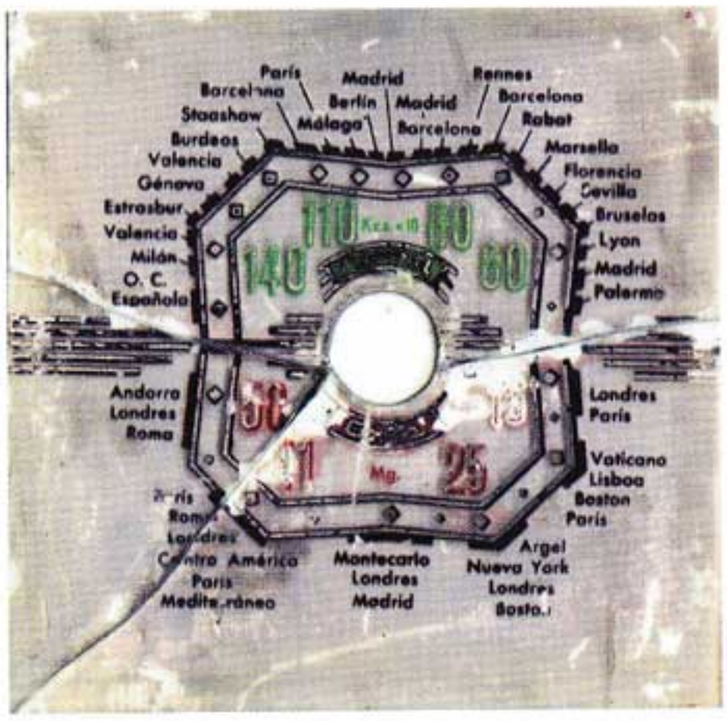
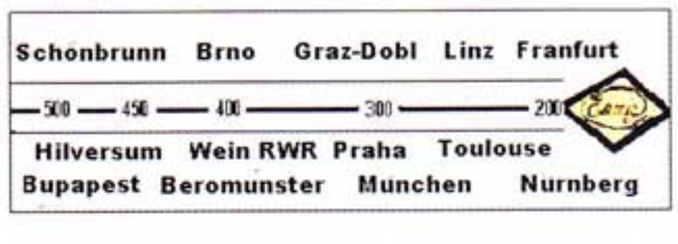
Making Dials – More possibilities by Tony Jordan



Far left: Dial in original condition
Left: The restored dial
Below: Restored Eumig 323U 'thermometer' dial
Bottom left: Spanish set as bought
Bottom: Eumig 323U



I read Gary Tempest's article on dial making in the 2009 Autumn edition of The Bulletin with interest. I had just purchased a 1946 Eumig 323 MW radio with no dial and a broken dial cord. The radio should have a very simple glass strip dial with the medium wave frequencies shown along the centre. Station names are shown above and below the frequency band. From a picture of a Eumig on the net, I sketched out how the dial should look. I didn't have Adobe Illustrator or Coreldraw on my computer, so I used Microsoft Paint (which came with the computer). This method is very limited, but the dial was simple. I managed to get a Eumig logo from some documents found on the internet. The results weren't perfect, but looked really good on the set. The Perspex, I purchased on Ebay. It was A4 plastic menu covers (costing about £1 each +pp) these were the right thickness and easy to cut. I used Gary Tempest's technique of printing on DECadry, then sticking the DECadry to the plastic, to produce the scale. Getting the size exactly right took a bit of trial and error!

Then came a real challenge! I bought an old Spanish radio with a glass dial in 3 pieces. The dial had been taped together with clear sticky tape. This had yellowed with age (not to mention cigarette smoke). The dial was scratched and faded.

I carefully removed the sticky tape and cleaned the dial. I thought about buying Adobe or Coreldraw, but these don't come cheap! Also, reproducing the style would not be easy. My wife asked me to try to scan and enhance some 100 year old family photos. I have a copy of Adobe Photo DeLuxe 4 on my old laptop and used this to patch and enhance the pictures. "If it's good enough for a photo, it's good enough for a radio dial" I thought!

I then set about scanning the dial. Getting the glass pieces aligned took a good few scans, but finally I got a picture of the dial.

I then set about "painting" over the cracks and scratches. After some trial and error, I found the best way was to take a "swatch" of colour from a good area and then carefully paint over the cracks and scratches. A good quality mouse is essential ..and a wet Sunday! The red and green coloured frequency numbers took hours of careful painting as did the short and medium wave words (Corte and Normal). The black lines were re-drawn using the lining tool. Fortunately, some of the damaged station names were repeated (such as Londres, Paris). These were highlighted and copied from one part of the dial to another. The remaining broken names had to be done with a fine brush at max zoom.

The background colour was faded, this I "fixed" by adjusting the overall colour of the picture + adjusting brightness, contrast etc until it looked correct. I should have done this first; it changed the other colours a bit. I did try using the colour wand to change the background colour, but the background colour "washes" into the lettering.

I then exported the picture as jpeg and printed using the Windows Office Picture Manager. This required a lot of trial and error to get the size and the background shade right. I printed the scale on DECadry, but found the result was a bit too opaque. I eventually used good quality paper held in place by tape at the edges. The paper diffuses the dial light really well.

It is best to save the work as a,b,c etc at every major stage. A few times, I decided to go back a stage and try a different method or effect several times. As can be seen, this method made a fairly good job of the dial.

I still have two problems: who made the radio, and how do I get it to work!

Thanks to Gary Tempest for his article, I would never have attempted this if I hadn't read it.