

## About this exhibit

This exhibit primarily looks at the period from the 1920's until the mid 1950's, sometimes called the "Golden Age" of radio. During that time, broadcast radio came into the mainstream, and radios were the main source of entertainment and information in the most homes until television came along in the 1950's.

Before this, amateur radio had its beginnings after about 1910. Keen hobbyists either made their own, or assembled radio components that were becoming increasingly available for purchase. Wilf Hall was one of those people, and many of the radio artifacts in the Touchstones Nelson collection were generously donated by him. He was a member of the Nelson Radio Club (formed in 1924), and later the West Kootenay Amateur Radio Club. He was also the authorized dealer in Nelson for Silver Marshall radios.

Although there was a station (CJCB) that offered limited programming for a couple of years in the 20's, Nelson didn't get its own station until 1939, when CKLN started operations. Although things were apparently pretty lean in the early years, the station would continue operations under that name until 1967, when it was sold and renamed CKKC. Alan Ramsden worked at CKLN for much of that time, beginning as an announcer fresh out of high school and progressing to the role of station manager until the station was sold.

Along with rebroadcasting content from CBC, CKLN also created much of their own content, providing a venue for local actors, musicians and other performers. David Scott was a local author who wrote and produced numerous plays in the 1950's (you can see one of his scripts in the glass case against the far wall).

Over the years that followed, CKLN was bought and sold twice, changed names, formats and locations, and was joined by other radio stations being broadcast or available locally. And although it has been decades since radio has been the dominant medium of mass communication, for many people it remains a vital link to the rest of the world. The internet, interestingly, has provided an entirely new way of accessing radio content, and one that is no longer limited to being within range of the station or program, or listening to it when it's originally broadcast.

And in case you think that amateur (or "ham") radio is no longer relevant today, consider that there are many parts of our mountainous locale where you can get reception with a handheld radio, but not a cell phone (eg. the top of Whitewater). If your interests take you out of cell phone range, you might find ham radio very useful. It can also be used for emergency communication in situations where phone or internet services have been lost or overwhelmed, such as the flooding associated with Hurricane Katrina in 2005. I'm told the West Kootenay Amateur Radio Club continues to meet, and that new members are welcome. If you're interested, you can visit their website for more information.

Rod Taylor, Curator

## Many thanks to:

- **CJLY (Kootenay Coop Radio) and the Volunteers of Touchstones Nelson** for sponsoring this exhibit.
- **Alan Ramsden** who has been not only been a source of information, but has loaned us a number of the artifacts you see here.
- **Jim Sutherland** for sharing some of his vintage radio collection with us. Jim is also one of the last people around who fixes electronics, so if your vintage radios crackles or your big screen television has gone dark, he's a good person to talk to.
- **Stan Sherstobitoff**, whose is continually generous with his wide ranging collection.
- **Alex Dawkins** for his assistance in researching and installing the exhibit.
- **Chris Kolmel** for originally suggesting we do an exhibit on radio.