

The newsletter of the Hearing Loss Association of America, Albuquerque Chapter

WIRED FOR SOUND



News Release:

Auracast™

Debuts at Sydney Opera

Stephen O. Frazier

Following the performance, both the music and the Auracast ALS received praise from attendees.

It was at the Consumer Electronics Show in 2022 that the Bluetooth Special Interest Group (SIG) announced the development of a new assistive listening technology they named Auracast™. Unlike traditional Bluetooth®, which is basically a one-to-one broadcast system, Auracast is a one-to-many technology. Since then, all of the remarkable things Auracast can do have been repeatedly written about in news releases and stories—almost always in the future tense. With the announcement of the availability of Auracast in the world-famous Sydney Opera House in Australia, a test in New York's Lincoln Center, and installation in the Contact Theatre in Manchester, England, the future has arrived.

Though many headlines said the Opera House had introduced Auracast, it was actually one of the smaller performance spaces, the Drama Theatre, where the first Auracast performance actually took place. That theatre, the Playhouse, and the Studio venues have all been permanently fitted with an Auracast assistive listening system (ALS). According to the [Sydney Morning Herald](https://www.smh.com.au/culture/opera/marian-has-been-unable-to-enjoy-live-music-for-decades-new-technology-just-changed-that-20250317-p51k2j.html),¹ the Concert Hall and the Joan Sutherland Theatre are in the process of being fitted. The system being installed in the complex was the result of collaboration be-



tween the ReSound division of hearing aid maker GN, the Australian National Acoustic Laboratories, and Hearing Australia, the largest provider of government-funded hearing services in Australia. They, plus representatives of Google, the Bluetooth SIG, and electronics giant Samsung, were present for what was billed as the first Auracast fine arts venue Auracast installation. Attendees used Auracast-enabled hearing aids, earbuds, and other devices to hear the Auracast, and reported universally positive reviews of the sound quality of the ALS.

The Sydney Opera Complex may be the first performing arts venue to offer Auracast on a permanent basis, but Alice Tully Hall in New York's [Lincoln Center](https://www.lincolncenter.org/)² beat them in introducing the technology to a classical music audience. In November of last year, the ceiling of Tully Hall was temporarily fitted with a small ReSound hearing aid TV streamer for a performance of composer Richard Einhorn's *Voices of Light* by the New York Choral Society and the Mannes Orchestra. The sold-out audience included many of the same firms represented at the Sydney Opera Auracast debut plus assistive listening expert Andrew Bellavia and composer Einhorn, who is also well versed in assistive listening and music recording technology. Following the performance, both the music and the

¹ <https://www.smh.com.au/culture/opera/marian-has-been-unable-to-enjoy-live-music-for-decades-new-technology-just-changed-that-20250317-p51k2j.html>

² <https://contactmcr.com/news/contact-becomes-the-first-theatre-in-england-to-introduce-auracast>

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HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
ALBUQUERQUE CHAPTER
Providing support and advocacy for
people with hearing loss

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[Hearing Loss Association of America](http://hearinglossabq.org)
– [Albuquerque chapter](http://hearinglossabq.org)



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17 May Meeting 10:00 AM To Noon—on Zoom**Hearing Aids—A To Z**

We invite you to hear from Courtney Kasin Mann, AuD, CCC-A, as she discusses the pros and cons of over-the-counter (OTC) hearing aids compared to care from a licensed audiologist. Since the FDA approved the production and sale of OTC hearing aids in the fall of 2022, these devices have drawn significant attention due to their affordability and ease of access. But how can consumers determine if an OTC option is right for their unique hearing needs?

Dr. Kasin Mann brings a wealth of experience to this discussion. She began her career as a pediatric audiologist at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, OH, before spending several years serving patients of all ages at Presbyterian Ear Institute in Albuquerque, NM. While there, she led PEI's Audiology Series, presenting on topics such as tinnitus management and communication strategies for individuals with hearing loss.



Now practicing at Glacier ENT & Hearing Services in Kalispell, MT, Dr. Kasin Mann continues her commitment to comprehensive, patient-centered care. Her specialized training includes working with individuals experiencing atypical aging (such as those with Parkinson's disease), cochlear implant users, and pediatric patients.

An experienced public speaker, Dr. Kasin Mann has delivered engaging and informative presentations throughout the western United States. She is passionate about providing evidence-based services that help individuals hear their best and make informed decisions about their hearing health.

We have fond hopes of resuming hybrid meetings (in-person in addition to Zoom), perhaps next Fall, but we need help in setup, handling the meeting and tear-down. We also want some new blood. You already know our dedication to providing the best information, advocacy, education and support for people with hearing loss. You can ease your way into volunteering and learn how this works. Just email one of the board members (listed on the left). You may also use the chapter email: HLAAbq@gmail.com.

Auracast ALS received praise from attendees.

In January, Manchester, England's [Contact Theatre](#)³ laid claim to being the first theatrical venue in the UK to have installed Auracast. The theatre collaborated with GN's ReSound, the Ewing Foundation, and assistive listening maker Ampetronic in the installation of an Auri ALS developed by the UK's Ampetronic and America's Listen Technology. Following that announcement, theatre management focused on training their staff to ensure a seamless, inclusive audio experience. The new Auracast ALS was one of many improvements made during a renovation of the theater that has now been completed.

A church in Minnesota's survey of its hard of hearing members found, and reported to Loop New Mexico, surprisingly, that there was an equal number who had Auracast-enabled hearing aids and those with telecoils. That reported balance of the two different technologies, leads to speculation that other performance spaces will be following the lead of the above venues by supplementing their existing hearing loop or other ALS system with an Auracast partner.

Other Venues

In Ottawa, Ontario, a church member going by the name of Mingdee reported in the [Hearing Tracker.com forum](#)⁴ that his church had just recently supplemented the 400 seat church's sound system with an Auracast ALS. In this instance, the transmitter was a Homespot TV streamer. Though the SIG recommends mounting an Auracast transmitter in the center of a room's ceiling, this church simply mounted it on a panel with the control board for the sound system. There was concern for the coverage of the signal, but Mingdee reported

relief when it was found there were no “dead zones” in the sanctuary.

[Loop New Mexico](#) (www.loopnm.com/) was consulted by a church in Minnesota for information and a recommendation on an ALS, and it appears they are leaning toward a hearing loop plus Auracast for their 500 seat sanctuary. A church in the greater Chicago area is reported to have recently christened a new ListenTech/Ampetronic Auri system. These systems are expected to join many others when the SIG mounts a planned new page on their website. Like the [Find an Auracast Product](#)⁵ page, a Find an Auracast Venue page will make it possible to search online for suitable venues when planning a trip and, no doubt, be even more up-to-date than such listings that it's now reported are being accepted by Google Maps.

Several hearing aid manufacturers have already released Auracast-enabled hearing aids and most of the others have Auracast “ready” models that only need an over-the-air (OTA) software update to make them “enabled”. Hundreds of Auracast-capable earbuds, receivers, and other [devices are available](#)⁶ in stores or online that are capable of connecting to an Auracast ALS, so the situation is somewhat like that of the Iowa corn farmer in the movie Field of Dreams. He heard voices saying, “Build it and he will come.” There could now be voices saying something similar about Auracast assistive listening systems.

Smith's Community Rewards Shop at Smith's with their Rewards card, and Smith's will make a donation to HLAA Albuquerque chapter. You get your usual rewards points.

1-800-444-8081, opt. 3 to sign up or re-enroll.

The HLAAAbq NPO number for Smith's is **NC419**.

³ <https://contactmcr.com/news/contact-becomes-the-first-theatre-in-england-to-introduce-auracast>

⁴ <https://contactmcr.com/news/contact-becomes-the-first-theatre-in-england-to-introduce-auracast>

⁵ <https://www.bluetooth.com/auracast/find-a-product/>

⁶ www.loopnm.com/Auracast.html

Living With Hearing Loss Workshop at Ghost Ranch

WHEN: AUGUST 26-29, 2025

TIME: mornings, 8:30 to 12:00

WHERE: Ghost Ranch is located 65 miles NW of Santa Fe (40 miles beyond Española) on U.S. 84 between mile markers 224 and 225

DETAILS: <https://www.GhostRanch.org/program/g25080302/>

ACCOMMODATIONS: Info@GhostRanch.org
877-804-4678



HOST: Dean Olson

Loop People, Loop Places

Ginevra Ralph

Consumer Power

Two gentlemen who had both benefitted richly from the past 5-6 years of using telecoils in their hearing aids to access assistive listening systems, recently told me that they just got new hearing aids, and they sheepishly added, “but they don’t have telecoils.” One was told by his provider that he no longer needed a telecoil “because Auracast is coming”. The other was told that the brand he had always been fitted with didn’t make a model



From National HLAA:

May is Better Hearing Month and Mental Health Awareness Month. HLAA launches the “[Beyond Your Ears](#)” campaign⁸.

Explore the wide-ranging

this year with both a telecoil and replaceable batteries.

Exasperated, I told them to take them back. If a car maker you have always loved suddenly decides not to put windshield wipers on their new model, would you buy it out of loyalty?

You do have a choice! And you do have a consumer voice with hearing aid brands, but the technology and marketing is a lot to keep up with. If you are ready for new devices, the Center for Hearing Access is maintaining [a list of “ADA-access-ready” brands and models](#)⁷ that have both telecoil and Auracast. Be sure that you buy what you need and want, not what the manufacturers want to sell you today!

Yearly dues are \$15 per household.
They are due in January.

emotional and social effects of hearing loss.

Learn more at <https://www.hearingloss.org/>. (Search for Beyond Your Ears.)

⁷ <https://CenterForHearingAccess.org/uploads/ada-access-ready-hearing-instruments-list/>

⁸ <https://www.hearingloss.org/find-help/emotional/>

Thanks to those listed below for their generous donations.

Platinum \$400+

Albuquerque Hearing & Balance
Jim Twohig
Donald Thurn
Adelaide Zabriskie

Donation of portable loop

Ginevra Ralph

In memory of Karen

Twohig:
Bridget & Raymond
Lewellyn
Greg & Margaret Larson
James Twohig
Fletcher & Laura Hahn
Wayne & Sandra Remmel

**In memory of Rosanin Cohen:
Cohen Family**

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John Simmons

Silver \$100 - \$199
Barbara Armstrong
Gloria Inlow
Maurine McNaney
Michael Lieberman
Yukie Ebara

Bronze \$50 - \$99

Jim Dillow
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Special:

Smith's Community Rewards

NM HLAA chapters are 501(c)3 nonprofits and all donations are tax deductible.

Support the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA). Become a member TODAY!

The Hearing Loss Association of America is a volunteer association of Hard of Hearing people, their relatives and friends. It is a non-profit, non-sectarian educational organization devoted to the welfare and interest of those who cannot hear well. **Membership in the national organization is automatic with any donation (separate from any Chapter dues). A \$45 or more donation to National HLAA provides a subscription to the bimonthly publication Hearing Life.**



Albuquerque Chapter Membership

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- Renew

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Payment: Membership amount: \$..... Donation: \$..... Total: \$.....

Dues: \$15 per household per calendar year (Includes newsletter subscription)

Online: <https://www.hearinglossabq.org/electronic-pay>

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