

COLUMBUS & COURTENAY NOTES

by Peter Lankshear

The Radio Corporation of New Zealand made some excellent receivers and the countrywide distribution system of their extensive range of models makes it likely that most collectors will encounter these very collectable radios.

Several models, including the 66, 75 and 90 were produced over a long period and largely as a result of wartime and postwar shortages, each manufacturing run had its individual variations. The 66 in particular had many versions. A justifiably popular model, it was a no frills dual wave receiver with an R.F. stage. Variations include 66, 66A, 66E, 66J, 66W and a broadcast only 66BC.

Although some modifications were documented, there can be traps in many of the 1940's models, and two in particular are worth watching for.

1. Be on the lookout for bridging connections on the octal rectifier sockets in which pairs of pins 3&4, 5&6, and 7&8 are tied together. This seems to have been done to accommodate either 5Y3 (U50) or 6X5 rectifiers. However, as Radio Corp. did not provide valve location stickers inside their cabinets, there is no indication as to which type was intended. If both rectifiers had the same filament voltage, there would be no problem, but the 5Y3 requires 5.0 volts, whereas the 6X5 is rated at 6.3 volts. Each will work with the other's supply, but in either case there is likely to be shortened life. In my experience it is quite common to find receivers in which the wrong valve type has found its way into the rectifier socket. The easiest way to be sure is to measure the filament voltage. If it is less than 6.0 volts, use a 5Y3. Otherwise use a 6X5GT.

2. During this same period, Radio Corp. used both the 6J8G (or its direct equivalent the X65) and 6K8G converter valves and again there is no indication as to which type was originally fitted. The 6K8(G) or(GT) has a high mutual conductance triode section and is NOT an equivalent of the 6J8G. Later the 6K8 and the ECH35, also with a "hot" triode often found their way into receivers intended for the 6J8G. To further confuse the issue, two different types of oscillator coil were used.

Generally, interchangeability is no problem, but in some cases, using a 6K8 or an ECH35 will result in an odd sort of oscillation on some parts of the tuning range. This is oscillator "squegging", resulting from too much feedback. If this happens, and you do not have a 6J8G, check the value of the mica capacitor connected to the oscillator grid, pin 5. It is likely that it will be found to be 500 pf. Substitute a 100 pf mica or ceramic capacitor for a cure.

