



The World Wireless Beacon

Newsletter of the
Society of Wireless Pioneers, Inc.,
P.O. Box 86, Geyserville, CA 95441 - USA

Vol. 6 No. 4

December 1994

Holiday Greetings

1994-1995



*From your
SOWP
Officers
and
Directors*

*Peace
and
Joy!*

*To all our
Members
and Friends ...*

*A joyous Christmas
and Hanukkah
and a Healthy and
Prosperous
New Year*

*May this Holiday season
bring family and good
friends to your side and
peace to your pathway.*

*Now and forever - may each
day break and the
shadows flee away.*

- 73 -

**The President's
Report
by Jack Kelleher
2581-P, W4ZC**

First, I wish to thank those who responded to my request for comments on the future of SOWP. The responses are not yet numerous enough to be called a "statistically significant sample", but the majority of responses favor a revision of our eligibility criteria to include more recent "pioneers", and to include those having a serious interest in the early history of wireless. The responders will remain anonymous for now, but here is a sampling of comments favoring change:

"...the only way to sustain or increase membership is to change the Society from being a club of pioneers to a club of people interested in the early days of radio, be they old or young."

"In this day and time, the post-World War II and Vietnam communicators are now pioneers - let's make it possible for them to carry on our traditions."

"...pump new blood in our Society by opening the rolls to the current and future crops of communicators. This is the only way we will be able to perpetuate the SOWP and ensure that the early wireless pioneers and their accomplishments are not forgotten."

Another commenter, speaking of the S.S. Jeremiah O'Brien, said in part: "why doesn't the SOWP affiliate with the ship's museum effort, and establish a permanent SOWP office/library/museum/ham station aboard her?"

I plan to attend the December meeting of Chapter IX (Arizona - Pacific Southwest), (December 10, 1994, at the Safari Resort, Scottsdale, AZ) where we hope to have an

in-depth discussion on the future of our Society. From there I plan to go to the San Francisco area and meet with Executive Secretary Waldo Boyd, Treasurer Lorin DeMerritt, our Founder and Past President, Bill Breniman, and other "targets of opportunity". These face-to-face contacts, and your letters, are our best and perhaps our only means for reaching a consensus concerning the future of SOWP. Please write, fax or 'phone me. My address is 612 Ednor Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905; telephone (301) 924-1605, fax (301) 924-0420.



...from the Secretary

Two major heavyweight areas of SOWP work face your Editor and me during the coming Winter season: readying a new edition of The Register (directory) and an edition of SPARKS JOURNAL. Each alone is no small task in itself; together they represent a heavy investment in hours -and in carefully shepherded funds.

It is "that time" again. Year's end marks the close of the Society calendar year. We now await with considerable eagerness your renewal checks. It is gratifying to report that we have received a few renewals already, although the deadline is the first week in February. As you read our new President's message you see that we are embarking on a course that will bring new life to the Society.

Among plans for next year we have two very interesting articles being written from the perspective of the pioneering in communications done to make space travel and extra-planetary landings feasible. Morse code and hand keys did not take center stage in

space but pioneering it was, and in full tradition of the old wireless spirit of do or die trying. The first article is destined for Sparks Journal; the second will likely find its place in The Beacon.

So, while you are reminded at this moment, look once again at the last group of characters on Line 1 of your mailing label. If they read "12/94" it is time to renew your active status for the coming year. If they read "12/95" or higher, you are paid ahead, and we sincerely thank you for your confidence that we will continue to do the job that is called for. No further reminders will come along after this one; 12/94's will miss subsequent publications unless we hear from you, because Line 1 will indicate to the computer a "past due" status that will automatically skip your mailing label.

Many members will note with understandable irritation that I have yet to answer their letters - I am as much as six months behind with some, and quite a number were received three months ago and the weeks following. My replies will steadily narrow that regrettable gap in due course as I continue to work at it, so please don't give up on us.

I wish one and all a most hearty Holiday Season around the world, and a most fruitful and prosperous New Year.

-Walt Boyd, K6DZY, Secretary.

P.O. Box 86,

Geyserville, CA 95441-0086

ARE YOU MOVING?

If you're planning a move to a new address anytime -

Please let us KNOW...

Before you GO!

A GREAT GRAND-FATHER LOOKS BACK

By Fred Kaiser, 4972-SGP, WA4HHO

My interest in electricity began when I was 6 or 7 years old. We were living in Brooklyn and many of the houses did not have electricity, including ours. When some of the kids on the block told me to come with them to Knickerbocker Ave where wooden utility poles had recently been erected, I went with them. The reason was to show me how I could get a shock. I did not know what a shock was.

We would stand in front of the pole and create a puddle- (in fractured French this was known as Pied-a-Terre)

By standing in the puddle and reaching up and grabbing the pole we could get a shock. Very bewildering to me and exciting, and it started me on the way.

Next, after shoveling snow for about eight neighbors all winter, I was able to buy a storage battery, a Willard four volt. I was about eight years old by then and I did not know how to make it work, but was told that German Silver wire had a high resistance (whatever that was), and my sister had a banjo which had a silver string, and I made a little "cup" in the center, and the cup would get red hot. That was interesting, but it was clear that something more was needed to make the battery work.

It so happened that on Mondays my mother did the washing, and she used something called oxalic acid in the wash. Guess it was a bleach. It came in crystals, and I found that if I put some crystals in the cup while it was red hot it would create a lot of awful smelling smoke. Both my sister and my mother were annoyed, and after they got through with me I

thought I would do well to run away.

By nine o'clock that night I was very hungry and I had forgotten why I had run away. At my current age I still have the problem of forgetting what I went in the next room for.



Time went on, and WW I ended and the ban on Ham Radio was lifted soon after and suddenly aials would be seen on top of roofs, now and then. So one of my "puddle" friends took me to see a radio in operation. This was in the ground floor of a house and we were waved in by a guy sitting at a table with a lot of things on top. He was in operation with another Ham, and there was a beautiful smell which I was told was Ozone, and it came from a lot of sparks on a motor driven wheel and I was told that this was a rotary spark gap, and that thing was a Thordarson transformer, and another thing was a condenser.

I was hooked.

Finally, about 1920 I got in business with a Ford spark coil and a coherer which I had read about in a magazine - I think it was Radio News.

In order for the coherer to work (it never did) it had to have a sort of a bell ringer and the ball was supposed to hit the glass containing iron filings. I did not have enough time to diddle with it as my mother wondered what was wrong with the bell and made me put it back. So now comes a Galena Crystal with a cat's whisker. (My mother used to show people her black cat which had six toes on one foot.)

After getting scratched by the cat and paddled by my mother, I gave up on the cat's whisker. But now I heard about a radio place on Fulton Street in N.Y.C. (Manhattan) and now I was old enough to ride the trolley by myself as far as the Brooklyn Bridge, which I walked across to save a nickel, and found two places. One was the Electro Importing Co. run by Hugo Gernsback who published books and a magazine, but I was disappointed here. But right next door was a fabulous place known as "Nick the Greek" and he was a very kindly man who let me roam the store. He had a lot of surplus military stuff which looked very mysterious.

So I shoveled more snow and now had two jobs after school and I accumulated some money. One job was delivering flowers for "TREPPEL THE FLORIST". The other was delivering laundry. The owner would sit in his horse drawn van and I would do the leg work.

Now my friend "Nick the Greek" outfitted me with a one inch six volt spark coil, a Dubilier condenser of unknown capacity (but it looked professional in its nice aluminum case)

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GREAT GRAMPA -From P. 3

and a Murdock loose coupler, Baldwin headset and some other junk and I was in business.

Someone told me that I had better get a license. (I won't go into that too far, but I guess by now the statute of limitations would apply.) Later I got a conditional license by mail order and now I was legal. So I upgraded to a four-inch spark coil which made a soul-satisfying crash.

My antenna was a four-wire affair about 150 feet long and I received a notice from the Brooklyn Navy Yard-about 3 miles away - that I was interfering on 800 meters.

My father was bedridden for about a year and finally died, and money was tight. I left high school and enrolled in a night course at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn five nights a week studying Industrial Electricity, and working as a runner during the day with the Chase National Bank.

Ham radio was out for the time being, but I got the wanderlust and left the Pratt school and enrolled in the Marconi Institute to become a commercial radio operator. This was run by RCA to provide men for the fast-growing need for shipboard operators.

I received a First Class Commercial license in 1925, signed by Herbert Hoover, Secretary of the Dept. of Commerce which was before the FCC.

After a couple of coastwise trips between New York and Miami I got into a "disagreement" with the other operator when I found him going through my suitcase!

My next job was with the United Fruit Co which had its own Radio Operations including land stations in Central and South America. The ships

were largely cargo-oriented but also carried about 125 passengers. They were a great company to work for as far as I was concerned.

I was now 18 years old and was mighty proud of my nice white uniform with shoulder bars and a cap. The other operator was an old man about thirty and a very wonderful and helpful guy. We got to Panama and here happened one of my reasons for writing this.

(A recent article in the monthly magazine for the Atlanta Radio Club of which I am a member, told of a guy who climbed his tower and lowered his tools and spare parts weighing about 300 pounds, in a wheel barrow, and when he came down to untie the rope at the bottom he hung on to the rope and the barrel came down and he went up. etc. A great story!)

We stayed at the dock in Panama over night, and the second mate came to the radio shack and told me that now would be a good time to clean the insulators as the salt air accumulated on them. The ship was about 500 feet long and the aerial was a four-wire affair strung between the ship's two masts. There was a pulley at the top of each mast and the one inch or so rope came down to a cleat at the bottom of the mast.

A deckhand brought a pail of water and a brush and frankly, by now I was kind of scared (and pretty dumb) as I had never heard of anything like this. But I started to unhook the rope from the cleat and got within about five turns of having it unwound when they stopped me and had a good laugh. Those insulators were about three feet thick and weighed about 20 pounds. The wires were about one half inch thick, so you can imagine what could have happened.

Shipboard life was nice, but boring

after the fourth or fifth run to the same ports. Our transmitter was a five KW open core transformer type powered by a 500 cycle generator driven by a 110 volt DC motor. There was a large bank of Edison cells for emergency power and a huge coupler with a hand crank, to select our three transmitting frequencies, 600m (500 kHz) for calling, switch to 700m (429 kHz) for traffic and 800m (375 kHz) for direction finding stations along the coast. There also was a large bank of Leyden Jars as condensers. In poor weather we used to get a fix off Cape Hatteras from two Navy land stations..

Late at night, (I think it was about 1 or 2 a.m.) we got the news from a station in Arlington VA and here is when I learned two-finger typing after a dressing down from the Captain who said he could not read my writing.

Down in the tropics the static was so bad that sometimes we could not copy all that was transmitted. That problem was solved by buying a newspaper the day we left New York and that served to stimulate our imagination ten days hence when we had to guess at stock market quotations. We never did get a complaint.

Back in those days, of course, there was no air travel so we carried passengers, mostly business people but a few tourists. We always took pains to be helpful to the tourists because they would sometimes buy us a beer.

United Fruit gave their land-based operators a month's vacation, and the shipboard operators filled in as relief operators. So I found myself assigned to their station in Santa Marta, Colombia, and this was interesting as the second day I was there, they had a minor revolution, or uprising, which lasted three days. They closed the station, but treated us well,
(Continued, Page 5)

GREAT GRAMPA - From P. 4

except that they recruited me to help remove dead bodies which were brought in by railroad hand car. I did not care for that.

This was during Prohibition (against alcohol in the U.S.) and the deck and engine room officers had a "thing" going and I had to become a part of it. We would load up on tax-free cigarettes in Panama and along the coast of South America, native women would come aboard and stuff packs of cigarettes in their bloomers which were tied at the bottom. Someone else handled the details but the cases of cigarettes were kept in the battery room which was high and dry.

Then on the return voyage, on our last stop, Kingston Jamaica, we would take on a load of booze which was stored in the paint locker in the bow of the ship. Two days out we would send a message in some kind of code and this would tell someone what and how much we had. The stevedores would take it out by the bottle along with a stalk of bananas and a sack of coffee. My salary was \$85 a month but the additional money from the things just mentioned was about \$200, my share depending on how much we handled. The officers on the ship, by the way, were a friendly bunch and not at all roughnecks, but they could handle themselves very well if need be.

That was about the end of my commercial radio career, as after a year I left for a land job with a fine company, Honeywell, Inc., and stayed with them until I retired after 45 years.

Honeywell eventually became a high-tech firm and grew like topsy. I was transferred 13 times to different cities and in 1954 was transferred to New York as Eastern V.P. and became a member of the Sales Executives Club. It was here that I became acquainted

with David Sarnoff, Chairman of RCA, and a very nice and astute man. We were not close friends but once in a while he would call me to have lunch. I think he wanted to get away from his pressures once in a while. When I left N.Y. to transfer to Atlanta in 1964 he presented me with an autographed copy of his biography which makes fabulous reading.

This about concludes my writing effort except that I forgot to mention my ham rig after the Galena thing. I had a DeForest audion tube (it had two filaments in case one burned out) and I had saved up enough money to buy a Grebe receiver which had been in a fire. The wooden case was a bit charred but the guts were OK. It had two tunable things called variometers and was a good receiver.

But my transmitter was something else. We had by now current in the house (about 1921). It was DC, so I bought from a junk shop a 110 V DC motor and a 550-volt DC motor (I think they came from a trolley car) and presto, I had myself a motor-generator.

I did not have a meter to measure the output, but it would give me a hell of a shock so I was satisfied. The Western Electric electron tube was round - like an apple. and was rated at 5 watts! Anyway, with a Bell Telephone carbon mike and a modulation transformer etc., I was in business and the rig was good for about 5 miles. The plates of the tube would get red hot and I thought this was a good sign. I could check my output by putting my finger on the output lead, and if I got a burn I knew I was putting out. My call was 2BBI.

I retired in 1971 and started up a new business. Meanwhile, one of my friends, W6ROD, got me a SWAN 260 transceiver. And so, with a Hustler

vertical stuck in the ground I was again a Ham - without a license. So, down I went to the FCC office and breezed through the code but failed on the tech. That hurt my pride. I got a Novice ticket to allow me to talk with my grandson, KF2B, in Rochester on CW. But he was in college and my business kept me jumping. So I waited till later when we moved into a retirement place. I bought a Yaesu radio (a good set) from a friend who couldn't use it after he moved into an apartment that had restrictions. I received permission to put up a dipole on the roof of this 18 story building (we are on the 16th). Took the ham license test again - failed. So I studied more and passed with the help of friends at the Atlanta Radio Club and am now WA4HHO. Every Saturday morning at 1100 Eastern time on 14,290 kHz we have our Honeywell net and it's great fun to be able to be able to talk with other old timers.

-73- Fred

NET NEWS ...ETC

It's a real pleasure to announce that **John McKinney**, 1001-P, W0AP, is back as Net Control of our Thursday morning Oscar Harrison Memorial Transcon Net on 14.058 MHz at 1500 UTC. WELCOME BACK, Macl.

HIGH SPEED CODE PRACTICE

Welcome Aboard to Bob Griffin, 5104-M, AB6YR, who will take over the weekly Pacific Coast practice skeds formerly handled by W. Conley Smith, 0078-TA, K6DYX. Bob will transmit high speed CW Mondays and Thursdays at 0330 UTC on 3523 and 7023 kHz. Bob will be part of the on-going SOWP high-speed practice program run the same evenings by George Hart, W1NJM. More later. - Editor.

EDITOR GOES BACK TO SEA

Well, almost. The date, Saturday September 24, 1994, when about 0930 EDT we boarded the Liberty ship SS

out into the Patapsco River where she had been launched in September, 1942. We passed under the Francis Scott Key Memorial Bridge. By now, our

a large separate bay, the RMCA shortwave transmitter and receiver.

The chow line beckoned, so we went below the main deck to No. 2 hold, where a fine buffet lunch and beverages was spread. There was enough for seconds and (thirds)?

Meanwhile - and during the entire cruise - the George Hipp orchestra played the music of the 40's atop No. 2 hatch. There were military, popular and patriotic tunes of the World War II era for all to enjoy.

Each Chesapeake Bay cruise by the JOHN W. BROWN is a memorial to merchant mariners and U.S. Navy Armed Guard crewmen who gave their lives during World War II. Today there were commemorative readings, the band's rendition of the Navy Hymn and a bugler playing "Taps" as a memorial wreath and a red rose were placed in the water.

Suddenly, from the Maryland coast came a flight of fighter planes, heading straight for the BROWN! Piloted by their civilian owner-pilots of the Bay Squadron, four AT-6 Navy advanced trainers buzzed the ship repeatedly. These are the type of WW-II aircraft used to simulate Japanese "Zero" airplanes in the movies.

After reaching a point abeam of Annapolis, MD, our vessel turned about to return home. Our cruise ended too soon. The dedicated Project Liberty Ship volunteer crew of the JOHN W. BROWN, assisted by Baltimore tugs, returned our vessel to her berth about 1630 Eastern time. All who were aboard will remember a day spent in perfect weather with old and new friends, and the nostalgia of years gone by.

(For another photo aboard S.S. JOHN W. BROWN, see page 20.)



Sam Hucke, M.D., President, Gallups Island Radio Ass'n. at KHJL.

JOHN W. BROWN/KHJL at the Dundalk Terminal, Baltimore, MD. This was her annual Chesapeake Bay cruise and we (your Editor, two sons-in-law and a grandson) were among some 600 passengers for six-and-a-half hours of sunny sailing.

Many on the passenger list were members of the Gallups Island Radio Association, an alumni group from the U.S. Maritime Service radio operator training school in the harbor at Boston, MA during World War II. They had just completed a reunion meeting in Baltimore.

Weather for the cruise was superb. There were a few clouds, but temperatures had risen overnight to a sunny morning 70F from a rainy Friday.

With a band playing, our ship headed

tour of the vessel, including the hot and noisy engine room, had begun.

It is the radio room all ex-Sparks want most to visit, so we went to the bridge deck where we found a small cabin outside the main deck-house. This is the "new" KHJL radio shack. It houses a computer for Comsat-C, NAVTEX, weather fax and SITOR and a Ten-Tec Omni-D amateur transceiver.

The "old" KHJL radio room was a few steps farther along a port-side companionway. Here we found the familiar RCA Radiomarine 3-U unit which can still provide MF and HF CW communications. It even has an intact cat's whisker crystal detector in a lower-left panel! To the right of the main console is the auto-alarm and in



Buoys and Gulls - by Olive / VE7ERA



OPERATING FROM THE TOP OF THE WORLD - II

(Continued from Sept. '94)
Following a year in isolation, the small Pearyland expedition group returned home safe and sound in the summer of 1950, and back in Copenhagen the following Spring, Borge Haagenen was asked to participate in a large Danish/U.S. project in northern Greenland which would establish a permanent weather station at Nord with the call XPL. This tour would take Borge back to Greenland for a further two years.

Transportation of material for the station was by air from the American air base at Thule to the new site and was undertaken by a fleet of American aircraft - C47, C54, C119 and Globemasters. For a Dane who had never before seen the Americans in action this was all most impressive.

Because of various delays, and accidents with aircraft, it became too late to build the station in 1952 as planned and it was decided to send four people to the proposed site to spend the winter in a small house to get weather observations started as soon as possible. Borge spent the first winter at Nord with the same radioman as at Pearyland, along with a station manager and a cook. Weather messages were transmitted to the collection station in southern Greenland, as well as to the Thule air base where a

great deal of amusing confusion arose because the operators at Thule used the Z code abbreviations which were Greek to the Danes, while they used the familiar Q code which apparently was undecipherable by the Americans.

An interesting event took place

in the fall of '52 when XPL received a request from Scandinavian Airlines to stand by on 5671 kHz, the CW frequency for the North Atlantic air traffic with ground stations like TFW/Reykjavik and EIP/Shannon.

The station had no transmitter capable of operation on this frequency so ham radio ingenuity had to swing into action. While in Thule on the way up, Borge had begged a few radio parts

The reason for the standby request was because SAS was making a test flight of the planned north polar route to the U.S. west coast and the aircraft needed as many contact points as possible in the sparsely populated Arctic. The big moment arrived and Borge enjoyed a nice QSO with the aircraft as it flew over Pearyland. That Christmas several unsuccessful attempts were made to drop mail from Thule to the



DROPPING FUEL DRUMS at NORD

from the well-stocked maintenance shop there and with these he was able to make an ARRL handbook-style transmitter with a 6AG7 tube as crystal oscillator/amplifier. A crystal on a somewhat lower frequency was ground on sandpaper until it reached the correct spot which was checked by listening to the traffic from TFW in Iceland.

men at Nord but navigation in the darkness made it impossible for the aircraft to find the station.

By the summer of 1953 the station was completed and consisted of 25 buildings, for Greenland very luxurious conditions for the 26 people who were to spend the winter there.
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Top Of The World - from Page 7

As Borge was ready to return to Denmark in 1954 he was asked to join Eigel Knuth on a short summer trip to examine some archaeological sites about 200 km from Nord. This sounded interesting so Borge agreed and together they set out on skis over the still frozen sea. The sea ice does not break up every year in this location and in that month of July there was still about a two meter thick ice cover which had a lot of water on top, so the men wore rubber boots with their skis.

At the same time as they trudged over the ice, the resupply of Nord was taking place by USAF Globe-master aircraft, fifteen of which were flying back and forth from Thule. Traffic was continuous during the constant 24 hours of daylight and the pilots, who had heard of the two crazy Danes walking across the ice, made a point of flying over, dropping chocolate bars, chewing gum etc.

Unfortunately progress was stopped by open water further away, so Borge and Knuth had to return to Nord without reaching their goal. Some days later however, a Danish Catalina amphibious aircraft was able to fly to the site, put down on a strip of open water, and set the two men off.

Once more back home in Denmark Borge worked for the new television

broadcasting station for a while before getting married and emigrating to Canada in 1956 where he and his wife have lived ever since.

For an interesting postscript to Borge's operating career in the far north, we turn to some incredible events of last summer. During a 20 m. QSO with OZ/OX3FV in the beginning of August '93, Borge learned that a special military flight by a Hercules aircraft was to be made in about a week's time, partly to take a number of dignitaries to Pearyland in order to



Borge Haagensen operates a small radio station at Nord in 1952: Danish Transmitter and 2 Danish Receivers. Behind these, a BC-654 Transmitter.

celebrate the 90th birthday of his friend Eigel Knuth, the man who was the leader of the expedition in 1949.

After the QSO, Borge made a telephone call to defence headquarters in Copenhagen, where, to his surprise, he learned that he could join this flight in Copenhagen. Able to get a Canadian Airlines ticket via London, Borge showed up at Vaerlose, north of Copenhagen, and flew via Bodo in Norway to Pearyland where he enjoyed 'a proper Danish birthday party' with his friend in the place where they had been 44 years earlier.

The party was attended by big shots

from Denmark; among them the director of the national museum in Copenhagen who made one of many long speeches, followed by toasts in schnapps, the highlight of the evening. A great moment was enjoyed when Borge's friend, Eigel Knuth, a well-known archaeologist, received a handwritten letter of congratulations from Danish Queen Margrethe.

Borge adds that on the way to Pearyland the plane landed at the now defunct Nord where, to his surprise, he found in the old transmitter building all the equipment he had installed in 1953. What a nostalgia trip! One in a lifetime since, during his many years in Canada, Borge had lost much contact with Denmark and certainly never expected to see remote and inaccessible Pearyland again.

Borge would love to hear from any American radio operator who spent time in Thule from 1952 to 1954, or from any flight crew who came to Nord during that same period. His address is:

Borge I. Haagensen, VE7VB,
2420 Chilco Rd., Victoria, B.C.,
Canada, V9B 4W9

SWAP and SHOP

WANTED FOR CASH: Antique telegraph bugs and automatic keying apparatus used at marine coastal stations.

Also Marconi "ATLANTA" model marine communications receiver.

Also, antique stock market tickertape machines.

Please write to -

Joseph D. Kramer, K3ES,
5540 Northumberland St., Pittsburgh,
PA 15217 USA. Tel: (412) 621-3977

M/V SEA VENTURE/WJMV AND M/V SEA SPRAY/WRXN RENDEZVOUS AT SEA

By D. J. Gagne, 4727-V, W2LID

For several years, I have been discussing with Ben Russell, (1853-V, N6SL) the possibility of taking pictures of the M/V SEA VENTURE/WJMV while she was underway at sea. Ben is Radio Electronics Officer on the SEA VENTURE.

But on every trip north from Texas to points along the East Coast the SEA VENTURE was either too far off shore, or if close enough, was going by at night.

On September 23, 1994, during a contact with Ben on 500/512 khz when the SEA VENTURE was about 100 miles south of Cape Hatteras, he advised that they would be passing Manasquan Inlet on the New Jersey coast on the afternoon of the next day, Saturday, September 24. (As it happened, this was the same day that the Baltimore-based Liberty ship, S/S JOHN W. BROWN, was taking her annual Chesapeake Bay cruise.) - Editor.

About two years ago, my boat, the M/V WINDWARD/KERL, was lost in a boatyard fire. The WINDWARD has since been replaced by the M/V SEA SPRAY/WRXN.

The SEA SPRAY is similar to the WINDWARD - a 34-foot Mainship trawler. Navigation equipment is also similar except for the addition of a Pathfinder radar by Raytheon.

The 405 - 535 KHz MF equipment is all RCA - an ET-8043 transmitter, an ET-8053 lifeboat transmitter/receiver, and an AR-8510 receiver.

The WINDWARD's ham equipment, an Atlas 180 transceiver, had been removed before the fire for winter

storage and has been reinstalled on SEA SPRAY. Her lifeboat transmitter/receiver was also removed and will be reused.

In August, 1993 SEA SPRAY sailed up the New Jersey coast to the U.S.



M/V SEA SPRAY/WRXN, Barnegat Bay, NJ, August 1994

Merchant Marine Academy at King's Point, New York. The purpose of the trip was to deliver an old shipboard Scott receiver to the Academy museum.

On August 17, 1994, she was used to take pictures of the Liberty ship SS JEREMIAH O'BRIEN steaming south about 4 miles off the New Jersey coast bound for Baltimore and San Francisco. I was alone aboard SEASPRAY.

Early on the morning of September 24, 1994, we anchored SEA SPRAY and made contact with Ben on 500/512 khz. He confirmed an ETA of 1530 at a point 13.5 miles due east of Manasquan Inlet in the northbound Barnegat-Ambrose traffic lane.

On this trip I had a friend along, Doug Barnes, not a radioman but a

good helmsman. Doug also offered to videotape our meeting with the SEA VENTURE.

We weighed anchor a little before noon and proceeded out the inlet shortly thereafter on a heading of 102

degrees magnetic. Although skies were cloudy, the sea was calm and visibility was good. There were long four-foot rollers left over from a storm a few days earlier but they gave us no trouble. A contact with Ben on two meters confirmed the earlier ETA off the inlet at 1530.

We arrived at our rendezvous point with about an hour and a half to spare so we decided to turn south. We continued on a heading of about 190 degrees magnetic which took us down the middle of the traffic lane.

We passed a Maersk Lines container ship heading north. Another check with Ben to update his position showed we were only about 20 miles apart. With the SEA VENTURE running 13.6 knots and us doing about 9, we
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RENDEZVOUS from Page 9

were closing pretty fast.

We soon picked up the SEA VENTURE on our radar at about seven miles distant and shortly thereafter spotted the familiar outline of an

13.6 knots is close to our top speed. I then advised her mate that she was too fast for us he said he was glad she was faster than somebody!

After a few goodbyes on the radio, we headed back to Manasquan Inlet

which was now about 15 miles away on a heading of 313 degrees magnetic.

The skies had cleared and the seas were "oily smooth" when we reached the inlet. And we finally had gotten our pictures!

My SEA SPRAY will be stored during the wintertime in the same boatyard where the WINDWARD burned in January, 1992. They say lightning never strikes twice in the same spot! ?

P. S. : "I have expanded the radio gear on my boat to include a Stoner-Goral HF-SSB transceiver. It was SSB only, but I modified it for CW by keying one of the crystal oscillators, re-inserting carrier and disabling the mic circuit on two channels. VCS in Halifax came back on my first call on 8,368 kHz with a good report on CW. I also have a crystal for a working frequency of 8342.5 kHz, also CW. For SSB, I have only one frequency, 8225 kHz, which is WOO's (Oceangate, NJ) channel 811. I haven't been able to raise him yet..."



M/V SEA VENTURE, off New Jersey coast, September 24, 1994

aft deck-house type of tanker.

We advised Ben on two meters that we had sighted him and then called the ship on VHF channel 16. After shifting to channel 9, we advised the mate on watch that we would make a one whistle pass (i.e., we would keep to his port side).

The time was about 1500 and we could see Ben on the port bridge wing along with the Chief Engineer, the mate on watch, and another crew member. Ben's ship was heavily laden and was riding low in the water.

We took many pictures and videotaped SEA VENTURE as we passed by. Then we swung around astern of her but couldn't catch up to her as her



M/V SEA SPRAY/WRXN - Radio Equipment Console In Main Cabin

SPARKS AND FRIENDS PAY A VISIT

On September 29, 1994 a group of former ship Radio Officers and long-time radio amateurs visited a modern commercial ship and its Radio Electronics Officer.

The place was a tanker dock at Paulsboro, NJ. The ship, M/V SEA VENTURE/WJMV, whose REO is Ben Russell, 1853-V, N6SL, host to the group.

The visitors: Henry Dale, 4557-V, N3BNC; Don Gagne, 4727-V, W2LID; Bob Jarvis, 4560-V, N2EG; Earl Korf, 613-SGP, K2IC; George Lemkuhl, W2RIJ and Charlie Siems, W2LIY.

All of them are pioneer communicators, with years of experience aboard ships and aircraft in war and peace or at large installations ashore.

Their host, Ben Russell, N6SL, has been a ship Radio Electronics Officer for many years and is a graduate electrical engineer.

M/V SEA VENTURE is a 20,000-ton chemical tanker operated by Atlantic Tankers, Inc., serving Gulf and East Coast ports of the U.S. The ship is equipped with modern communications and navigation facilities including MF, HF and VHF radios, radars, cellular telephone, gyro-compass, NAVTEX / satellite computer and weather-fax.

Mr. Russell maintains all the electronic equipment aboard the vessel. Atlantic Tankers has decided that



L-R: On the bridge -Earl Korf, Don Gagne, Ben Russell, George Lemkuhl and Henry Dale



Ben Russell, 1853-V, N6SL



Radio Room of M/V Sea Venture/WJMV

SEA VENTURE will carry a qualified operator-maintainer, rather than to depend on shore-based maintenance. Ben showed his visitors all these facilities including his domain, the WJMV radio room.

After the visit, Ben reported to Earl Korf that when the group was assembled in the radio room - if Captain Cutter had called out "Sparks!" - in Earl's words, "all five of us Sparks and ex-Sparks would have answered!"

Ben Russell sends a LETTER to the EDITOR

M/V Sea Venture/WJMV
P.O. Box 13348 Norfolk, VA
October 25, 1994

Dear Ted,

About a week ago W8PQO called me on my daily 14058 kHz ham radio schedule and requested that I give you some impressions concerning my long range views concerning the GMDSS system.

Personal Concerns About GMDSS

By Ben Russell, N6SL

BACKGROUND

Ever since introduction of the marine communications satellites, message handling between companies and ships has become much faster than in the CW days. Anyone with minimum computer skills can operate the satellite systems. This caused many in the international shipping community to question the need to have a
(Continued page 12)

GMDSS - From Page 11

Radio Officer aboard their ships. Effective in February of 1999, all ships will be required to have GMDSS equipment aboard with licensed GMDSS operators who will have other jobs on their ships. Maintenance will be at the option of the company to use either shore based maintenance or shipboard maintenance. Since crew sizes of modern ships have been declining from approximately 40 at the end of WW2 to about 21 for modern ships, it is assumed that most operating companies will elect to use shore based maintenance and no longer have trained Radio Officers in their crews. The FCC has made it very difficult for anyone to get a Radio Telegraph license. Years ago you could take your examinations in all FCC district offices and usually schedule an appointment within a week of calling. If you were unsuccessful, the examination could be taken again after 30 days.

OPERATIONAL GMDSS

The old distress-safety system which has evolved over the past, used monitoring of 500 kHz as the system core with ships in distress being helped by other nearby ships. One reason this system was effective is that 500 kHz was used for *CALLING* as well as distress. This gave all ships a reason to keep a good watch on 500 kHz. The GMDSS system uses a combination of new technologies using Digital Selective Calling (DSC), location beacons, radar beacons and the maritime satellite systems. Most radio traffic will be routed to and from ships via satellites and not require operator intervention.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Ships will be advised of distress and routine H/F traffic via DSC and will continue some use of H/F SITOP systems. Since dedicated professional operators will not be constantly moni-

toring the new equipment operation it is possible to have numerous undetected malfunctions of the system. Present law requires that all tank vessels entering United States ports must have their radar, gyro, VHF, course recorder and recording fathometer operating properly, or they may be restricted to daytime transit. In the past, Radio Officers have maintained these systems in addition to safety/distress radio systems. GMDSS and FCC rules do not address the operational maintenance of navigation systems aboard ships. Failure of radar and navigation systems have the potential to cause serious accidents with some resulting in loss of life and pollution of our coastlines and harbors.

ECONOMICS

The ship owners/operators will achieve their one major objective of further reducing crew size and costs by use of the GMDSS system. Currently, the cost of oil spill responsibility insurance is extremely high and may drive some shipping companies out of business. Major oil companies that have foreign flag ships will be "self insured." When smaller companies leave the coastwise market due to insurance costs, the door for repeal of the Jones Act will be opened. This Act preserves most coastwise traffic for U.S. registered vessels. Some large shipping companies are owned by United States companies but have the bulk of their ships under "Third World" flags so they can further reduce crew and U.S. regulatory costs. If they prevail, it is possible that all of this discussion concerning GMDSS and the U.S. merchant fleet will be moot because the U.S. fleet will become too small to be of any consequence and will fade away just like CW on 500 KHz.

73, Ben, N6SL



**CARDS
and
LETTERS**

Ken Blue, 2999-V, WO6H, whose personal journal, *CIVILIAN AT RISK*, was reviewed in our June, 1994 issue, writes to say it is still available at \$8.00 postpaid. Write to: Kenneth D. Blue, P.O. Box 1793, Cedar Ridge, CA 95924.

Ray Hensley, 4043-P, W7AFG, sent a note saying "I recently received my 60 Years As A Ham certificate from QCWA for 100% CW operations, 30 years as KL7CZ and 30 years as W7AFG. / Hearty Congratulations, Ray! - Editor

Ray Redwood, 4072-V, KA5HCX, sent a card saying he recently had a heart Anziagram. "Have had no heart attacks (but has had) 4 by-passes...I'm Lucky, Lucky, Lucky..." His book, "QTC", was published in 1989. / All Good Wishes, Ray - Editor.

Johannes "Joe" Flipse, 3942-M, sent word to Exec. Sec. Walt Boyd saying, "after 43 years active Radio Officer now am retired since 1993 and now live permanently in the Netherlands....have a new official Dutch class A amateur license with the call **PA3GNO**." His former call was SM6LQG/PA. Look for him on the **Annual SOWP International QSO Roundup, Dec. 8 - 10, 1994.**

Your Editor sends Best Wishes, Many Thanks and "73" to all 1994 Beacon writers. Keep 'Em coming!

MY FIRST SHIP

By Harry Hyder, 3663-V,
W7IV

From boyhood, I had been fascinated by ships and the sea, and spent a lot of time in the harbor area watching the ships arrive and depart. I longed to go to sea on one of them.

In my mid-teens I became an amateur radio operator. Then I dreamed of becoming a shipboard radio operator, but I did not know how.

Shortly after Pearl Harbor, I read a newspaper article saying that there was a great shortage of shipboard radio operators; no ship could sail without one. I thought that I knew enough to pass the Second Class Commercial Telegraphers license examination. I took the test, passed, and in a few weeks had my ticket.

I joined the Radio Officers Union and was sent to the New York and Cuba Mail Steamship Company office, the Ward Line. I was immediately assigned to the S/S Norfolk, then docked in Tampa, Florida. I was given a railroad ticket to Tampa and some expense money.

Even the railroad trip to Tampa was an adventure, because up to then I had never been farther than a couple of hundred miles from my birthplace in New York City.

When I arrived in Tampa I went to the Ward Line office and was told that the Norfolk was berthed at the foot of Franklin Street. I went there and saw the ship for the first time. It was moored near the S/S Seminole, a small passenger ship that had just returned from Puerto Rico. Both ships were in wartime gray, although neither were armed. The Norfolk looked rather puny.

I went on board the Norfolk and introduced myself to the First Mate,

Johannes Johansen. He told me that the radio room had been sealed by the Coast Guard (a common practice early in the war) and that since my quarters were in the radio room too, I would have to stay in a hotel ashore until sailing day, at company expense, of course.

I got a room at the Bay View Hotel. From my upper-story window I could see the Norfolk.

After unpacking I went back to the ship and met some of the other officers. Everyone was quite friendly. I learned that the ship was undergoing repairs and was not due to sail for a couple of weeks.



S. S. NORFOLK/ KJTF, Key West, FL, 1942

I went to the ship every day to learn as much as I could about her. The Norfolk was one of the few coal burners remaining in the U.S. Merchant Marine. She had been launched in 1916 in Ecorse, Michigan, near Detroit. Her gross tonnage was 2543, net 1759. "Gross tonnage" does not refer to weight; it is the total cubic volume of the ship, where one ton is

100 cubic feet. "Net tonnage" is the volume available for cargo. The ship's length was 253 feet and beam 43 feet. The engine was a triple expansion reciprocating of 1300 horsepower.

All of the other officers were very friendly and informative. The Chief Engineer took me on a tour of the engine room, realm of the "black gang", and on a coal burner they were really black! Most of the officers were older men who had been with the Ward Line for many years. The Captain of the Norfolk, Oscar Seastrom, was actually the Commodore of the Ward Line. Before she had been taken over by the Navy, he had been Master of the Oriente, sister ship of the

Morro Castle, which had burned off the coast of New Jersey in 1934 with great loss of life.

The crew was a regular United Nations, mostly Latin Americans, although there were two Egyptian firemen. One of them, Ahmed Krem, was a survivor of the S/S Zamzam, a
(Continued page 14)

HYDER from Page 13

British ship torpedoed early in the war. A few others were survivors of other sinkings. The Stewards Department were mostly Jamaican blacks. The law required that a certain percentage of the crew of an American ship had to be American citizens. The Norfolk always had to sail on a waiver, because this requirement could not be met. Of course, all of the officers were citizens.

The Norfolk was not yet armed. I learned that in the fall she would go to drydock for overhaul and arming. At the present, the top speed was about seven knots, but the Chief Engineer told me that after her bottom was scraped and engines repaired she should be able to make ten knots.

Finally one day I was told that the Norfolk was going to a coaling station and would sail the next day, May 5, 1942. The radio room was unsealed and I could see my quarters and the equipment. The room was about ten feet square. It contained my bunk, a washstand, a locker and the operating desk on which was mounted all of the radio gear. The receiver was a Mackay Radio 117B. This was a TRF regenerator using plug-in coils. It could cover from 16 KHz to 19 MHz, but the short-wave coils had not been supplied because the ship had no HF transmitter. The transmitter was an older Mackay unit, using two 50-watt triodes in parallel as an oscillator feeding the antenna directly. It covered from 375 to 500 KHz in several pre-tuned frequencies, switch selectable. When operated on emergency power, one of the triodes was disconnected. The Autoalarm, a Mackay 101A, was mounted to the bulkhead above my bunk.

We sailed down Tampa Bay toward the Gulf of Mexico. At last I was going to sea!

In early 1942, the U.S. southeast coast, the Straits of Florida and the Gulf of Mexico saw a lot of German submarine activity, and many ships had been sunk, including one off the coast of Florida in sight of spectators on shore. There was very little convoying because there were no escort ships available. A good part of the U.S. Navy had been lost at Pearl Harbor and the rest had been sent to the Pacific. North Atlantic convoys were escorted mostly by the British and Canadians.

My watch was to from four to eight, morning and evening, because these times were considered to be the most dangerous. I monitored 500 KHz and periodically shifted to another frequency to copy BAMS, Broadcasts to Allied Merchant Ships. These were sent by Naval shore stations on a number of frequencies. The broadcast would start with a string of call letters, and if your call was there you would wait until your message came through. The call letters used were not the standard ship's call, ours was KJTF. Every ship had been assigned a "secret" call. There were general messages too, for all ships, usually dealing with submarine sightings. The messages were all in code, and I had been given a set of code books. These were in a canvas bag weighted with lead, and if we were torpedoed I was supposed to throw them overboard.

Decoding was a laborious process, and I thought naively that the code was unbreakable. I learned after the war that the code had been broken by the Germans before the start of WWII!

During the war, all commercial ship-to-shore stations were operated by the Navy. The stations I usually copied were WAX, Hialeah; NAR, Key West; NAS, Pensacola and WNU, New Orleans.

During my six month term on the Norfolk I heard a number of messages

from ships that had sighted a submarine or thought that they had, and five actual torpedoings. When I received one of these messages I would carry it to the bridge and the watch officer would plot the position on the chart. The closest was fifty miles away and our ship was never attacked. On one return trip from Cuba we saw a large Standard Oil tanker that had been torpedoed and beached on Rebecca Shoal. We could still smell the burning oil. On another trip we saw the masts and funnel of a ship that had been sunk near Dry Tortugas. It had not been there on our previous voyage.

The Autoalarm was a receiver fixed tuned to 500 KHz. It was designed to respond by ringing a bell if it received a distress signal consisting of four four-second dashes separated by one second. If the bell rang when the operator was off watch, he was supposed to tune to 500 KHz and listen for distress information. The sensitivity control on the Autoalarm was quite critical. If the control was set too high, it would respond to static, and static is severe on low frequencies in the tropics. If the sensitivity was set too low, a valid distress signal might be lost. I was awakened by the bell any number of times. Usually it was a false alarm, but several times it was for real. The Mackay autoalarm used motor-driven cams for the timing, and was quite noisy even when not responding to a signal. The radio room clock had a sweep second hand and the dial was marked off in segments to help time the dashes transmitted in case of an emergency. Also on the dial was marked a three minute listening period at 15 and 45 minutes after the hour. During these periods all other activity was to stop to listen on 500 KHz.

Another job for the radio operator
(Continued page 15)

HYDER - from page 14

was to check the chronometer daily. Accurate chronometers are vital for celestial navigation, the only kind of navigation available in those pre-electronic days. There was wiring between the radio room and the chart room. I could plug the phones into the chart room jack and note the time error on a chart next to the chronometer.

Our first voyage was to Caibarien Cuba, to load sugar. Sugar was a strategic material for producing alcohol used in the manufacture of explosives. We sailed to within sight of Havana then sailed to Caibarien, about 100 miles east. We anchored in the mouth of the river. We were immediately surrounded by bumboats, selling fruit, beer and rum. There were two other ships there, also to load sugar. Town was about 16 miles away, a two hour trip in a taxi launch. We were to be there for more than a week. Every evening one or two other ships would put into the anchorage, for shelter. At that stage of the war, unescorted ships were instructed to put into port overnight, if possible.

The sugar and loading crew were brought out on barges. The sugar was in 150 kilogram sacks, 330 pounds. It was placed on cargo slings, winched on board and placed in the holds. The loading crew did not seem to have any trouble handling those heavy bags. They lived on the barges overnight, building fires on deck to cook their meals. They even brought live chickens with them!

I decided to wait for a couple of days then go to town for a few days. Caibarien looked like it was in the last century, except for a gas station and a cinema. The hotel, La Commercial, where I stayed, was a large two-story wooden structure with wide verandas

running around both floors. The ceilings were very high and the bed was enclosed by mosquito netting. It was needed! It was clean and comfortable. I think it cost one dollar per night. At that time, the American dollar and the Cuban peso were equal.

After loading was completed, we sailed for Havana. This time we were to be escorted across the Straits of Florida to Key West. There were several ships in the convoy. The escorts were two small Coast Guard patrol boats, which would have been useless against a submarine whether surfaced or submerged. From Key West we proceeded to Tampa alone.

On our first voyage we carried a purser, but on such a small ship there was no cabin available for him, and he had to sleep on a bunk in the chart room. He left after the first trip. I was then asked to take over his job; this was not unusual on small ships. For this I would get an extra fifty dollars per month. I agreed. The job was not very onerous, mostly typing crew lists (in English and Spanish) and payrolls. I also advanced money to sailors when in foreign ports. The "slop chest" came under my jurisdiction too. This was a locker containing miscellaneous small items the sailors might need, such as cigarettes, razor blades, toothbrushes, items of clothing, etc.

I made five more trips on the Norfolk, all to Havana. We carried general cargo down, which we would unload at the Ward Line pier on the Havana side of the harbor, then move to the other side of the harbor to load sugar. When loading sugar the flies were unbelievable. Getting back to Havana was easy by taxi launch. I got to know Havana very well. Because of the war, the tourist business had evaporated, and restaurants and hotels were begging for customers.

On one trip to Havana an item of cargo was a large water-cooled vacuum tube, destined for some Cuban broadcast station. It was in a large wooden crate with the tube suspended inside by springs. The Chief Mate thought that a radio tube belonged in the radio room, so he put it there. I did not object.

Since most of the officers had been with the Ward Line for many years, the subject of the Morro Castle occasionally came up in the officer's mess. At the time of the fire, George White Rogers, the Chief Radio Officer came out as somewhat of a hero, staying by the key to the last. He was never suspected of starting the fire. Many years later he began to look somewhat suspicious. He seems to have been a psychopath. He had been banned from the sea during WWII by the Navy, for reasons never quite clear. Ashore during the 50s and 60s he had engaged in some criminal activities and was eventually convicted of murder. Did He set the fire? We will never know. It might have been completely accidental.

In October of 1942, when the ship went to drydock for overhaul and arming, I decided to leave. I wanted to see some more of the world and possibly some action. I saw plenty of both, but that is another story. I had enjoyed my stay on the Norfolk: two or three days at sea followed by ten days in port at both ends. What a life!

I left the sea in May of 1945, after VE day. "Sparks" is now a victim of technological obsolescence. But it was a good life while it lasted.

Editor's Note:

Research is now under way by another SOWP member into the Morro Castle disaster of 1934. It may be the subject of an article for a future issue.



Battle Shaping Up Over Morse Code International Rules

(Compiled by the Editor)

International Morse code requirements was among topics discussed when the Administrative Council of the International Amateur Radio Union met in Singapore, September 10 to 12, 1994, after the IARU Region 3 Conference.

The Administrative Council took the following action:

A resolution concerning the requirement in the Radio Regulations for a demonstration of Morse code ability for operators licensed to use amateur frequencies below 30 MHz was adopted.

Consistent with the views of the member-societies as expressed through the regional organizations, *the IARU will neither propose nor support a change in the requirement at this time.* (Emphasis supplied by Editor) (From ARRL Letter, Sept. 19, 1994)

Meanwhile (as reported in the WSYI Report for Oct. 15, 1994) "...an amateur group out of New Zealand was leading a major effort to change the international Morse code proficiency requirements. ORACLE (the *Organization Requesting Alternatives by Code-Less Examinations*) wants IARU Regulation RR2735 amended to allow individual countries to decide whether or not they want to require telegraphy knowledge when the amateur radio operation takes place below 30 MHz...

"There are two *World Radiocommunication Conferences* (WRCs) where this matter could be discussed. One takes place next year. The next opportunity after that is in 1997.

At this stage, the ORACLE managers have decided to focus on their own national position in New Zealand. Should their effort fail to get the matter on the WRC-95 conference agenda, then the campaign can be expanded to other countries by the formation of sister organizations throughout the world."

"...Here is the (excerpted) text of the ORACLE document:

"...RELEVANCE OF MODIFICATION OF RR2735 TO THE WRC-95 AGENDA

Item 1 of the agenda for WRC-95 is

To review the final report of the VGE (Voluntary Group of Experts) and to consider related proposals from administrations, in order to undertake as appropriate a revision of the Radio Regulations and to provide a timetable for the implementation of outstanding recommended actions."

"...We presume that the VGE considers Morse code proficiency to be an anachronistic [obsolete or archaic] specific requirement, and in any case each (government) administration can continue to address the matter nationally if they so choose..."

"The text of the current international regulation is:

RR2735 Any person seeking a license to operate the apparatus of an amateur station shall prove that he is able to send correctly by hand and to receive correctly by ear texts in Morse code signals. The administrations concerned may, however, waive this requirement in the case of stations making use exclusively of frequencies

above 30MHz... The text of the proposed modification...is as follows:

MOD RR2735 Administrations may take such measures as they judge necessary to verify the proficiency in the use of Morse code of any person wishing to operate the apparatus of an amateur station."

"Therefore we intend to actively seek both of the following:

- that our proposal to modify RR2735 and subsequently introduce alternative qualifications be accepted as New Zealand policy;
- that modification of RR2735 be placed by New Zealand on agenda item 1 for WRC-95."

"We acknowledge that responses from other administrations need to be taken into account in deciding to progress to the second point. However it is our aspiration to achieve both points."

" *The document is signed by:*

Anthony Cole, ZL2AZJ Graham Love, ZL2TBK John Rumsey, ZL2LZ Bob Vernal, ZL2CA Terry Waghorn, ZL2AYY David Walker, ZL2BHE

Managers of:

Organization Requesting Alternatives by Code-Less Examinations. (ORACLE, Inc.)"

"This group may be reached via the Internet at the following address: manager@wao.greta.cri.nz " or:

Anthony Cole, ZL2AZJ, 66 Ponsonby Rd., Karori, Wellington 6005, New Zealand.

Chapter News

JACK BINNS CHAPTER V -
Seattle, WA By Don Newman, 58-P,
W7CO

The regular fall luncheon meeting of the Jack Binns Chapter was held Oct. 15, 1994 at Andy's Diner in Seattle, this being our second successful meeting there. Lunch service was a bit slow, but the time was well spent in getting re-acquainted and the food was good. Everyone said they had a good time. We had 28 in attendance including 3 XYLs. We were in the Roundhouse Room which seats 30, just right for us. This restaurant is made up of old railroad cars, one being the Presidential Limited.

After the luncheon, Director Dudley called the meeting to order, followed by introduction of guests and visitors. All gave a brief resume of their wireless beginnings. Some of our regular attendees were unable to be present. Our Oregon member, Tuck, W7FLF, NCS of the "RJ" net, was at a reunion in Kansas. Keith, VE7KWK, NCS of our "JB" net, was unable to attend, as was Olive, VE7ERA. Our faithful out-of-towner, Gene, VE7BRC, was with us.

Two visitors were introduced, Mac, W7LJY, and Sam Pickering, KB7WCX was guest of John Dudley. Our good friend Capt. Viggo, WA7CJV, was unable to come at the last minute, due to illness. We all miss him on the nets since he has sold all his gear except a Navy RAK receiver.

Our meeting program was a most interesting talk, film and discussion about the history, development and present use of COMSAT, given by Bill Miller, W8SB. The nearest station is at Brewster, in eastern Washington. It is very active at present. Our speaker

took a major part in its development and installation.

A collection was taken for our treasury and we are again solvent. Fortunately, we had no Silent Keys to report but a moment of silence was observed for previous ones.

In a note to the Editor, Don said he is still busy with shipboard communications gear. He has spent two weeks on the ferry COHO installing new gear required for GMDSS. He says he is the only person on the west coast with a First Class license. For 35 years, all the COHO gear has been his responsibility, including a new NAVTEX tape machine and receiver. There are six NAVTEX transmissions each day on 518 KHz from Astoria, OR and Tofino, BC, mainly for offshore and coastwise shipping.

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST CHAPTER IX

Chapter Director Bill Jackson makes a **FINAL CALL** announcement for the upcoming Seventh Annual Joint SOWP - QCWA luncheon meeting.

It will be held Saturday, **December 10, 1994** at the Safari Resort, Scottsdale, AZ.

Guest speaker will be **Dave Bell, W6AQ**, television and movie producer who made the "World of Amateur Radio" films.

SOWP President Jack Kelleher, W4ZC, is planning to attend.

For reservation information, please call Bill Jackson, 3612-V, W6HDP, at 692-772-9641, or write him at 4930 N. Hobo Circle, Prescott Valley, AZ, 86314.

WELCOME - NEW MEMBERS

A warm "Welcome Aboard" to the following who have joined SOWP since our last issue.

Ralph H. EMERSON II, 5097-M,
W7WE (Reclassified from 185-TA)
1740 Fairfield Ave., Reno, NV 89509

Donald G. FULTON, 5101-M,
KC6WNN 19973 East Ralph St., Walnut, CA 91789-2250 FS: 1967 Tuslog, Det. 4

Theodore KANGAS, 5102-P, W8HV
648 Elliot Ave., Ishpeming, MI 49849
FS: 1943 CCC Str. Operator

James C. HAUBE, 5103-V, W3OER
Box 78, RD2 Tarentum, PA 15084
FS: U.S. Army, Italy, 1945

Robert E. GRIFFIN, 5104-M, AB6YR
1436 Johnson Ave., San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 FS: USMC, Oct. 1968

Yuzuru SUZUKI, 5105-TA, AA1JA
36 Dartmouth St., Apt. 412
Malden, MA 02148

Samuel J. PICKERING Jr., 5106-P,
K B 7 W C X
5651 195th Pl., East
Bonney Lake, WA 98390

Everett K. McMULLIN, 0315-TA,
X-6DSY, HC 29, BOX 312 Prescott,
AZ 86301

John J. DIETZ, 0316-TA, W2BFU
12 Northgate Park Ringwood, NJ
07456

Jerry SAGER, 0317-TA, KG7ZF
2698 Ridge Rd., Prescott, AZ 86301-
5321.

Henry HOLBROOK 5201-TA
407 Arundel Road, Fair Haven Cliffs,
Dunkirk, MD 20754

CORRECTION: (Chg Zip Code)
Lyle R. Brown, 0314-TA, W7LGB
727 E. Carleton St., Prescott, AZ
86303

CHANGE of ADDRESS

Eber F. Diehl Jr., 3647-V, W7AMM
FROM: 821 Niagara St., N.W., Palm Bay, FL 32907-8213 **TO:** U.S. Consulate General Sao Paulo, APO AA 34030-5000

Laurence F. Gray, 3637-P, K3AK
FROM: 855 Gov. Prentice Rd., Eastham, MA 02642-3262 **TO:** 9701 DePaul Drive, Bethesda, MD 20817-1705

Raymond E. Heimberger, 0418-M, W8TT **FROM:** 3674 Stoer Rd., Shaker Hts., OH 44122 **TO:** 3670 Stoer Rd., Shaker Hts., OH 44122

Edward Kincaide SSGP #4876, whose 99th birthday was August 25, 1994 has a new mailing address: **OLD:** 44 Spruce St. Fairhaven, Ma. 02719 **NEW:** 14 Livesey Parkway, Fairhaven, Ma. 02719

Charles P. Krause, 1412-V, N7ESJ **FROM:** 6305 Hawthorne Ln., Barnard Apt.#1, Myrtle Beach, SC 29572-2016. **TO:** New addr: c/o Mary E. Miller, 719 Cypress Dr., Surfside Beach, SC 29578.

E. A. Peavey, 1507-P, W5UZW **FROM:** 615 Park Street, Apt. 804 Des Moines, IA 50309 **TO:** Scottish Rite Park, Apt. 1202 2909 Woodland Ave., Des Moines, IA 50312

Arthur L. Robertson, 4592-V, W0IWV **FROM:** P.O.Box 719 La Junta, CO 81050-8719 **TO:** 821 Lincoln Ave., La Junta, CO 81050-8719

Frank Schwella, 1532-P, N6FS **FROM:** 41034 Cheyenne Trail, Cherry Valley, CA 92223 **TO:** 435 So. Anaheim Hills Rd, Apt. 321 Cherry Valley, CA 92807-4235

George L. Wilkinson, 0983-V, N7MRI **FROM:** 2501 Wigwam Parkway, Bldg.1, Apt.114 Henderson, NV 89014 **TO:** P.O. Box 1463, Las Vegas, NV 89125-1463

SILENT KEYS

With Deep Regret, we report the passing of the following SOWP members as they join our Chapter Eternal. We send our sincere sympathies to those they held dear.

AITKEN, Hugh J., PhD., 0116-TA, W1PN, Amherst, MA., April 1994, age 71. He was an author of several books. He joined the Department of Economics at Amherst College in 1965 and retired from teaching in 1993.

BROWN, Richard E., 2502-V, W3CJI, Allentown, PA. No details.

GIELOW, Clarence C., 2256-SGP, age 85, Venice, FL., June 18, 1994. Reported by his brother, Charles R. Gielow.

GOTISAR, Theodore H., P.E., 3197-V, W6TZK, Pacifica, CA., Sept. 19, 1994. Served in WW II as an intercept operator for U.S. Army, seagoing R/O for the Military Sea Transport Service in 1948. Later was a CW operator with the California Highway Patrol. Also was employed as an engineer by Aero Jet, Inc., Sacramento, CA. Retired as an engineer from Cohn and Co., Burlingame, CA. Reported by Ralph H. Emerson, 5097-M, W7WE.

GRAY, Capt. Almon A., USNR, Ret., 810-P, W1KA, Blue Hill, ME., Sudden heart attack in late September, 1994. Reported by his wife.

HUBBARD, Frank E., Jr., 1244-V, W5OFO, Brownwood, TX. No details.

HULTQUIST, John A., Sr., 211-P, W6QMC, Goleta, CA., No details.

JONES, Robert W., 4847-P, KH6O, Kaneohe, HI., Sept. 14, 1994. He operated the Hawaiian 14.1 MHz beacon for 13 years. He was a well-known 40 meter CW enthusiast. Reported by John G. Troster, W6ISQ and Robert S. Fabry, N6EK in QST, November, 1994.

KERR, Edward B. Sr., 1202-P, W2QUH, Trenton, NJ., No details.

LUSSIER, Edward G., 2703-V, VE4AAT, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, Dec. 7, 1993. Reported by his wife.

MARVIN, Frederick, 2390-P, WA6BXJ, Sedona, AZ., 1988

MITCHELL, Joseph H. Sr., 1525-SGP, N4NP, Sun City Center, FL., December, 1991. Reported by his son, Joseph Mitchell, Jr., KM4E.

RODGERS III, John (Jack) F., 4956-V, W3TFR, Catonsville, MD., Sept. 1994 after a long illness with cancer. He was a graduate of the WW II Hoffman's Island USMS Radio Operator Training School and was a very active member of Project Liberty Ship in support of the S/S John W. Brown, Baltimore, MD. He was 67.

In World War II he served as Radio Officer on five Liberty ships, a T-2 tanker, two WW-I style "Hog Island" freighters and one ore carrier. He also served as an instructor (Lt. jg) at the Hoffman Island radar school, Sheepshead Bay, NY.

His funeral took place Friday, September 23, 1994. The following day he was given a special memorial in the wreath-laying ceremony aboard the BROWN on its Chesapeake Bay cruise.

SEYMOUR, William, Sr., 1905-SGP, KH6EJ, Hilo, HI., No details.

WALTON, Col. R. C., USMC, Ret., 2441-P, W6CYL, San Jose, CA., Sept. 16, 1994, age 85 - heart problems. Reported by Frank Gunther, 3957-SGP, W2ALS.

WILLIAMS, Harvey G., 3292-V, W2FFU, Starke, FL., No details.



Mr. T.K.Phelps
The Society of Wireless Pioneers, Inc.
6289 Olde Orchard Drive
COLUMBUS, OH 43213-3416 U. S.A.

22nd August 1994

Dear Sir,

PORTISHEAD RADIO/GKA - 75TH ANNIVERSARY

I am writing to you as a 'useful' contact to ask if you can help me with Portishead Radio's 75th anniversary celebrations which take place next year.

I have been given the task of compiling a booklet made up of reminiscences and stories which involve GKA, and I feel sure that there are many SOWP members who will have some interesting and amusing stories to tell.

As more and more coast stations around the world close down forever, GKA is still going strong, despite the advent of satellite communications and GMDSS. Obviously our core business of CW communication has suffered as a result of these technological advances, but our radiotelex and aeronautical radio services have kept us in business.

What I would ideally like is for you to advertise the fact that 1995 is GKA's 75th birthday, and that I would appreciate any anecdotes and stories involving GKA from any SOWP member. I will also be delighted to hear from any member who has an interest in us, and I undertake to reply to all correspondence. My address is (given below).

Commemorative merchandise is planned to be made available during 1995, and full details will be publicised in due course.

If you can help me with this not inconsiderable task, I will be most grateful,... and if you need any further information please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,
Larry Bennett (G4HLN)
Customer Services Radio Officer
Portishead Radio - GKA
HIGHBRIDGE Somerset TA9 3JY
UNITED KINGDOM
Tel: +44 278 772253 Fax +44278 772222

∴ ALSO A POSSIBILITY OF SPECIAL EVENT
AMATEUR RADIO STATION DURING 1995!
WILL KEEP YOU ADVISED

Larry Bennett



L-R: Karl Nieberding (grandson), your Editor-Ted Phelps, Art Nieberding, (son-in law) aboard SS JOHN W. BROWN, Sept. 24 1994

REMINDER - SOWP SUPPLIES

Roy Couzin, SOWP Supplies Manager, is back in business after hip surgery. Contact him (address below) for stationery items, caps, bolo ties, etc. For detailed list see *World Wireless Beacon*, March 1994, Page 19.

Rapid Recovery Wishes

to W. A. "Wyck" Sherwood, 0303-TA, W2YIF, who is in the Rehab Center, St. Joseph's Hospital, Elmira, NY., after a fall at home and successful hip surgery. Hurry back on firm footing!

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