National Capital Radio & Television Museum

Artifact of the Week:

Westinghouse H-124 "Little Jewel"



This 1946 model was one of the first Westinghouse radios introduced at the end of WW II when this company and other U.S. radio manufacturers began converting from war materiel back to civilian products. In the postwar era Westinghouse also offered refrigerators to consumers, as did radio competitors such as Zenith and Philco. Because the cabinet is similar to the shape of 1946 refrigerators, radio collectors like this radio, and often refer to it as "the refrigerator radio." But Westinghouse never called it that. Its ads referred to this model as "The Little Jewel." It came in four colors: Light green, dark green (top photo, Model H-124, handle up), burgundy, and ivory (lower photo, Model H-126).



This radio performed better than typical small table model radios of the era, most of which had five-tube. Its sixth tube, a radio-frequency amplification stage, helped bring in weaker stations. Somehow, Westinghouse managed to cram six tubes and all the other parts into this 9-inch tall plastic cabinet. Of course six tubes plus other parts jammed into such a small tightly-packed space, meant that the cabinet got rather hot when left on for any length of time, which probably had an adverse effect on component lifetime.

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!