National Capital Radio & Television Museum

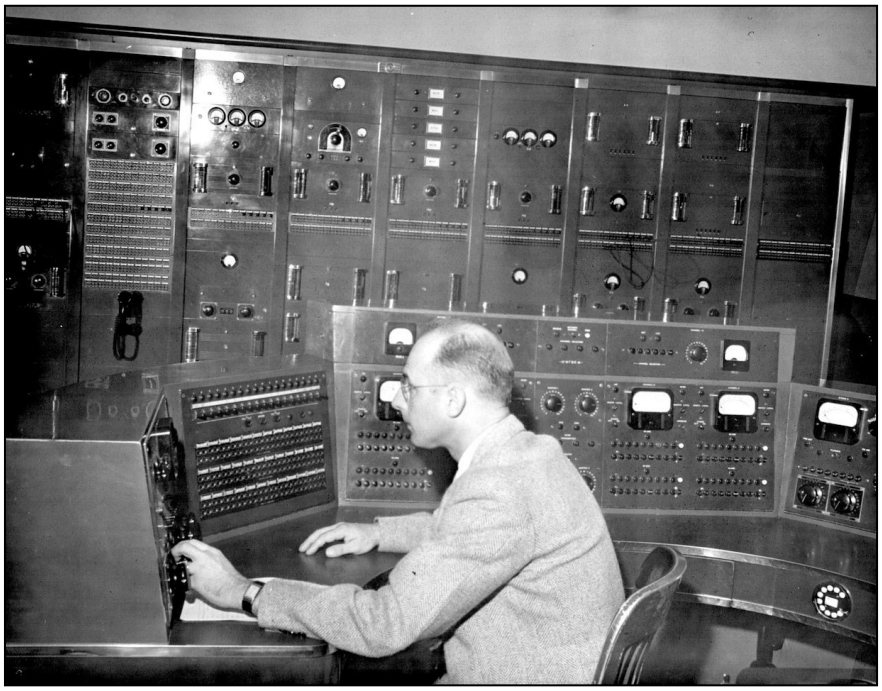
Artifact Showcase:

WFBR's Control Console

In 1939 RCA installed the new state-of-the-art studio equipment shown here at radio station WFBR, then located on the top floor of the Centre Theater on Baltimore's North Avenue. When the station moved to a new site many years later, the entire installation was left behind. Eventually this long-abandoned building was condemned. The museum was contacted and offered anything radio-related. But it had to be removed immediately or it would be scrapped. The tall racks in the rear were mostly gone when we arrived but the U-shaped operator console was intact and in good condition.

On a below-freezing winter day several museum volunteers waded through ankle deep water, ducking icicles to reach a stairway to the third floor. We disassembled the control console in an interior room with only flashlights to see what we were doing. We slid the heavy module units down an ice-incrusted stairway on cardboard sheets, slowly playing out heavy ropes to keep them from crashing down two stories.

The disassembled control console is stored at Davidsonville. Volunteers are eager to restore this valuable piece of history, but it is too large to fit into any of our current exhibit rooms. We need a larger building!



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!