Tuskite Works, Pitsea Hall Lane, Pitsea, Essex.

11 Pages

£1.50

Alan Cox 2022

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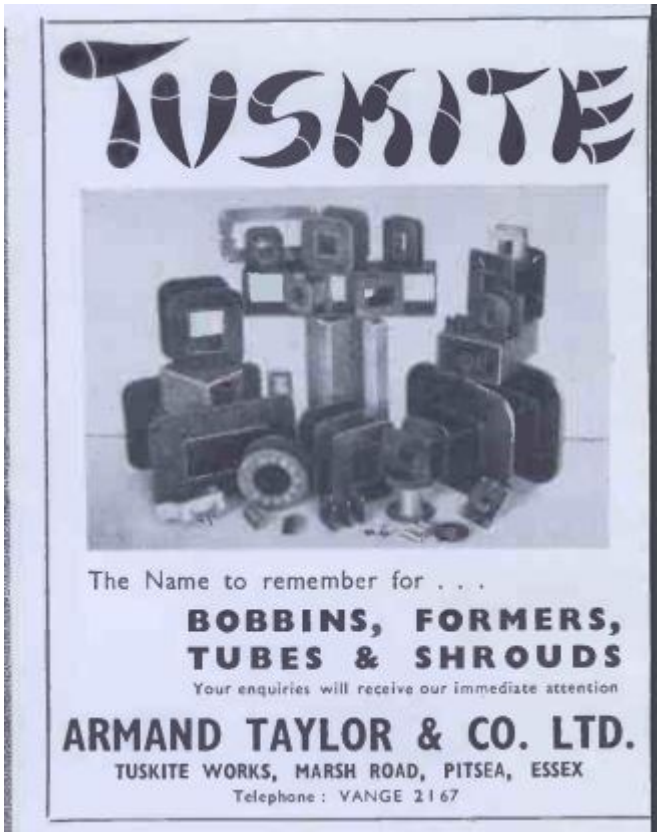
Ron Chittock recalls between Evelyns garage and the Busy Bee café on High Road, Vange. They used to work in a corrugated iron shed, and that is where the business started In 1944. Ron started working there when he was 14 years old. The manager was Mr Whiteman who owed the busy bee café. Almond Taylor owed the business. The old iron building was freezing cold in the winter as the only heat source was a pot bellied stove that sat in the middle of the floor with the stove pipe extended up though the roof so that you were cold or warm depending on your work position! And on one occasion something big and nasty fell near and exploded causing the stove pipe to fall down covering any body near by in soot.

He later got planning permission to build what is now the Tuskite works, We then moved everything down to Pitsea.

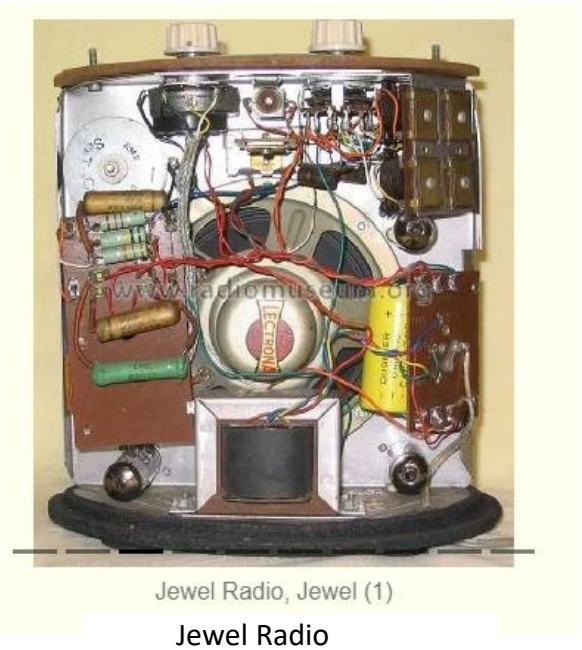
Vange, High Road.

Like so many local young men and women who worked there making bobbins that the coils were wound on for radio's. The materials used to make them was called tuskite. He also employed young boys and when they got older they were discharged. In 1947 the business was going so well an extension was built with no roof. Owing to a severe winter in 1946-47 All electricity was suspended to industry and domestic customers where limited to a few hours a day. So all the machines we used where convert to run a stationary engine made by JAP that was purchased from Bishops Garage, in Vange, They soon found out this was illegal as they were putting out too much carbon dioxide. We tried fitting up an exhaust pipes to duct the fumes outside but it did not work to well, so in the new extension they put me in it with my machine which was a band saw as there was no roof. In the middle of winter, no heat. I filled up a drum with coal to make a watchman's brazier but as it got colder I moved it nearer and burnt a hole in my trousers.



Armand Taylor & Co Ltd, August 1950

Jewel Radio



Jewel Radio

Jewel Radio, Basildon (GB)

Model Types Jewel

Jewel Radio Ltd, Pitsea, Basildon, Essex.

1957—1957

The Company ARMAND TAYLOR & Co Ltd. Manufacture of Paxolin product decided in 1957 to manufacture radio sets. It set up a new company for this purpose called Jewel Radio Ltd.

Only one model was produced the “Jewel”

BVWS bulletin

Incorporating 405 Alive / vol. 27 no. 2 Summer 2002 www.bvws.org.uk

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The Jewel Radio

This was taken from BVWS bulletin incorporating 405 Alive Vol 27 no 2 Summer 2002 magazine. From a article by Gerald Wells.

An original unrestored

Very few people will have heard of Tuskite. Very few people in the radio trade will have heard of it either. If You lived in or around Marsh Road in Pitsea, Essex and had a 3 number telephone then you have been aware of the factory that called itself 'Armand Taylor' & Co Ltd. You would also be aware of a peculiar smell that emanated from this factory. What you couls smell was a process of Bakelizing Paper to form what is commonly known as Paxolin. Everybody in the radio industry had Come across this material but didn't know it was called Tuskite.

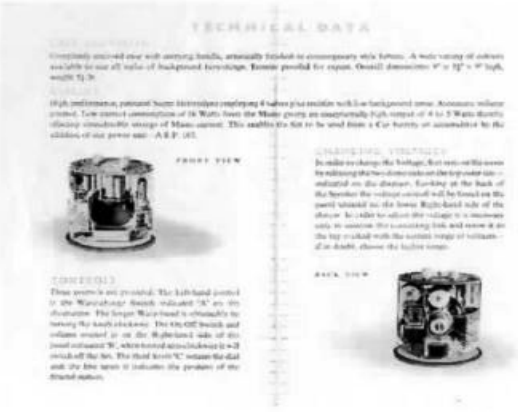
It was used for making coil formers, transformer bobbins and tag boards. Half of the factory is still in existence producing Tuskite for what is left of our radio industry. It is but a shadow of it's self, employing a hand full of people. The factory is run by a very charming lady called Josephine. I can only assume that she is the daughter of Armand Taylor. In 1957 this very worthy company decided to produce a five thousand of them: in actual fact only 1000 were produced.

I worked this out from the serial numbers they were all six figure and started with 111000 I never found anything beyond 111999. Up until March 2001 I had only been aware of one that is in Jonathan Hill's 'Radio Radio' figure 785. It was on the 23rd February that I had a telephone call from Josephine. She informed me that she had a factory that had been out of use since 1957.

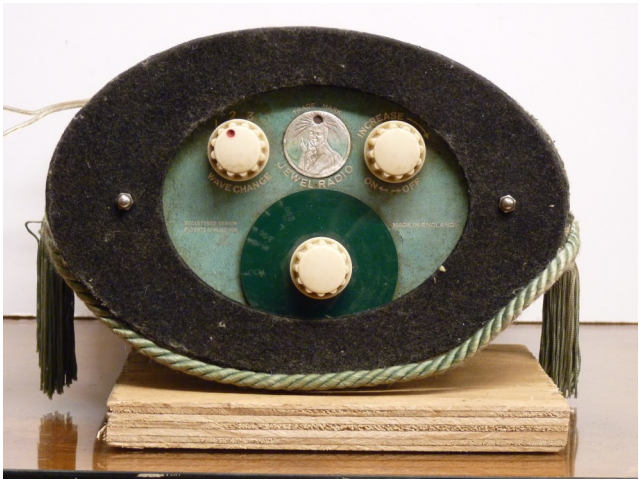
She further stated that she wanted to sell the factory but it was full of radio's and unwanted stock. She said that she had a possible buyer but she would have to get the factory completely emptied. It had to be done in a hurry and I could have it all for nothing: all I had to do was to collect it. I told her that I was on holiday the following Monday, down to Lakeside Hayling Island.

I telephoned John Thompson who had a very large Citroen hatchback car. He agreed to contact Josephine and collect the contents of the factory. He cleared everything. He made seven journeys from Pitsea to Dulwich. When I came home a week later, I found my whole dinning room two feet deep in clag. There were about 200 incomplete sets and bits of cases. They were all rejects, in fact about 20% of the first run. I think at this point in 1957 they decided to padlock the factory. Although they were very fine little sets they were all valved and the transistor was on the way in. In Spite of the fact that I have been continually involved with radio for sixty years, I have not met anything like this sort of design before. The designer was one hell of a genius. If you examine the accompanying circuit drawing you will wonder what the blazes is going on.

If you take a close look at the chassis you will be convinced that the man behind it was no ordinary designer.



The Jewel Radio



The Jewel Radio is a very curious radio as it employs 3 battery valves with 1.4 volt heaters (2xDAF91 & 1 DK92) and a mains type valve for the audio output

(a UL41 which dates from 1953).

It is a very bad design as it has virtually no ventilation hole to let out the heat. Indeed some have been known to catch fire. I believe that the one we have is an original from the factory.

> "This set uses an unusual tuning capacitor. A copper foil is wound onto a drum as the tuning knob is rotated. Causing a change in value of capacity."

Basildon Heritage would like to thank Richard at the

British Vintage Wireless & Television Museum at

West Dulwich, London.

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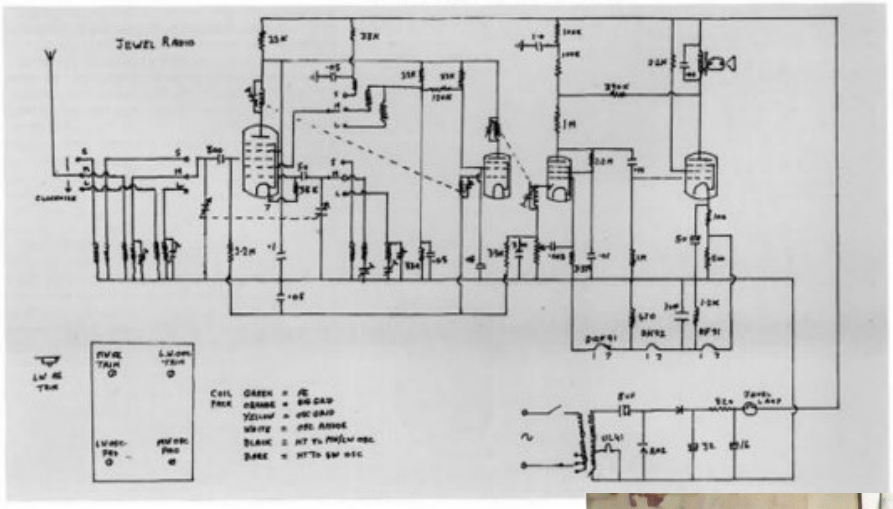

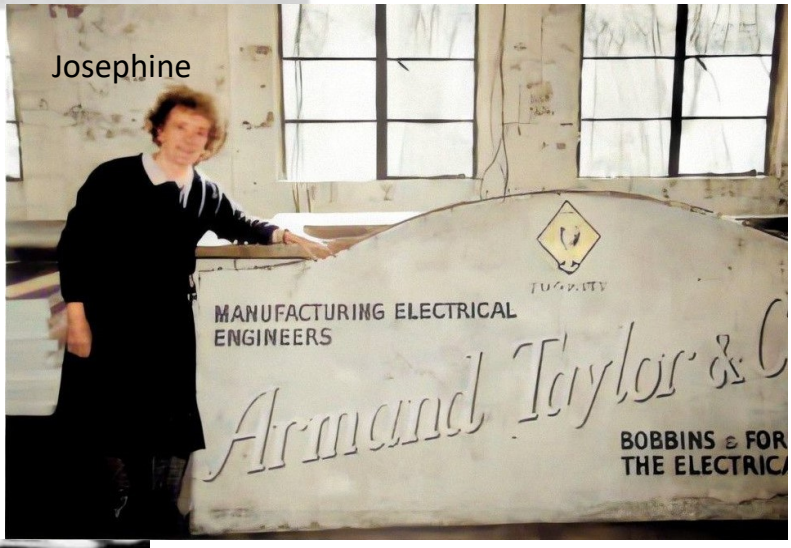

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