

Audio Research Mourns the Loss of Ward Fiebiger

Press Release on death of Senior Design Engineer, Ward Fiebiger

Plymouth, MN, March 14, 2017 – On March 13th, Senior Design Engineer Ward Fiebiger suffered a sudden and fatal heart attack. Ward was 58 years old.

“After many years of dedication to Audio Research, Ward’s passing comes with great shock. Ward was a mentor to many at the company and his legacy has been passed on to the employees at Audio Research. My sympathy goes out to Ward’s family and friends,” said Charlie Randall, CEO, McIntosh Group; President, McIntosh Laboratory, Inc.

Ward was born in St. Paul, Minnesota. Ward grew up working at his father’s radio/tv repair shop as a youth repairing turntables and vacuum tube electronics in the early to mid-1970's. After graduation, Ward attended trade school for radio/tv repair where one of the last of the classes teaching vacuum tube theory was still available.

His career started and ended at Audio Research. In 1978, Ward worked in the service department, later moving into Quality Assurance and eventually transferring to engineering where he supported engineers in board layouts and prototyping. Ward had the honor of working side by side with Bill Johnson and other engineers learning from Bill his design philosophy, and absorbing much of the company’s DNA. Bill would be proud of the products being produced today.

All analog Audio Research products since 2005 have been of Ward’s design. Ward’s career at Audio Research spanned over 37 years. Ward also had a personal audio repair shop, where he serviced other manufacturer’s high end electronics and just about every product Audio Research has produced. He also owned many Audio Research collectable pieces such as a mint condition SP10 MKII and a new old stock D79C MKII.

“During Ward’s 39-years at Audio Research, he was a guardian of founder Bill Johnson's vision when it came to advancing the state-of-the-art of music reproduction in Audio Research vacuum tube product design. Ward’s sudden departure comes as a shock and feeling of loss for everyone who knew him. We offer our condolences to his family and friends”, said David Onan, President and CEO, Audio Research.

There are many key product contributions in Audio Research’s legacy and work during Ward’s tenure, including:

- Reference Anniversary Preamplifier
- Reference 5 Preamplifier
- Reference Phono 2 Preamplifier
- Reference 75, 150, 250, 750 Power Amplifiers
- VSi60 and VSi75 Integrated Amplifiers

Ward is survived by his wife of 34 years, Maureen and two daughters, Meaghan Robb and Katelyn Fiebiger. His hobbies included riding his Harley motorcycles and bow hunting as much as possible in the fall at his cabin in Wisconsin.

Funeral arrangements are scheduled for March 18.

About Audio Research

Audio Research is one of the oldest continually operating manufacturers in American audio. The company was founded in 1970 in Minneapolis, Minnesota with one goal in mind: to advance the state-of-the-art in music reproduction. Today, Audio Research remains a performance-oriented company by philosophy and design. New product introductions are driven only by genuine advances in technology and performance -- the HIGH DEFINITION

that is the hallmark of the company's products. The company has grown steadily over the last 40 years, with a network of top audio specialist retailers across North America and distributors throughout Europe, Asia and South America. The company occupies a 48,000 square-foot, technically-advanced production plant and administrative headquarters in Plymouth, Minnesota, where approximately 50 technical, assembly and support staff guide the product line from concept to finished goods.

Audio Research was instrumental in refocusing the audio industry on designing products for musical performance, and not merely for the sake of new technology or mass-market pricing. Audio Research was founded by William Z. Johnson, who began designing custom audio electronics in the early 1950's and who also operated a specialty audio retail store until the mid-1960's. Johnson's efforts almost single-handedly revived vacuum-tube designs at a time when major industry manufacturers had abandoned this technology in favor of low-cost solid-state devices which were markedly inferior in terms of musical accuracy, a fact widely acknowledged today. Many industry observers consider Johnson one of the true originators of the entire concept of "high-end" audio as it exists today -- an area of technological expertise in which American companies remain the clear innovators and leaders on a global scale.

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