

## Museum Friends Group

This museum needs your support. You can offer this by joining our Friends' Group. For an annual £10.00 donation you will receive a news letter, invitation to social events and technical support.

You can join by simply filling this form in and sending it to the British Vintage wireless and Television Museum.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Skills or services you can offer the museum \_\_\_\_\_

Tick here for Gift Aid donation

I authorise the British Vintage Wireless and Television Museum to reclaim the tax on this and future donations. I confirm that I am currently a UK income tax/capital gains taxpayer and the amount of tax I pay is at least equal to the amount the British Vintage Wireless and Television Museum will reclaim on my donation in the current year.

Please make cheques payable to 'British Vintage Wireless and Television Museum'



The British Vintage Wireless and Television Museum  
23 Rosendale Road, West Dulwich, London SE21 8DS  
020 8670 3667 Registered Charity No. 1111516

## A National Treasure

'Broadcasting is so much part of our lives that it is easy to forget just what a difference it has made in little over eighty years. But in the not very distant future, when the world of analogue will be preserved only in collections of this kind, we will be grateful to the British Vintage Wireless and Television Museum, who have kept the evidence of those early years. It is also easy to forget just what is involved in bringing together, housing and maintaining the collection. The Museum deserves any help you can give it to support this important national asset.

I will be honoured to be one of the first 'Museums Friends'.

Robin Reynolds, Head of BBC Heritage

### The British Vintage Wireless and Television Museum

I was fortunate enough to visit the Museum for the first time in the mid 1980s; I was foolish enough to arrive with a preconception that this was a small private collection stored in someone's house on the outskirts of London.

I regularly get information about private collections and personal museums; collecting is a wonderful obsession that the British do so well and indeed my own house does have more than its fair share of old radio sets and vintage telephones. So working on the basis that if you've got more than about eight related objects it's a "collection" and if you arrange them on a shelf so people can see them it's a "museum", you may guess my shock when Gerry Wells opened his front door and invited me in to see this stunning collection. Hundreds of objects, beautifully cared for, many restored to full working order, all laid out in a well thought out sequence plus a seemingly inexhaustible flow of information about each object.

In the 20 years since my first visit, the Museum has continued to grow; now home to some 1,500 objects it is simply the finest collection and display of its kind in the world. Its strengths lie in the quantity, diversity and quality of the collection plus the expertise that surrounds them. A collection without knowledge is useless; an object without description, understanding and relevance is worthless. How many times have we all visited indifferent museums with a few dusty objects, unloved with fading captions, waiting out their life sentence in a grubby glass case. Not so at Dulwich; here you'll find not only care and conservation but also a passion for the subject and a depth of knowledge which is shared, exercised and kept alive and in good health for the generations that follow. Here's the kind of commitment that money can't buy.

Money however is needed to keep the Museum running and to ensure that future generations are able to enjoy this magnificent collection. One way you can help this worthwhile cause is to become a "Friend" of the Museum so that you can give some tangible help and at the same time feel part of the organisation. I'm delighted and honoured to become one of the first of the Friends of the Museum. Unable to offer any "hands-on" help (the 400 mile round trip is rather daunting) it gives me the opportunity to become a stakeholder in the future of this important national treasure.

I do hope you will join me.

John Trenouth, Senior Curator of Television  
National Museum of Photography, Film & Television, Bradford



## The British Vintage Wireless and Television Museum



The property housing the museum has had a rich heritage of radio and electricity. Alfred Rickard-Taylor (an early wireless enthusiast) lived here from 1908 to 1914. In 1914 Mr. Frank Wells (Gerald's father) purchased the property.

Gerald was born here in 1929 and from the age of four expressed an interest and fascination for anything electrical. This led to a passion for wireless and became his ultimate obsession. The sense of miracle and wonder has stayed with Gerald.

At the end of the Sixties drastic and dramatic changes occurred in his life. He was not able to continue the life of an electrical contractor. However, he could see wireless and television sets being discarded and felt there was a need for a "Vintage Wireless Museum".

This Country was a major contributor for wireless development, even Marconi came to the UK to further his ambition for communication without wires. There was a need to preserve early wireless sets and their history.

The Museum for vintage wireless has been in existence since 1974 and now includes televisions.

The "British Vintage Wireless and Television Museum" has inspired the start of many wireless museums. It is, however, now the only viable and working wireless museum in the UK. Many radio and television programmes have been produced about the Museum which have encouraged the history being preserved for the nation whilst gaining worldwide recognition.

The Museum has an ever-expanding range of radios, televisions, speakers and radiograms from the dawn of radio up to the last valve model ever made. Items of interest to academics, historians, manufacturers and collectors are on exhibition. The Museum consists of two buildings making thirteen rooms with 1300 wireless receivers on show, along with many display cabinets of components and wireless associated artefacts, also a period shop. There is a valve laboratory enabling the manufacture of early Triode valves (the three electrode valve) plus workshops to demonstrate the manufacture of chassis, cabinets and associated parts for wireless construction.

Several examples of BBC equipment are on display and in numerous cases are working, for example the 625 to 405 line standards converter. High-definition television started on the 405 line standard in 1936. The 405 line television service was phased out by 1985.

Those with memories of the black and white era are still able to see these fine sets on 405 line working.

The British Vintage Wireless and Television Museum is now a trust and a registered charity. The museum is not open to the general public, but guided tours are available by appointment. Admission is free but donations are greatly welcomed.

Mr. Gerald L Wells. (Life President)

Mr. Geoff Patrick

**Committee:**

Mr. John Thompson. (Chairman)

Mr. Christopher Rowe

Mr. John Sully (Secretary)

Mr. Mike Barker (Trustee)

Mr. Fred Watts (Treasurer & Trustee)

Mrs. Eileen Laffey (Trustee)

Mr. Kevin Lott (Trustee)

[bvwm.org.uk](http://bvwm.org.uk)



RGD 2350T Television Radiogram. Presented to the Museum by the late Sir J Paul Getty Jr KBE



HMV Lumiere. The world's first Radiogram. Presented to the Museum by the late Sir J Paul Getty Jr KBE



Philips 636 Superinductance receiver