

## Tube of the Month

### F-328A

In the 1920s, the ham community was small and everyone knew who the “big guns” were. Dxing was popular, but the equipment was mostly home made especially for the higher short waves. QST would run stories about working Europe from W6 on 40 meters. Don Wallace, 6AM, was one of the most famous DXers of the day. When Don’s old triode (a UV206) was getting soft, he contacted 6EX in the San Francisco area. 6EX ran the National Radio Co. who made rectifiers and did some tube rebuilding. Don was sent a Federal F-328A that may have been rebuilt and an arc rectifier to power it. Don constructed a water jacket to cool the tube and had rubber hoses for tap water input. The output ran outside onto the driveway. The circuit was a Hartley oscillator and when conditions were good, the water came out steaming. This tube had a dissipation of 5 KW and there was much speculation as to the output power. I believe this rig was the origin of the expression “A California kilowatt”. The tube was damaged in the big earthquake of 1933 and was retired. About 45 years ago, I met W6AM at a convention and the conversation led to the water-cooled tube of 1927 that seemed to be one of Don’s favorite yarns.

Visit the museum at [N6JV.com](http://N6JV.com)

Norm N6JV

