

On Sunday, January 20, 2013, the monthly meeting of the Audio-Video Club of Atlanta was held at the Virtual Properties Realty Training Room in Duluth, Georgia. This meeting featured Jim Smith who wrote the book "Get Better Sound" and has since created a follow-up DVD. He also writes "Quarter Notes" periodically on new concepts in audio. This was followed by a presentation by Lee Scoggins, a member of the club, on rare CD's and what makes a good CD. This secretary was unable to attend, so these minutes are based on notes taken by members at the meeting, with my special thanks to Marty Prystupa.

Our president, John Morrison was first up with some announcements. John discussed his work on setting up a new web site for the club, and in conjunction with that the ability to pay your dues on-line using the new site. The December "meeting" was the annual Christmas party, and the field trip to Crawford Media on December 9 was very well attended and was successful. The next meeting will be at MPower AV on February 17. John then announced the "equipment managers" for the club's "reference" components, who members can contact to borrow the equipment. For the speakers it is Sam Papadas; for the amplifier, Steve; and the record "flattener", Lee Scoggins.

John then introduced the first speaker for the day, Jim Smith. Jim had some prepared notes where he discussed several important concepts. These included the placement of speakers (need to get the bass right), not playing it too loud (no more than 85 dB), having the highest quality source material you can get, using a laser range finder to set your tweeter height and listening chair placement, adjusting your toe-in for best sound, and using a real-time sound analyzer (there is an "app" for that!) which does require a good microphone and knowledge to use properly. All of these tips and a lot more are in his book and/or the DVD he sells, advertised in Stereophile. Jim is also starting a new project called "Through the Sound Barrier" which he is working on getting funding for from sponsors and individuals.

The first Listening session then started using a new Oppo BDP-105, their newest universal CD player w/integral and flexible D/A. Also used was the club's reference tube integrated amplifier, the TSE-KT88, in ultra linear mode putting out 50 watts per channel, and the club's 2-way stand mounted speakers with club constructed speaker cables. Many reported that the sound was quite good, with lots of "synergy" between the tube amp and the speakers and cables.

After the listening session, there was a Q&A session with Jim. They dealt with voicing your system to your room and the use of room treatments (do not make the room 'too' dead with these), speaker spikes (bass does not sound good with spikes – it is decoupled), the need to re-voice if speakers or components are changed (none needed though if only wire is changed), placement of equipment (suggests a side wall instead of between the speakers), and speaker wires (they can make a difference).

Lee Scoggins was then up, where he shared some information about where we can find rare and/or difficult to obtain CD's, and getting the best prices. He covered what makes collectible CD's, places to find them, and then during the second music break played a few of those collectible CD's. He also spoke on mastering differences, good sound engineers (critical for a good CD), local record stores, on-line and used CD stores, and downloading material for digital music. John Morrison will email Lee's presentation notes to all members for their reference. It was then back to listening! This time the amp was set at triode mode, with 35 watts per channel. This was done without telling, and some thought the music sounded better in the second session.

The club thanks our presenters for a great afternoon of learning and listening, and to Virtual Properties for once again hosting a club meeting. Also, thanks to Horton McCurdy for lending us his Oppo BDP-105 for our source component, and to Ed Stiles for supplying stands and a video monitor at the last minute.

Thomas Horner
Secretary, A-V Club of Atlanta