National Capital Radio & Television Museum

Artifact of the Week:

1949 Mitchell Bed Lamp Radio



The Chicago-based Mitchell Manufacturing Company, which began as the Mitchell Lamp Company, made some unusual radios in the 1940s, including radios built into table lamps, as well as this artifact—a Model 1251 "Lullaby Bed Lamp Radio."

The hooks on the bottom were designed to be hung over the top of the headboard, so the radio would hover over your head.

From the pillow, it was an easy reach to turn on the radio and tune in a favorite program. The cylindrical lightbulb at the top is turned on by the black switch just above the tuning dial, providing illumination for reading a book, or, say solving a crossword puzzle while listening to the radio.

The radio chassis was nothing special—just a simple standard five-tube table model design of the era. The ad coaxed a reader to "Relax in Luxurious Comfort with this New Bed Lamp Radio." It sold for $29.95 in 1949. At 95 cents down and a dollar a week, it could be fully owned in a mere 7½ months!

We appreciate your support of the museum so that historical artifacts like this one, and the stories that go with them, can be preserved for future generations. THANKS!

