

Monks Eleigh radio museum: Paul Goodchild finds home for 500 sets

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Paul Goodchild had amassed 500 radios in sheds at his house in Monks Eleigh

A man with a collection of nearly 500 radio sets, some dating back to the early 1900s, has opened a museum to house them in a former Suffolk chapel.

Paul Goodchild, now 70, has set up Sounds Of The Past in Monks Eleigh.

"I've always had a fascination with music and radios as a youngster and I had a friend who's a qualified electrician who helped me," he said.

The museum will be open on the first Sunday of every month and entry is by donation to cancer charities.



An Ekco A22, manufactured in Southend in the 1930s, is still picking up FM and AM radio stations



A Columbia gramophone player built by the record company in the 1930s



Steel needles used on the gramophones came with the instruction to "use each point once only"



The dial of this 1950s Bush radio shows European radio stations that were once commonplace on most sets

Mr Goodchild said he started collecting old radios, most of which were donated to him, once he had retired from the construction industry five years ago.

On-screen 'sparks'

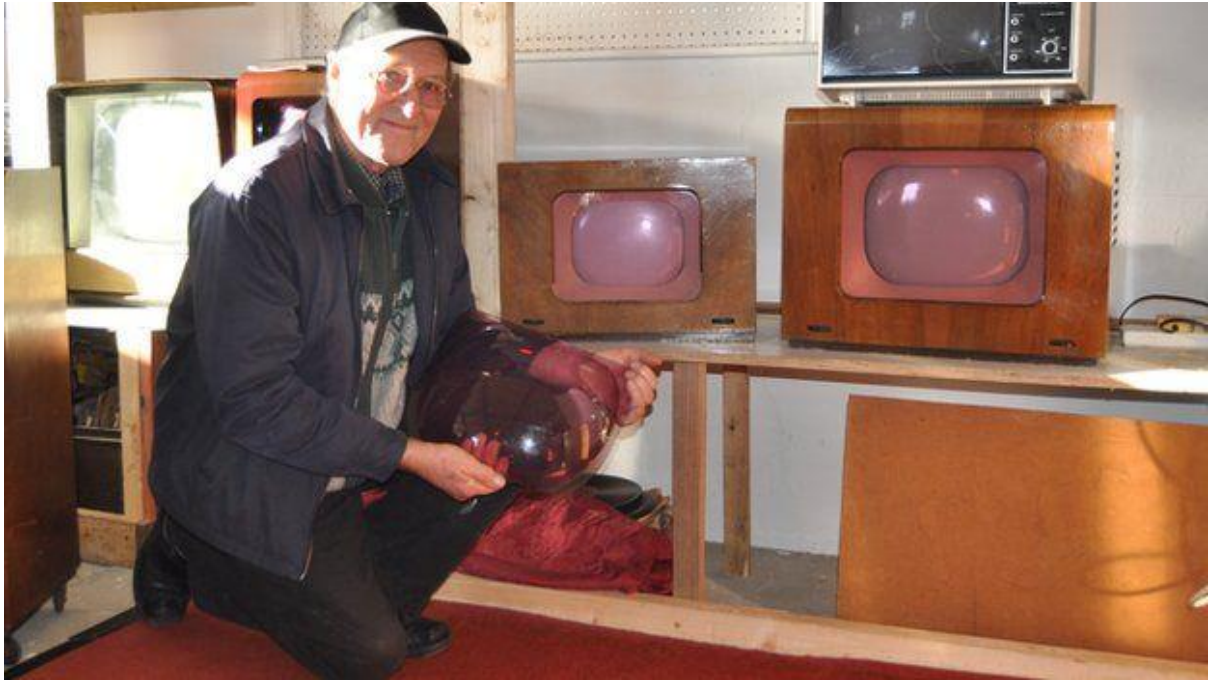
The oldest radios in the collection are crystal sets dating from about 1900, while later models include an Ekco set made in Southend-on-Sea in the 1930s and a His Master's Voice radiogram from the 1930s.

He said: "The owners very kindly offered the chapel to me for free, because I was on BBC Radio Suffolk asking for a building to house all my radios, which were in sheds in my back yard.

"I don't have a digital radio at home because I find I can't get such a fine tuning on them to pick the stations up so well, so I still use old dial radios at home from the 1970s and 80s."



Crystal sets from about 1900 only had headphones rather than loudspeakers



A 1953 Pye television set (smaller one in centre) with a magnifying screen which would sit in front of it



A range of Dansette record players from the 1960s including a Viva, RG31, Major De Luxe, Conquest and Bermuda



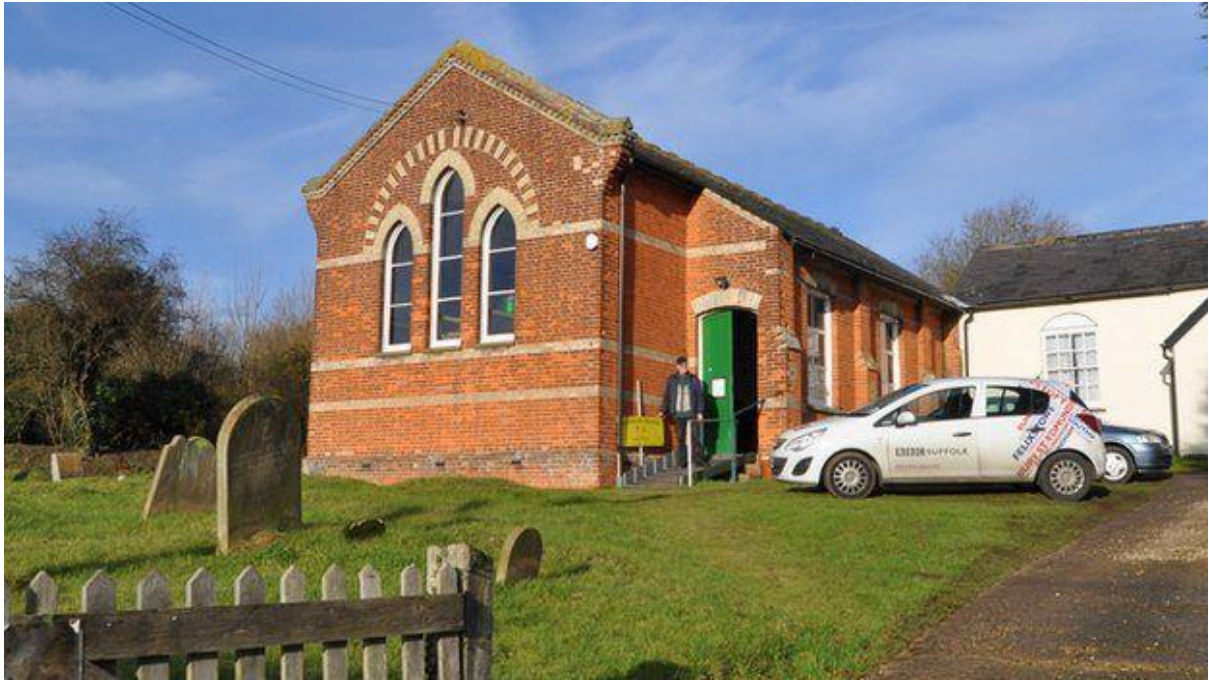
An upright Alan Michael Sugar Trading (Amstrad) music centre dating from the late 1970s

The museum also has gramophones, VHS and Betamax video players, jukeboxes, organs, cassette players and eight-track cartridge players.

It also has a Pye television similar to the one Mr Goodchild's parents bought to watch the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953 - regarded as the event which saw the first mass-purchase of televisions.

Mr Goodchild said: "We thought it was marvellous at the time, but every time a car went past you'd get sparks on the screen and you were constantly having to alter the horizontal and vertical holds on the set."

The museum, in the former United Reformed Church building, will next be open to the public on Sunday, 4 January.



The United Reformed Church chapel was built in 1860, but has been unused for 20 years



Mr Goodchild has a workshop at the front of the chapel



This "Rock Rover" jukebox was built using some parts from a Rover 80