: Strong, steady, and clear. 2YA: Has been weak, but is improving; four valves gives good loud-speaker results; fairly steady, no distortion. 3YA: Very weak until about 4 p.m., when it comes in much

stronger. At 4.15 p.m. is sometimes stronger than 2YA; fades a little, no distortion.

Night.—1YA: Very strong, usually very clear, but occasionally a little distortion; swings somewhat in the early evening, but is very steady after about 8.30; no fading. 2YA: Strength about the same as 1YA; fades rather badly and frequently; very clear, no distortion. 3YA: Strong, fades frequently, no distortion; clearest of all N.Z. stations here; sometimes quite as loud as 1YA. 4YA: Extremely weak; takes five valves to bring in on speaker; clear, but fades somewhat.

Weather Reports.

B.L.H., Hawera: May I make a suggestion with regard to your weather reports that I think would be of better use to your country listeners, and would be no inconvenience to those in the town, and that is, that they be broadcast immediately after the 6 p.m. chimes from 2YA. In the country at this time of year most of us retire early, and only when friends are in, or anything special on, do we sit up until 9 p.m. Your paper is of great interest, and I follow others in saying that it fills a long-felt want.—[It is not from preference, but from necessity, that the weather report is announced at 9 o'clock. If the report were procurable earlier it would be announced earlier.]

Te Moana (Geraldine): The "Radio Record" is a very interesting paper, and we enjoy it greatly. The programmes are also very good, especially the three northern stations. There is just one suggestion that may be of interest to many of the children listeners-in, and that is that the 2YA Uncle should have his session on a Thursday instead of Friday evening, as it is the only evening in the week there is no children's session. Our kiddies seem quite lost with no wireless on a Thursday.—[The Broadcasting Company intends in the near future to have children's sessions every evening the three main stations are open.—Ed.]

The Amateurs.

R. G. Logan: In a recent issue of the "Radio Record," and under the heading of "Kapa Notes," I see a few lines in defence of the amateur transmitters who spend concerts for the crystal set user. The correspondent who wrote these notes appears to have the idea that I would like to see the amateurs dumped in the sea altogether. I would not, as I recognise that they are doing good work. But they could still do that good work and keep off the air between 8 p.m. and 10. The writer says that I ought to learn how to tune my set. He is labouring under a delusion, for information from professional and amateur sources, as well as my own knowledge, shows that it is impossible to tune out the noise. The matter may now be dropped as far as Rangiora is concerned, as I believe there is a movement afoot among the Rangiora transmitters to keep quiet between 8 and 10 p.m.

A Dunedin View.

Wellington, 2YA, has been rather a disappointment to quite a number down here, considering the power it is supposed to be. Fading is very bad at times, and one has to sit down beside the set so as to control volume, as if set is delivering good volume one minute, the next it is hardly audible. Much is noticeable at times, but is not very bad, fading right out is worst fault. The "mike" the announcer uses seems to be much better than the rest, as his voice comes out clear, without any background of hiss. As for programmes they are quite satisfactory as far as I am concerned. 1YA and 3YA are not nearly so good, since the wavelength change, especially the latter station. Fading is bad from both, and 3YA goes off into a mush just when one wants to hear something. Possibly atmospheric conditions account for some of these troubles, as the "Aussie" stations are all, with the exception of 2FC, mushy at times, and all subject to fading, especially those last few weeks.

"Now for my real grouse: After the radio broadcast stations turn their programmes loose 'on the air' in good order and condition, do they not care how they are received? Is it a matter of no importance to the company that reception of programmes is completely spoilt at times by howling receiving sets, sometimes for the whole evening. The bedtime stories from Christchurch are almost always mutilated this way, and children cannot be bothered listening unless they can understand what is being said, clearly.

Power leaks are another serious source of annoyance, but they do stop sometimes for a day or two. Static, of course, we cannot help. The only thing that prevents many murders is the offenders with radiating sets are not within reach.

"Could the company not force the seriousness of the 'howling valve nuisance' home on to the public by giving frequent and forcible talks on the subject from all stations. This serious trouble certainly limits the number of listeners, and often completely stops the sale of radio sets as I know to my cost.

"Re power leaks, could the R.B.C. not approach the power supply authorities about leaky insulators on H.T. lines, loose connections, etc., as this trouble is second only to the howler."

"Now, this has been one long growl, but I can assure you the cause of it is unfortunately very real, as I could easily prove if I took the trouble to go round for signatures in verification."—I am, etc., W. TAYLOR. Dunedin.

[You will note our comments elsewhere regarding atmospheric and fading. So far as the "howlers" are concerned, though this is a matter of great importance to the company, it surely cannot be considered to be the company's duty to track them to their lairs. The company, we are sure, has its hands full already in putting programmes on the air. The Listeners' Leagues through the country have considered that this work is within their province, and rightly so. It is their duty, by every means in their power, to help the Government inspectors to suppress those who make the night hideous for listeners. The murderer of a "howler" would be acquitted by a jury of valve set owners on the grounds of justifiable homicide! But we do not advocate any resort to Lynch Law!—Ed.]

Selecting the Programmes.

"Allow me to congratulate the Radio Broadcasting Company on the improvement of the programmes now provided for listeners-in," runs another letter. "Being a valve set owner, I am able to select my concerts from your four stations, and find the items so good that one wishes one could listen in and hear the lot at once. I am very content, however, to listen to any one item, as each and every one is a treat now. The concert provided from 2YA last Sunday evening was a great pleasure, every artist being first-class. This programme was refreshing after the over-doses of church music broadcast on Sundays."

"I have no suggestions to make, but I have a wish. It is with reference to the broadcasting of church services on Sundays. If practicable, could the more important denominations be represented every Sunday—Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist—at one of your stations respectively?"—M.P.W.B., Canterbury.

[It should be possible to arrange this. No doubt it will be one of the duties of the new superintendent of programmes.—Ed.]

Delighted With Simplicity.

"Just a few words in appreciation of your broadcasting station. We know very little about wireless, but we have a small crystal set, and can get all your items beautifully. I have a small family, so have neither the time nor the opportunity of attending concerts, and to be able to stay home sewing or darning and yet 'listening-in' to the various items is very welcome. We greatly enjoy the orchestra. We were always under the impression that a great deal of 'tuning-in', etc., was necessary; our's has not been readjusted for a fortnight. Just connect up a couple of wires and there you are."

Whangarei on 2YA.

A Whangarei enthusiast makes these comments:—"Might I offer hearty congratulations on your programme to-night (Friday), from both a musical and technical point of view. From night to night since the official opening the transmission has steadily improved. To-night's observations are as follow:—General hum practically indiscernible; modulation, especially voice, excellent; fading practically negligible; bad atmospheric which interfered badly with both 1YA and 3YA did not materially affect your programme; as regards volume, it is necessary to detune considerably using three stages of impedance audio."

Reconciled to Backblocks.

"We have just installed a wireless set, and we think that our station 1YA is fine indeed. Especially did we enjoy Friday and Tuesday's programmes. The organ recitals were glorious. We are away back here, shut off from the busy world. The quietness sometimes weighs upon my wife; but she told me that now she does not mind if she never sees town. Something for wireless!"—That's the verdict of a country listener.

Bands for Country Folk.

"I wish to express my appreciation of the great improvement, also the

sincere endeavour made by your company to give improved service. Despite the criticism, I consider the New Zealand stations compare favourably with the Australian stations. 1YA has greatly improved, 2YA and 3YA are very clear, but fade very badly, which is very disappointing. We sincerely hope something will be found to eliminate this great drawback. I also wish to express my appreciation, as well as that of many of my friends, of the Sunday afternoon programmes given at 1YA. I can assure you they are greatly appreciated, and it would be more so if the Municipal band could be switched on. Country people have not the opportunity of hearing good bands."—J.T., Cambridge.

Remember the Wide Circle.

"Reading some of the comments in the 'Radio Record,' it seems to me people don't remember the wide circle you have to cater for," says one writer. "As a listener-in for more than four years now, I consider it wonderful the improvements that have been made, both in tone and quality. The church services on Sundays must give great pleasure to hundreds of people unable to attend church. I know my own mother, an old lady, enjoyed it, as she was unable for a long time before her death to go to church. As I write this I am listening to the service broadcast from Christchurch. This is only one of many, many things we enjoy. As one who enjoys all the different programmes you put on, I thank you."

How to Get Dunedin.

"We have a five-valve wireless set by Gilfillan, and the vendor gave us a list of several broadcasting stations, with the setting of the dials for each station. This was before the wavelengths of the New Zealand stations were altered, and now we cannot pick up 4YA at all. Will you kindly let us know by means of your valuable paper if there is any relation between the wave-length of a broadcasting station and the setting of the dials? We have noticed the symbols of several stations which we have not got on our list, and we should like to get them if possible. The New Zealand stations we have require the following setting:—1YA, Auckland (833 metres), 25, 27, 28; 2YA, Wellington (420), 44, 46, 48; 3YA, Christchurch (306), 19, 23, 24; 4YA, Dunedin (463); 5AR, Melbourne (484), 63, 64, 65. 'Thanking you in anticipation.—Yours, etc., O.D., New Plymouth."

[We suggest you try about 57, 58, 61, or thereabouts. 4YA would be comparatively weak with you.]

2YA Very Clear.

C.F.B., Roxburgh: We enjoy 2YA's concerts very much, and we can soon tell if you are giving out the details, for there is not one station which I pick up where we get it so clear and distinct as Wellington, although Christchurch and Brisbane are close second and third. The listener-in who is not satisfied with Wellington wants to see a doctor and have his head read. In regard to the "Radio Record" I think that if it was half the size and double the thickness it would be far better, for I am sure hundreds are keeping all copies for future reference.—On the last point, to halve our size would involve folding and slower production at heavier cost; more important still, it would certainly cost a day's mailing for many places. Under our present equipment and conditions the present size is unavoidable.—Ed]

Some Suggestions.

S. W. Iles (Waitemata): I am very interested in the various articles in your paper, and rather amused at one entitled "Don't Meddle." The author thereof presumably is a radio dealer who doesn't believe in amateurs trying to learn anything about their sets. Has it ever occurred to him that his slogan of "don't meddle" had been strictly adhered to we should never have had wireless, the telephone, and many other marvels due to man's inherent curiosity to find out what makes things go.

Now, re programmes. I am indeed pleased to note such a marked improvement, and listeners have now little cause to grumble. There are, however, one or two points in which they could be further improved. 1YA and 2YA both have Thursdays for band nights. This is an error which could easily be rectified, and would be greatly appreciated if it was. Again, it is hardly fair that Saturday nights from 9-11 should be devoted to jazz at 1YA, 2YA, and 3YA. If 2YA gives jazz the others should arrange differently, or else give alternate Saturdays. Also, why is it that we hardly ever hear piccolo, clarinet, and oboe solos. These should be good "over the air."

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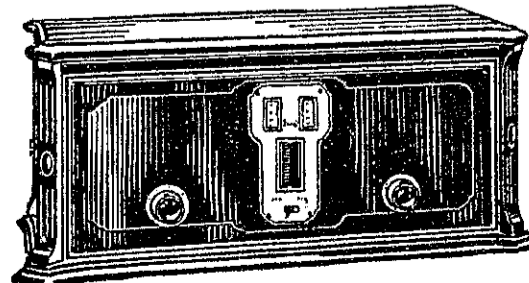
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