

Memories of Christmas Past

Year after year, while growing up, just about every boy and girl salivated at receiving the Sears, J.C. Penny's, Lionel or a Monkey-Wards catalog, Christmas edition. We put a pile of goodies on our Christmas wish list, only to be whittled down by Mom and Dad to a more realistic list for Santa. I, like many involved with science and technology, eagerly awaited delivery of the latest Lafayette, Tandy-Radio Shack and Heathkit holiday catalogs. My friend, Neil sent me these photos from an early '60s Heathkit catalog.



Heathkit
1964

I had always wanted to tackle the color TV kit but for a kid at the time, the price was way outta reach. At least I had high hopes! Sadly, most catalogs mentioned above have faded into history but our childhood memories of these flourish each and every holiday season.

The "Chew"

SEVENTY-TWO



"Where
Choosy
People

Choose
to
CHEW!"

NEWSLETTER December 2023

Hey Santa... A ham lives here,

come down my chimney
with ham goodies tonight!



**Merry Christmas,
Happy Hanukkah,
Happy Kwanzaa,
Happy Festivus?**



No matter which holiday you observe, enjoy it to the fullest, with family and friends at home, and friends on the airwaves!
Have a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year too!



From "Taz," mascot of the Chew!

if it smells like
chicken



you're
holding it wrong

**HOT,
HOT,
HOT!**

A Christmas Ham

By Loby-WA2AKZ

'Twas a night before Christmas
and all through my shack



The tubes were
a-glowing...
I was making
contacts

The antenna was tuned and
rotated 'round
Facing the south, the noise
level to drown

I sat in my old chair,
earphones on my head
I stopped spinning the dial,
now what's being said?

Two old codgers were at it...
they were
making a
scene!

Which rig was
garbage and
which was a
dream



Down the band I slid like
snow on the fly



With nothing
else heard,
40 meters I'd
try

With the snap
of a switch,
align grid and
plate

Setting the filters, HEY...
there are my mates!

The "RAG CHEWERS" were
there, talking en masse
Each taking turns,
their
greetings to pass
One by one listing
their holiday
wishes



Of rigs and amps and satellite
dishes.

With a broad smile, the radio I
keyed

I checked myself in, what else
would one need?

Then all of a sudden, a sizzle
and spark

The lights blinked twice and
then all was dark.

A glow in the
back of the rig's
getting brighter
My heart sinks to
the floor, the
transformer's
on fire!



Pull out the plugs... smoke's
filling my nose
I turn on the spray from a close
garden hose.

Open the windows, fling open
the sash
I toss out the rig to the ground
with a crash
Stench from the smoke fills
my poor head
Then all of a sudden, I wake up
in my bed

What could have caused such a
terrible nightmare?
Was it the beer, the nuts or the
ham ill prepared?

But my shack is intact and
snow lightly falls



73's to my
friends,
Merry Christmas
to all!

DC Christmas Lights?

Years ago when schlepping through high school, (mid 1960s,) I took a course in motors and motor controls. One of the projects was



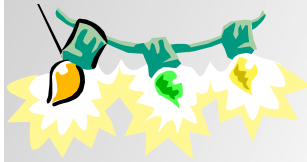
to strip and re-wind a GM car's DC generator. Yep, this was at a time when most cars still had generators. Following the instructors

directions, the class carefully cut out the windings, counted the turns on the poles and armature, then cleaned up the carcass for new coils. I hand-wound the new field and installed new windings to the armature, then assembled the unit. For the final grade, the generator was placed on a test stand with a belted motor to spin the armature. The unit was brought up to speed and if you generated about 14 volts DC on the test meters, you passed! Well, my mind was working overtime and thought: *what if I rewound the generator to make 120 volts DC?* Using what I had been taught, I calculated wire size and turns for the coils, then tore down the generator and installed the new wiring. I brought the generator home and sat it on the work bench in the basement. My dad had made a grinder using an old washing machine motor and what better driver for my generator?



Before I continue, I'll give a short explanation of home electric service in my area of Brooklyn. Our row house was built in 1920

and each house was served by a single 120v 30A service. That was good enough for the 1920s but as decades passed, the little 30a fuses in the basements got stressed with new energy hungry devices. I set up the generator and attached the belt from the motor to the generator pulley. I plugged the motor in and the unit sprang to life. WOW! I was generating 120 volts DC. Now what to do from here? Since it was the Christmas season, I decided to try to run the outside decorations consisting of dozens of old C-9 incandescent lights. This was decades before energy saving LEDs. I ran an extension cord to the generator and fired up the



old motor once again. I ran outside to see the lights and smiled knowing each bulb was illuminated with Direct Current.

What I didn't know was the old motor could not handle the load of the generator and slowed down causing the main 30A fuse to blow. The whole house went dark and I knew I was in trouble. Mom was cooking dinner and she yelled, *"What the hell are you doing down there!"* I ran back inside and grabbed a flashlight, pulled the plug on my Frankensteinian experiment, and installed a new glass fuse. The house lights were back on as I got a stern warning from Dad and Mom while my younger sister laughed her head off. I had done it though, and was well satisfied with the outcome. After I'd gone through the electronics classes and gotten involved with ham radio, my family always looked at me wondering what I would do next in the basement and why the house lights would blink when I was on air. Loby-WA2AXZ



A note from your editor ...

Our monthly newsletter "THE CHEW", contains information about the activities and participants in the 7.272 Ragchew Net. We rely on contributions of stories and pictures from the members to keep all of us up to date, impart information we can all use and, of course, to raise a smile and a chuckle or two. If you find a new "Taz" photo that can be used for future certificates and QSLs, that too is greatly appreciated. Without you, there is no Chew!

Please, e-mail your stories, tech info and photos to Loby at wa2axz@arrl.net
Many Thanks!

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## Volunteers Wanted!



If you would like to be one of our Net Control Stations on a regular schedule or as an occasional fill-in, please contact our net scheduler, Walt-KB3LGO

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Goods and Services:

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**72chew.net**



As we approach the end of another year, Loby and I want to reach out to you and express a heartfelt *Thank You* for your participation in the 7.272 Ragchew Net.

***“Thank you for all you do for the Chew!”***

Thank you for being there, whether as an occasional or regular check-in. Thank you for coming on board with maybe just a brief check-in or a long and interesting QSO. You are very much appreciated and welcome here on the Chew. By checking into the Chew, you are bringing enjoyment, a sense of connection, smiles, and laughter to multitudes of people across the continent and beyond.

During this past year, we have brainstormed about how to get more net control operators active on the Chew. Together we have come up with some good ideas that are now paying dividends as we move into winter. Also, there have been quite a few new stations checking into the Chew. With the winter months ahead of us and hams staying indoors to keep warm by the radio, we expect to add to the popularity of the 7.272 Ragchew Net as well as pick up more net control operators.

As you know, the 7.272 Ragchew Net celebrated its 19<sup>th</sup> anniversary this past May. As we look forward to the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023, we have the highest hopes of celebrating that anniversary with a schedule filled with net control operators who are busy throughout their shifts bringing smiles and laughs to the fellow hams they chat with on the air.

May you and your families and friends have a joyous holiday season. May you be healthy and safe. And may you never forget that because of you...

***It's Always A Great Day On The Chew!***

*Thank You and Happy Holidays,*

*Walt, KB3LGO & Loby, WA2AXZ*

