



Henry Esplin Kloss (1929-2002)

Greg Weaver

After dropping out of MIT when drafted into the Army in 1952, and while stationed at Fort Monmouth New Jersey, Henry Kloss enrolled in a night course on high fidelity at NYU. The teacher of that course was Edgar Villchur, the man who had recently conceived the radically new acoustic-suspension loudspeaker.

The two founded Acoustic Research to develop and build the world's first commercially produced acoustic-suspension loudspeaker, the AR-1. They soon followed it with the AR-2, and then the wildly successful AR-3, the most commercially successful loudspeaker of the 1950s.

After leaving AR and founding KLH, Kloss produced several more landmark products, the KLH Model Six speaker, the Model Eight radio, the Model Nine electrostatic speaker, the Model Forty reel-to-reel tape deck, and the first portable, transistorized hi-fi system, the Model Eleven.

Advent was founded to allow him to pursue his aspiration of building a cost-effective projection television. Electronics magazines of the day asserted that a tiny vacuum tube could, in theory, be used to provide the image for a 24-inch TV. He asked himself, "Why not a 7-foot screen?" At Advent, the speaker he created to generate the funding for his projection television project, the Advent Loudspeaker, quickly became the most highly regarded and popular speaker of its day.

Perhaps Kloss' greatest single talent was his ability to recognize the promise of, and then to rapidly incorporate, technological advances. His early implementation of the transistor was crucial to the portability and subsequent success of the KLH Model Eleven system. His early adoption of Ray Dolby's noise-reduction system, combined with the implementation of chromium-dioxide tape, made the cassette recorder a true game-changer, and the product that

Henry Kloss played a seminal role in at least four of hi-fi's major advances.

1954: Founded Acoustic Research with Edgar Villchur.

1954: AR showed the world's first acoustic-suspension speaker, the AR-1, at the New York Audio Show in September.

1957: Founded KLH with Malcolm Low and J. Anton Hofmann.

1958: Introduced the KLH Model 6 speaker.

1960: Introduced the KLH Model Nine, the world's first full-range (flat from 40Hz to 20kHz) electrostatic loudspeaker, and the Model Eleven transistor radio.

1966: Introduced the KLH Model Forty reel-to-reel tape recorder, the first appearance of Dolby technology in the consumer-product market.

1967: Left KLH to found Advent.

1972: Released the Advent 201 Cassette Deck with Dolby B and the Advent VideoBeam 1000, the first large-screen projection television for home use, for which he earned an Emmy.

1977: Founded Kloss Video Corporation (KVC).

1978: Invented the Novatron video tube that dramatically increased the efficiency of projection TVs.

1988: Co-founded Cambridge SoundWorks, for which he designed some three dozen products.

2000: Co-founded Tivoli Audio.

2002: Henry Kloss passes away.



started the first real wave of, and debate over, musical piracy.

It is doubtful that he had any inclination that he would be responsible for the best-selling speakers of each of three distinct decades, the AR-3A in the 1950s, the KLH-6 in the 1960s, and the Advent Loudspeaker in the 1970s, or for kick-starting the "home theater" market.

Over the course of his prodigious career, Henry Kloss, humble about his accomplishments to the end, played a seminal role in at least four of hi-fi's major advances—the acoustic-suspension speaker, transistorized equipment, Dolby noise reduction, and the cassette.