

# The Bendix E-Beam

*News from the Bendix Radio Foundation  
working for the Preservation and Presentation of the History of  
the Bendix Radio Division and Bendix/AlliedSignal Communications Division.*

© BRF 2012

---

Issue Number 21 – February 22, 2012

We, the BRF volunteers, would like to express our deepest thanks for your continuing support of the BRF's efforts to document the history of the Bendix Radio Division and Bendix/AlliedSignal Communications Division.

## **Major BRF Objective of a Permanent BMI Exhibit Begun.....by Angelo DelNegro**

**Past:** On October 1, 2010, a new permanent BRF exhibit documenting “*Bendix Radio / AlliedSignal – 60 Years in Baltimore*” was opened in the BMI's Communications Gallery. Allocation of this space presented BRF's first large exhibit space since the earlier “temporary” exhibit opened on August 29, 2002 and remained open through May 2006. This new exhibit covers the complete back wall of the BMI's Communications Gallery – an area 9 ft high by 34 ft wide plus artifacts in adjacent display cases. This exhibit was designed, produced and installed by BRF personnel working closely and with approval of BMI. The BMI directorship has given BRF strongly supportive reviews and comments on this new exhibit. Many visitors have told the receptionist many positive comments about the exhibit as they exited the museum.

**Next:** BMI has now authorized BRF to start planning the replacement of the two *Allied Chemical* panels in the main Decker Gallery display area with a *Bendix Radio* display. This new permanent exhibit will be a vertical display area (two panels, each panel 4 ft wide by 12 ft tall) to summarize the history of *Bendix Radio* in the Baltimore area and point to the BMI's Communications Gallery exhibit. As this display will have to be compatible with the existing Decker Gallery displays, professional display support and installation is required. BRF is financially committed to the support of BMI in order to make this permanent Exhibit a reality. Our ten year presence at the BMI always had the goal of a permanent Exhibit in the main Decker Gallery. We need your strong financial support in order to achieve our goal of a permanent 1<sup>st</sup> class Exhibit that we all can be proud of. Your ideas on subjects to include (and why) and help and support on this major project are solicited to present the best image of *Bendix Radio* in Baltimore on par with – if not better than – the other Baltimore organizations in the gallery.

Step 1 – Our preliminary approach and associated sketches were presented to the BMI management and we were given approval to proceed with the wording and photos preparations.

Step 2 – A proposed display layout, preliminary sketches, photos, sub-panel wording and artifact display have been given to the BMI management for comment, suggested changes, and subsequent approval.

Step 3 – Implement BMI response.

Step 4 (etc) – Next submittal, etc.

This Decker Gallery exhibit is scheduled for a 2012 opening. That's only months away so don't put it off emailing us [[website@bendixradiofoundation.com](mailto:website@bendixradiofoundation.com)] or visiting the BMI on Thursdays for BRF's meetings with your ideas (and assistance).

**Website.....<http://www.bendixradiofoundation.com/>.....by Bill Mackey**

The only activity this past year has been the posting of the 2011 BRF/BMI Membership listing. No new documents or database files have been completed or uploaded to the website.

**Collection Additions.....by Bill Mackey**

The contributions to the Bendix Radio Foundation archival collection during 2011 include the following:

- 1) Group photos of the first and second Bendix Radio employee picnics of 1938 (Chicago) and 1939 (Baltimore Fort Avenue). These were received from the daughter of Nils V. Nordstrom: Mrs. Jean (Nordstrom) Hofmann. We met her and her daughter at BMI and personally received the original photos and heard her story. See the photos and associated article presented herein.
- 2) Bill Sisson provided us with a Personal Resume of Projects he worked on during his years with Bendix.
- 3) Ada Coburn donated various Bendix Service Pins from her personal collection.
- 4) Tony Gullace contributed ESAR, FPS-85 equipment photos, articles and brochures plus other items.
- 5) A great find was the Instruction Manual for the Railroad Radio 2R, dated October 1960, as donated by H. Gruenberger.
- 6) Miscellaneous other donated articles, photos, etc. plus artifact items were received from multiple contributors.

**Database and Artifact Logging Activity....by Bill Stotz**

The last drawer of microfiche documents was cataloged. These consisted of mostly Program reports for equipment manufactured between 1945 and 1975. A total of 4189 microfiche records are entered in the database; one more drawer is cataloged but remains to be entered. The Audio/Visual collection is about 85% indexed. The cataloging of the original drawings is about 70% complete, with about 10% entered into the database. A total of 619 artifacts have been photographed and recorded in the artifact database. We have a total of 343 boxes, of which 263 are actual storage boxes. The rest are drawing storage, microfilm drawers, file drawers, open shelves, etc.

**Employee Names Database.....by Ken Kidd & Bill Stotz**

The Employee Names Database is a database of the names of employees of the Bendix Radio/Communications Division/AlliedSignal Communications that covers the period from the formation in 1937 to the sale of the division to Raytheon on September 10, 1998. We are currently working on a file of approximately 7,000 entries which will bring our database total to 38,000 entries; most are multiple entries obtained from various sources. We are still looking for additional **personnel lists** and **organizational charts** which you may have in your files. Let us know.

**BRF and BMI Joint Membership.....by Bill Scott**

We need your continued support of the BRF through yearly membership and donations. The 2011 BRF and BMI Joint Membership totals 101 members: 45 Family Memberships and 56 Individual Memberships plus an additional 31 persons who made monetary donations. Last year the 2010 membership totaled 99 members. Our active database consists of over 1,500 names of former Bendix Radio, Communications, and AlliedSignal in Baltimore employees or friends. A death index is also kept of those persons who have passed away over the various years. Please keep us informed of any address or email changes.

=====

**Bendix Radio Foundation**      Baltimore Museum of Industry  
 1415 Key Highway      Baltimore, Maryland 21230      [ 410-727-4808 ]  
<http://www.bendixradiofoundation.com>

=====

## **Nils V. Nordstrom History, Bendix Radio Fort Avenue & Towson.....by Ken Kidd**

The BRF continues to receive interesting and unusual items relating to employees and events for its archival collection at the BMI. A case in point is the photographs of the Bendix Radio employee picnics of 1938 and 1939 included in this E-Beam. These photographs, were brought into the museum just last summer by Mrs. Jean Hoffman, the daughter of Nils Nordstrom, an early and long term employee of Bendix Radio.

In a short biographical write-up about her father, Jean tells how Nils emigrated from Sweden to the US in 1923 with an older brother to join other family members already in Malden, Massachusetts. During the next few years, Nils worked at various jobs such as street cleaner, janitor, roofer, and sheet metal worker. Marriage and children came along as Nils continued with sheet metal work and other jobs into the depression years.

In 1937, an uncle in Chicago let Nils know that good jobs were available there, so Nils headed west by Greyhound bus with his family (which by then included three children), and was hired by Bendix Radio. Then, with the move of operations to Fort Avenue, Nils and family were on the road again headed for Baltimore to continue his career with Bendix.

In the BRF archives, we have documentary evidence of Nils' employment via the 1942 telephone book where N. Nordstrom is listed as night-shift sheet-metal foreman. Later, in the August 1951 telephone book, Nils is listed under the heading "Dept 14 – General Factory" as night plant superintendent. Further references are found in telephone books into the sixties, and a feature article in the February, 1954 issue of the *Bendix Beam* describes Nils' self-taught skill as a portrait and landscape artist, noting that "he took to oils like a duck to water." Another photograph (also supplied by Jean) shows Nils at a presentation event which we think is probably on the occasion of his 30-year anniversary sometime in 1967. (The other two men are yet to be identified. Can you help?) Shortly thereafter, Nils retired and fulfilled a long-time dream of living in Florida and spending his time playing golf.

Employment at Bendix Radio was also in the cards for Jean and her brother Carl Nordstrom. Jean got a job on the assembly line after graduation from Sparks High School and then worked in the Purchasing department before moving on to Black and Decker. We found a listing in an early sixties telephone book for Carl working in Department 993 – Factory Accounting and later he continued his employment with Bendix in Florida.

*A special thanks to Jean Hoffman for these unique photographs and historic information.*



Nils Nordstrom was also an Artist



Nils Nordstrom receiving his Service Award

**Photo of Bendix Picnics 1938 and 1939**  
*from Jean (Nordstrom) Hofmann*

