Upcycling my Heathkit Radio

I previously bought a Hifiberry DAC Pro, and use that as the main input device for my old stereo. Works great. I use the moOde distro of the MPD server (moodeaudio.org) on a RPi 3B. I was mostly using it to connect to my iPhone via airplay or my Echo (alexa) via bluetooth. I have a pretty extensive music collection: LPs, CDs, and iTunes. I have a turntable with a USB output and have finally started ripping my vinyl. I am getting pretty fed up with the proprietary nature of iTunes, so I started looking around for something else to organize my music. I found Picard (on my ubuntu based Linux system, picard.musicbrainz.org) does a pretty good job of building / maintaining a music library. I put all my files on a Western Digital NAS drive, and mount it on my RPi stereo system.
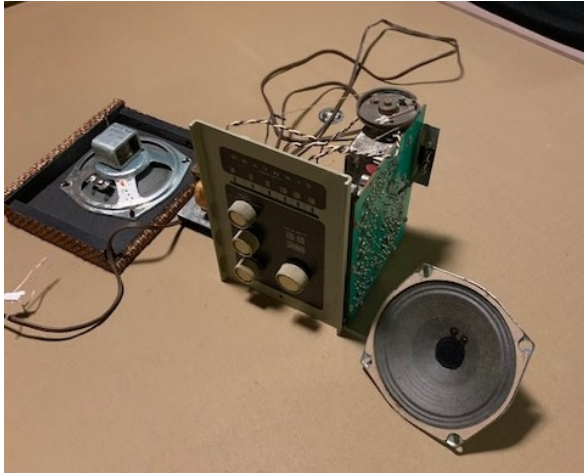

Even though my music collection is extensive, I found it wasn't all that big (< 32 GB), so I decided I could put it all into a standalone system.

I built a Heathkit FM radio as a teenager, never could bring myself to throw it away. It still worked, but who listens to FM radio anymore. It had a beautiful solid walnut case.

So I pulled out the guts.

I also had some TEAC speakers, from a long dead CD player, so I chopped them up to fit.

I had a RPi 3B, laying around. I bought the excellent Hifiberry Amp 2 (~$50), an official Raspberry Pi 7 inch Touchscreen (<$70), and a 60W (Meanwell RPS-60-15, $16) power supply. It all stacked up into a pretty small package.

And put it all together with the moOde software on a 64GB micoSD card.

moOde software is nice. It is based on Music Player Deamon (MPD, musicpd.org), which is very nice, but cumbersome It accepts AirPlay and Bluetooth connections to play external content, but also works very well with the music files organized by Picard. There are many MPC (music player clients) around or you can connect from any browser – I use Gnome Music Player. As I rip more vinyl or buy more music, I add it to my Picard directory and use rsync to update the heathkit SD card.

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rsync -av /mnt/WDpublic/Picard/ heathkit.home:~/Picard/
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