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Press Release

Tarrant tunes in to Museum's radio appeal

Radio broadcaster and television presenter Chris Tarrant tuned in to an urgent appeal from the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley for donations of pre 1939 vintage radios for their latest exhibition. The ex Capital Radio breakfast show host and Who Wants to Be a Millionaire presenter proved he was on the same wavelength as the Dudley attraction by posing for pictures with a 1934 Art Deco Murphy '24' radio.

Chris Tarrant said: "It is important that broadcasting gems like this Murphy set are preserved for future generations. Some of the world's most memorable speeches were made on radios such as these including Neville Chamberlain's declaration of war, the Death of King George V and who can forget Churchill's famous wartime speeches?"

James Gripton's Radio Repair Shop is set to open at the Black Country Living Museum this summer. The exhibit will cover all the technical landmarks of wireless from the start of public broadcasting in 1920 up to the outbreak of the Second World War, an era of rapid improvements in reception, sound, convenience and tuning. The Museum urgently needs around 40 pre 1939 vintage radios to deck out the shelves and hopes a little help from one of the country's top broadcasters might do the trick!

Stephen Howard, Assistant Curator, Displays said: "This really is an SOS appeal. In order to ensure the accurate reconstruction of Gripton's Radio Repair Shop we need to find a lot of pre 1939 vintage radios. As long as they're the right date we will happily accept them. If they're broken or just shells – it doesn't

matter, the shop would have carried the latest models and the current best sellers but also customers' trade-ins, while in the back room there'd be plenty awaiting repair. One way to check the date of your radio is to look at the dial and if it has the Third Programme – that's the forerunner of Radio 3 - on it then it's too late, because the station started in 1947. We also hope to find a thirties car radio, or a radiogram.

“Just as desirable are the style and design landmarks of the era, like the first Bakelite models, or Pye Radios with their famous ‘sunburst’ motif on the grille, or those styled to blend in with traditional furniture and décor. We're still looking for examples of the leading mass market makes, like Phillips, Cossor, Pye, Pilot and Bush.”

If you have a radio you would like to donate to the Black Country Living Museum please contact Stephen Howard, Assistant Curator, Display on 0121 521 5609 or at stephenh@bclm.co.uk with details of your radio.

Note to Editors:

About the Museum

The Black Country Living Museum is one of the UK's leading open air museums. Attracting over 300,000 visitors each year to an astonishing 26 acre site just two miles from the town centre of Dudley, it captures and admires the achievements and culture of the region's past and the extraordinary impact this had on the wider world. With its thriving village spanning 150 years of history from c1770 to the 1920s, canal, tram way, school, public park and fairground, alongside the energy of an industrial landscape of mining, steam power, heavy metalwork and lime kilns, the Museum offers a visitor experience that few others can match. We also have one of the best fish and chips shops for miles around!

Photographic Information: Image attached

Image Caption: Chris Tarrant poses with a 1934 Art Deco Murphy '24' radio at the Black Country Living Museum. The Art Deco Murphy was one of the best engineered models of the period and was so reliable that many still work today.

For further information:

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