

# COLLECTORS CORNER

## A Trio of "Midget" TRFs from TCA Models AC-60 Junior, AC-61, and AC-70

BY FRANK HEATHCOTE

*Frank Heathcote's history as a writer for A.R.C. goes back to 1984 when Gary Schneider first asked him to write an article for the second issue of A.R.C. In his eleventh A.R.C. article (August 1985), Frank wrote about the Clarion Model AC-61, made by the Transformer Corporation of America (TCA). Now, ten years later in the following article, he has expanded his interest to include a trio of TCA sets.*

*Frank has written to express his pleasure at being asked to contribute to this tenth anniversary issue and to extend his congratulations to A.R.C. for having reached this milestone. Frank also shares with us an amusing anecdote about his far-reaching A.R.C. "fame." He says that he always gets a chuckle when he thinks of the flea market near Chicago where he was introduced to another collector who exclaimed, "Oh, you're the Frank Heathcote who writes for A.R.C.!" Frank says, "It was the only time in my life that I felt like a celebrity!"*

*We're delighted to contribute to Frank's "celebrity" status any time and hope that he'll write many more articles for A.R.C. in its next decade. (Editor)*

The Transformer Corporation of America (TCA) came on like gangbusters when it entered the radio manufacturing field for the 1930 model year with its line of Clarion radios. Prior to that, TCA was well known throughout the radio industry as a manufacturer of iron core transformers and chokes, speakers, and power packs.

In a 4-page ad in the June 1930 issue of *Radio Retailing*, TCA claimed to have "perhaps the most modern radio plant in the world, where every part that goes into Clarion radios is fabricated from raw material, finished, and assembled." The plant was located at Ogden and Keeler Avenues in Chicago, Illinois.

TCA's president, Ross Siragusa, saw to it that Clarion kept a high profile in the various radio retail magazines. Nearly every issue had photos of different personalities visiting the plant, Clarion's spiffy delivery trucks, or a Clarion display at some overseas trade show. Clarions were good sellers in Latin America and in the smaller countries of Europe. TCA seemed to go after the



Figure 1. The Clarion Model AC-60 Junior.

export market with more vigor than most other radio manufacturers.

### MODEL AC-60 JUNIOR

The Clarion "midget" series started with the Model AC-60 Junior, shown in Figure 1. [The first midgets were considered to be cathedrals.] This set was released in the 1931 model year for \$63.30 with tubes. It employs a TRF circuit with 2 RF stages using Type 24 tubes. A third Type 24 functions as a detector transformer coupled to push-pull Type 45s in the output stage. A Type 80 rectifier provides DC well filtered by two chokes.

In a rather unusual practice, the speaker field coil is used to obtain grid bias voltage for the audio output tubes. Volume is controlled by varying voltage to the screen grids of the RF tubes. A local/distance switch is used to disconnect the antenna in the "local" position, and there is a 2-position tone control switch.