

"The Best Guide Yet"

A Critical Review of 1932 Radio Guide

and Call Book

By
"Observer"



ALMOST without warning we have found ourselves in possession of the 1932 "Radio Guide"—a 160-page booklet, crammed full of interesting and instructive matter no radio enthusiast or, for that matter, casual listener, can afford to be without. This is the fifth "Radio Guide" and without hesitation it can be acclaimed the "best yet." Each year this publication has become more valuable, more interesting, and more informative. It has grown with radio science; it started when radio was in its infancy in this country, and has expanded with it. To-day it is an eloquent testimony of radio in its present advanced stage. It is published at the end of one of the most interesting years in New Zealand radio history and, as one would expect, it has a complete record of all those stirring events which have made the last twelve months a long-to-be-remembered period.

In a profusely illustrated section, it takes the listener back into those early days, the early 1920's, when radio was a hobby indulged in only by those who dared the wrath and penalties of the powers that be, for radio was then forbidden. It traces the growth through those days until the days of organised broadcast, when YA, YB, AE's etc., first came on the air. It recaptures some of the early thrills experienced by the amateurs of those days, and tells in a graphic manner how the first long-distance calls were received.

It takes the listener to the beginning of the Broadcasting Company in 1925, and traces the growth of radio in this country under their administration. It sketches the company's attainments and tells of the losing battle which they fought for the retention of their control. It outlines the schemes advanced by them, and tells how they were met by the public and the Government.

Finally we see the establishment of the New Zealand Broadcasting Board and its Advisory Committee. The Chapter ends with a very terse statement of the problems which lie ahead of the Broadcasting Board and what we may expect to see in the future. This article is illustrated by many hitherto unpublished photographs of artists, groups and the photographs of the four YA announcers. Many listeners will be anxious to get the "Guide" for these photographs alone. These are on excellent paper and are a credit to the printers.

In Chapter 2, intriguingly captioned, "This Thing Called Broadcasting," is to be found an absorbingly interesting treatment of radio from a scientific viewpoint. It sets out by asking, "But what is this radio and how is it that, whilst we can hear nothing in the air, yet it appears to be full of voices for the radio? The air is not full of voices and the radio does not carry sound. The solution of it all is found in that marvel of the modern day—electricity. What is electricity?" And then it goes on to tell in a delightfully simple manner how the material universe is built up of

protons and electrons, and how these, in various combinations, make up life as we know it. Readers are then told how these protons and electrons, under certain circumstances, can be made to perform the miracles we attribute to radio.

Those puzzling terms of wavelengths and frequencies are explained in a manner so simple that anyone who has not the slightest knowledge of radio, nor an inkling of how to acquire it, can understand. It links radio with heat and light waves, and gives it its correct place in a vast spectrum.

You have often heard those terms "modulation," "de-modulation," and "transmission," and wondered what they really mean. In the "Radio Guide" you will find them explained in such a manner that you can understand them. It takes you to the receiving set through each stage, explaining with many diagrams how it is that "while we can hear nothing in the air yet it appears to be full of voices for the radio," and then devotes several pages to that modern receiver—the super-heterodyne receiver.

It works upon a complicated principle, but the "Radio Guide" has taken away the complications and made it appear so simple that the average reader, uninitiated in technicalities, has a bird's-eye view of the complete operation. This section is illustrated with many diagrams which are fully explained, starting with a sketch showing the very fundamentals, leading to a diagrams of the modern a.c. superheterodyne.

It tells you all you want to know about speakers and their baffle boards, batteries and their selection, the eliminator and how it works. There is a section on the aerial and the earth, which states very carefully the main features of their installation and maintenance.

A chapter quite new to New Zealand radio listeners will be that on the design of a complete radio receiver. Experimenters will be more interested in this chapter, for it deals with all the fundamental points that designers must consider. Illustrated by eight clear diagrams, this article for the serious experimenter is worth the half-crown paid for the "Radio Guide."

Then in a brief chapter are reviewed the salient features of the modern set.

The last section in this absorbing chapter is that on television, and it is not a brief mention, but a simple explanation of the phenomenon of this new radio science. It explains clearly how light is changed into electricity, transmitted and received. The various scanning systems are fully explained, with special reference to the Baird system of television which is making great headway in England at the present time.

Section 3, "With the Constructor," is introduced in a rather unusual manner. A typical four-valve circuit is taken and, stage by stage, the reader is taken through it. Every component is numbered and the *raison d'être* given (Continued on page 22.)

