

Kokeshi Doll, Germaphone Crystal Radio by Miniman

John Anthes, 2015 NMRCC President

Recently a friend and colleague, Deborah Belasich, decided to make me a very generous offer. As a young girl she was a U.S. Air Force "Brat" while her family was on station in Japan during the 2nd-half-1950's. Deborah's parents gave her a rather unique radio using just a single germanium crystal.

Made by Miniman Industry Co, LTD the Doll Kokeshi Germaphone was backed, by "Government Subsidy as an excellent article for export and awarded prize for invention." "A PAT. 29618, 15374." The photo shows that this radio is in excellent original condition with vibrant orange, pink, yellow, red, green and black with a high gloss clear coat.



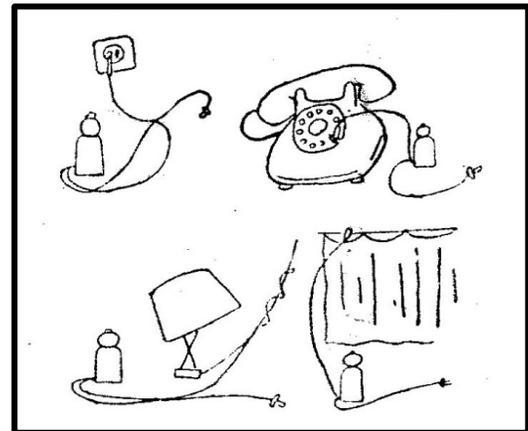
Station tuning is performed by revolving the doll's head on the vertical axis

Also included are the box containing the original 1-page operating instructions (See end of document) printed on nearly transparent rice(?) paper. Notice also that the radio has two ear plugs and an antenna on a 8-foot-long length of red wire. The antenna wire has a connector on the end shaped like one prong of a typical 115 volt AC wall plug.

The crystal radio having limited un-amplified sensitivity has an estimated hearing distance table (Double for Night Reception). For example, a typical AM clear channel station in the US broadcasting 50 kW may be picked up at a distance of 45 miles or 100 during the evening.

HEARING DISTANCE	
OUTPUT POWER B.C.	DISTANCE
100 KW B.C.	90.00 MILES
50 KW B.C.	45.00 MILES
100 KW B.C.	23.00 MILES
1 KW B.C.	12.50 MILES
500 W B.C.	9.00 MILES
50 W B.C.	6.00 MILES
DOUBLE DISTANCE FOR NIGHT RECEPTION	

Also included in the operating instructions is a sketch showing four separate possible ways to boost the intercepted signal by the antenna. Number 1) shows inserting the antenna connector into an AC outlet (Presumably a neutral!), 2) shows



connection to a telephone, 3) wrapped around the power line of a home lamp, or 4) wrapped around an elevated (metal?) curtain rod.

Deborah recalls listening to the crystal radio just once while in Japan. So I decided to try signal reception during the night here at our home in Cedar Crest New Mexico. My attempt to pick up a signal failed. And my attempt to gain access to the interior of the doll also failed upon risk of permanently damaging the wooden doll.

Unfortunately the reception of Sandia Crest broadcast radio signals here are shadowed by a secondary mountain ridge. And even my high-tube count radios routinely have limited daytime signal reception.

Of note in the operating instructions is the statement that "These radios work with only one particle of germanium, and do not need batteries." Mention of a "Particle" suggests a fragile mechanical connection that may have long ago separated?

I did wonder how this radio may be valued in today's market. An internet search provided many instances of Kokeshi Dolls. It seems that up to and including today that these dolls are a favorite tourist purchase. I found just one reference, on a Japanese auction site, to the Kokeshi Radio. The Google translation shows that this "Rare" radio sold for \$40.

최근낙찰상품 HOME > EBAY auction > Recently Sold Products

VTG Kokeshi Wooden Doll-Radio / Germaphone W / original Instructions And Wiring RARE



- **Information Sold**
- . product name : VTG Kokeshi Wooden Doll-Radio / Germaphone W / original Instructions And Wiring RARE
- . Contract price : **\$ 40**
- . Qty : One
- . Price start : \$ 25
- . Exhibitor : illovetanks04
- . When D-Day : 2015-03-28 10:19:03 AM
- . End date and time : 2015-04-04 10:19:03 AM

[리스트 보기](#) [결제비용 상세보기](#)

MANY THANKS TO DEBORAH FOR THIS UNIQUE AND INTERESTING ADDITION TO MY RADIO COLLECTION: the ONLY CRYSTAL RADIO!

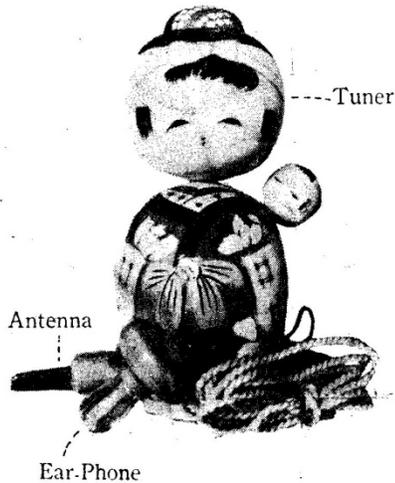


NEW, OUTSTANDING IN RADIO!

(Backed by Government Subsidy as an excellent article for export and awarded prize for invention.)

A PAT. 29618, 15374

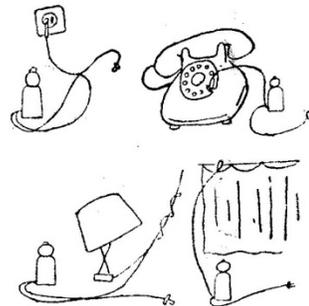
Listen in through a Doll -
KOKESHI GERMAPHONE



Special Features

- 1) No battery or current needed, hence no operating expense.
- 2) Long Life.
- 3) Small and handy. Can be carried in coat pocket.
- 4) Useful also as an ornament.
- 5) No disturbance to others, and you may fall off to sleep while listening without danger to yourself or surroundings.
- 6) Tune in by revolving the head of doll.

Hearing range and how to operate the antenna:
See the following illustration.



Notice

- 1) These radios work with only one particle of germanium, and do not need batteries. Listening-in is always possible except when major interference obstructs reception.
- 2) Signals may be jammed occasionally as these radios are not super-radios, but one is able to obtain clear reception after some experience in handling and installing the antenna.
- 3) These radios are not over-amplified due to its restricted size, and therefore operate only in districts where broadcasting stations exist or their vicinity.
- 4) Reception is not possible in trains, or buildings where electric waves are absorbed into the reinforced concrete walls, but it can be operated in buildings or trains where the broadcasting output exceeds 100 kw.

Hearing distance

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ORIGINAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS