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Hi-Fi Glossary

AUTOMATIC FREQUENCY CONTROL: A circuit used chiefly in FM receivers to keep the station accurately tuned.

HAFFLE: A wood or metal surface or enclosure used with a loudspeaker to prevent the air waves behind the speaker from meeting and interacting with the sound waves in front of the speaker, thereby preventing cancellation of low-frequency sound waves.

COAXIAL SPEAKER: A dual speaker system in which the tweeter and woofer are combined in one physical unit (see Tweeter, Woofer).

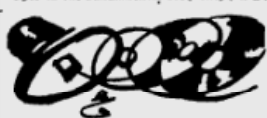
CONE RESONANCE: The frequency at which the speaker cone is readily excited into excessive vibration, producing an intensity of sound greater than is war-

anted by the strength of the electrical impulses.

FREQUENCY RESPONSE: A rating of the efficiency (generally expressed in decibels) with which a circuit or device handles the different frequencies falling within its operating range.

FLUTTER: A type of distortion characterized by a series of rapid variations in pitch. Flutter occurs when the speed of the record turntable or tape-feed mechanism is not constant.

HARMONIC: A frequency which is a multiple of the fundamental frequency; e. g.,



If the fundamental note is 100 cycles per second, the first harmonic would be 200 cycles per second.

HARMONIC DISTORTION: A form of distortion in which the amplifier produces harmonics alien to the original sound. These harmonics are heard together with the original sound.

TWEETER: A type of loudspeaker specially designed to reproduce high frequencies. A treble speaker.

WOOFER: A loudspeaker, specially designed to reproduce low frequencies. A bass speaker.

WOW: Distortion in sound occurring when the speed of the record turntable or tape-feed mechanism is not constant. It is heard as a series of slow variations in pitch.

UH-OH, HERE COMES THAT OLD TECHNOLOGY AGAIN!

Continued from page 9

ginnings. Actually, the hi-fi equipment now being used in a few cars is more or less experimental and is constantly being improved. Compared to what will be around in just a couple of years, it is as crude as a Lucille Ball gag alongside something by Bea Lillie. Even so, the current units are really a marvel of engineering, and some miserable problems have been partially solved. One of the most irritating things about the usual microgroove deal is the tendency of the stylus to jump half the allegro vivace movement every time someone sneezes or drops a beer can on the Oriental rug. You can imagine what a rocker this was to lick when the stylus was mounted in the glove compartment of a light car in the hands of a teen-ager driving over a corduroy road with his date, after the prom and before the Big Deal. It took the engineers about five years to come up with a workable answer. The next thing to bother the boys was the record itself. It had to be small, unbreakable, and play a lot longer than the usual 45-r. p. m. disc, since changing records while muddling thru Seventh Avenue traffic could easily raise the insurance rates. Surprisingly enough, the final product of all this scrabbling in the labs turned out to be rather decent equipment. It won't compete with Altec-Lansing, but then it wasn't designed to do that. However, it does compare favorably with almost all the stuff that is now labeled "hi-fi" by the people who turn out package units. But no matter how neat and

finished the sets now in use seem, they will only be the merest shadow of the installations that are now being kicked around several very important development labs.

FIRST OF ALL, it should be pointed out that this is no mere trend or fad, but is in actuality the first stirrings of a really big change in American listening habits and will eventually knock several industries right out of business and will create several new ones. For several years the radio industry has been forced to recognize the fact that a large percentage of its listeners were drivers. As TV spreads to the more rural areas this percentage is getting larger momentarily. Every year around 5 million radios are sold in new cars or are installed in older ones. This figure yearly added to the already radio-equipped cars on the road,



JEAN SHEPHERD

amounts to a lot of cash customers. It would be disastrous to radio if suddenly all cars were to come off the line ready to play records, instead of able to pick up Ballantine spot announcements. There have been several wrinkled brows over this one. There hasn't been much talk about it, however, since most radio people either aren't aware of the future of this interesting new development or, more likely, they prefer to ignore it. The most recent trends will force the issue and are bound to effect almost everyone within a couple of years. Some of the plans I've seen are really corkers, and if I had some ready scratch around, I know just where I would invest it. For example, one of the fastest growing companies in the country has just completed a couple of deals that could conceivably result in the same sort of change that hit the country when TV became a commercial operation. And all of this concerns the automobile and reads like something by a science-fiction fan's dream on Saturday night.

[This is the first of two articles on recent trends in hi-fi, by WOR humorist Jean Shepherd. The second article will appear in an early issue. — Ed.]

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