

The RARA RAG

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The Rochester Amateur Radio Association
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VOL. 26

APRIL 1974

NO. 8

OLD TIMERS NITE at Next Meeting - Friday, April 5th

An evening of fun, laughs and a bit of reminiscing for all...

**** RECOGNITION AND GROUP PHOTOGRAPH OF PAST PRESIDENTS..

**** WEIRD SIGNALS OF THE PAST!!

**** 40 YEARS OF HAMFEST PROGRAMS AND PICTURES!!

**** EQUIPMENT OF THE PAST!!

This is the time of year when old timers come "out of the wood" and mingle with the newer generation...

It is a time to visit with old friends whom you haven't seen in many years. To insure a good turnout, this Meeting Notice is being sent to ALL old timers -- members as well as non-members.

The response last year was great --- let's make it even better this year!!

The meeting will be at our regular location, the Monroe County Farm and Home Center, 249 Highland Avenue.

Hamfest Coming Soon - - - May 17th and 18th

The largest amateur radio event in the north-east will happen soon on May 17th & 18th. That event is the annual Western New York Hamfest and VHF Conference... better known on the air as the Rochester Hamfest.

Your personal copy of the Hamfest program will be in the mail to you soon. More than 6,000 copies will be mailed to all Rochester area amateurs and to those who have attended the Hamfest recently.

Complete details about ticket prices, programming, etc., are contained in the program you will receive. Should you talk with anyone who does not think he is on our mailing list and wants a copy of the program, just have him send a card to WNY Hamfest, Box 1388, Rochester, N. Y. 14603. His copy will be in the mail immediately.

Tickets will be on sale at the April 5th RaRa meeting. RaRa members get special reduced rates when purchasing tickets at the meeting. Show your membership card to Ernie Crewdson, WA2FVG, ticket chairman.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

by Bob Lauzon, WB2NSD

The program presented at the March meeting was one of the more interesting presented this year. Bob Nezelek, W2CNS, and Len Gessin, WA2ZNC, explained the Air Force MARS 2 meter FM repeater system and they gave us a live demonstration which was an unqualified success with everything going as planned. We heard live two-way conversations between linked repeaters and we were given a graphic explanation of their repeater hook-up. Air Force MARS is to be congratulated on the success of their system and Bob and Len on the success of their presentation.

At the April meeting we will celebrate Old Timers Night again with Bruce Kelley, W2ICE, at the helm. As usual Bruce will make the evening memorable and thoroughly enjoyable. We hope that many old timers who haven't been out recently will attend to add to the number of regulars at this meeting. We will have some good news for Past Presidents of RaRa so let's have as many of them present as possible.

The Annual Meeting will be held on Friday, May 3, at the Farm and Home Center. Your officers for 1974-1975 will be elected at that meeting and the dues structure for the same period will come up for confirmation along with other important club matters. Your presence is important if you are to have a voice in the affairs of RaRa for the coming year. Up-to-date Hamfest news will be announced.

The Code & Theory Class is completed but we are unable to report the final outcome as the new FCC regulations forbid looking at the examination questions, however, there is every indication that quite a few new Novices have been created and that many of them either have become, or will become, members of the club. The next Novice Class will start in September and we are trying to secure the same excellent facilities at RIT. Adequate notice will be given before the class starts. Plans for a General/Advanced Theory Class for the fall are being made with five volunteer instructors having already signed up. We need another five to round out the staff so if any of you would like to help out we can sure use you for one, or at most, two sessions of your choosing. Please let me know at the next meeting and you will feel satisfaction we all feel when we help brother hams.

LETTERS - - -

March 16, 1974

Misses Bettyanne & Suzanne Bryan
96 Kings Lane
Rochester, New York 14617

Dear Friends:

This is truly a case of finding it difficult to chose the proper words to express our sincere sense of sadness and personal loss. All of us, however, who have ever enjoyed the great Saturday luncheon sessions at Bryan's want you to know we each feel a genuine heartbreak over the terrible fire which took away your family business and our wonderful "meeting place."

Many of us were at the scene on March 9th, for as usual we had gathered at Rochester Radio Supply to make the trek to Bryan's. We stood outside and, if not outwardly, certainly inwardly, we wept over the demise of such a great place where so many of our happy memories were formed. Two of part of the original group are now "silent keys", as we Amateurs refer to the departed. So some of our fond memories of them are connected with the Saturday luncheons.

Today at noon we walked by the place, peered in, and were heartbroken again to view the destruction. We will no doubt continue to meet for lunch but no place will we feel we will ever recapture the friendliness of such warm and delightful people.

We will miss all of you, not the least of which will be Edith!

To a man we have all agreed this letter must be written, to thank you all for your understanding of our sometimes noisy bunch, for the great food and service, for the friendliness and helpfulness of you tow ladies who always made us feel "at home" and welcomed.

If ever Bryan's is rebuilt, and we hope it will be, you can be assured we will be waiting for the doors to open on the first Saturday!

Thank you for everything, from all of us. We just wanted you (and your mother and all of the family) to know we Rochester Amateur radio operators, or "hams" share your grief over the loss of Bryan's!

Sincerely,
Eddie Dunn
For all of the group.

The RARA RAG

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LETTERS - - -

Continued

(Editor's notes) - (Here is a letter sent to Bill DeWitt, W2DD, with more information about the first broadcast from an airplane, reported by Bill last month in the Rag.)

8 March 1974
4217 Brookfield Drive
Kensington, Md. 20795

Dear Mr. DeWitt:

My Mother, Brother and I enjoyed your article in the March RaRa Rag which Don Hassett sent to us. As a minor, but unmentioned participant in the 1926 Air-to-Expo broadcasts, I'd like to add a few details and items.

Charlie Wethern, the elder of the two airplane owners, was the pilot for most of the flights. I was most impressed when I first met him; he held out his left hand. He had been struck on the right shoulder by a propeller blade and his right arm was completely paralyzed. He was killed during the thirties when his auto struck a bridge girder. I believed this happened near Utica. Spencer Punnett died quite recently.

The airplanes were manufactured by the Standard Aircraft Corporation, Elizabeth, N. J. and powered by Hispano-Suiza engines, hence the Hisso-Standard designation. The same plane with a better-known American engine was called the "OX-5 Standard". The pilot sat in the rear cockpit, thereby ensuring that the passengers would get to the accident first.

Buckland field was a meadow, complete with livestock. The lavatory facilities were quite ample - a hay stack; providing one could get past the browsing cows. I was terrified of the beasts and always required escort.

Dad took me with him on one broadcast flight. It was my first airplane ride, lasting 42 minutes. We reached an altitude of 3000 feet. I was permitted to say "Hello" to my Mother. I also started to tell her my tummy felt funny, and as my description became more graphic (urp!) I was cut off the air - censorship!

My Dad took movies, as you mentioned in your article. They included aerial shots of Rochester and the fairgrounds, one of the crowd around the receiver and speaker, and one of, I do believe Ducky (I wasn't permitted to call him THAT!) Dengler at the field, coyly peeking out from behind the airplane's rudder. I still have those films.

I am not sure what became of the WKBK license, do you know?

During the 1926 hurricane, when all normal communication with Florida had been interrupted, My Dad, and possibly others, sent hundreds of messages to hams in Florida who were sending equal numbers of messages north as people up here tried to locate friends and relatives down there and the people in Florida reassured friends and relatives up north that they had survived the storm and flood.

Each autumn, pilots Wethern and Punnett flew their planes to Geneva where there was a hanger in which the airplanes spent the winter. We drove down one time and I remember helping push the planes in onto the dirt floor. The radiators were drained, the big doors closed, and the flying season officially ended.

Those were exciting days for a six-year old. Thanks for bringing them to mind.

Sincerely,
Gene Handler, Jr.

March 7, 1974

Rochester Amateur Radio Association

I would like to thank your organization for the opportunity you gave to me to get my novice license. This is something I have always wanted to do. When I saw the notice in the paper I thought here is my chance. So please accept my thanks and also give my thanks to Bob, Dave and Ed who gave their time to teach. My call is WN2UBD.

73, Edward F. Kohl

Editor's note: Bob, Dave and Ed are the boys who taught the novice course... Bob Lauzon, WB2NSD; Dave Hassett, K2SQI, and Ed Holdsworth, WA2EKR.

FIRST SSB AND EARLY PHONE OPERATION

by Bruce Kelley, W2ICE, Club Historian

Records are seldom made of early amateur accomplishments and when they are, they seem to get lost. Fortunately, information has been kept of early sideband operation in the Rochester area all of which is within the memory of most local amateurs.

A brief review of early phone operation reveals there were no "wireless telephone" transmitters in the area pre-WWI. Such transmitters if they existed, would have been modulated arcs. (Continued on page 4)

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FIRST SSB

(Continued from page 3)

1914-18 saw development of modern phone transmitters using vacuum tubes. The early 20's found several modulated oscillator sets on the air including a DeForest transmitter owned by Larry Hickson, founder of WHEC. By 1927 amateurs were working DX on 20 meters. Typical was the loop modulation system used by Al Balling (8ALY). His entire transmitter consisted of one 50 watt tube as transmitter. A single turn of wire attached to a telephone mike was loosely coupled to the tank coil. This crude arrangement provided phone contacts with Europe!

Loop and Heising modulation of the 20's was replaced with Class "B" modulators which made phone operation commonplace by WWII. There was little change after the war other than for a brief craze with the economy minded ham who tried NBFM on 20 and 75. Then something happened. In the latter part of 1948, AM operators heard some pretty horrible noises on the phone bands.

The wise amateur soon found by carefully adjusting his receiver for CW operation the garbled sound became speech! This was single sideband operation, a mode of communication first used commercially for trans-atlantic telephony in the 20's.

First stations to be heard were WØTQK and W6YX at Stanford University. Then a couple in the East: Don Norgaard, W2KUJ (Schenectady) and Dick Long, W3ASW (Harrisburg, Pa.). About this time, Fran Sherwood, W2QCF, gave the first SSB talk at a RaRa Meeting and a Rochester amateur, Grady Fox, W2VVC, became interested.

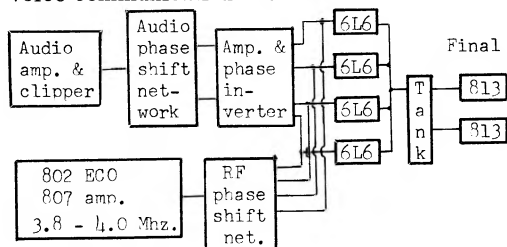
Following plans in an article in July, 1948 QST, Grady constructed a SSB exciter for 75 meter operation making him the second SSB station in New York State and the first in Monroe County. Shortly after, Bill Rust, W2UNJ (Cortland, N. Y.), wrote an article in the August, 1949 issue of QST describing a simple SSB exciter. Interest was now beginning to pick up.

The first to explore 14 mc. SSB in the Rochester area was Yoe Seiler, W2EB (East Bloomfield) soon to be followed by Jerry Fink, W2TTQ and Fran Sherwood. Central Electronics gave the would-be-sidebander the popular 10-A exciter in the early 50's eliminating the need to become a "technical wizard" as the homebrew-

ers were known in those days.

The period between 1955 and 1965 saw the big swing from AM to SSB and by 1970 few AM phones could be heard except on VHF and 160 meters. There was talk of abolishing AM altogether on the lower frequencies. This was not necessary. Attrition did the trick. If you're nostalgically inclined, listen for W2AN's 192 AM transmitter on 3905 Kc. operating from the A. W. A. Museum. It uses a UX-210 crystal oscillator driving a 210 which is Heising modulated by a pair of UX-250's in parallel. The W2AN SSB rig is a 10-A driving 35 year old 807 and a pair of 805's.

Credit for historical material in this brief article goes to W2VVC who has compiled a comprehensive file for RaRa covering both local and nationwide SSB development. Who knows -- maybe the RaRa Historian of 2000 A. D. will go through our files and discover Grady's folder telling about SSB -- a form of voice communication used in the '70s.



Block diagram of W2VVC's first SSB transmitter

FOR SALE: VIKING RANGER transmitter GSB-100- single side band transmitter; Heath kit WARRIOR amplifier; Heath kit "Twoer"-2 meter transceiver with DC power supply and halo antenna. John W. Fulreader, W2AWN.

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Chronological Record of RaRa Presidents

by Bruce Kelley, W2ICE, Club Historian

Amateur radio in Rochester was first organized

Rochester in 1913 when the Rochester Wireless Association was formed. That club was followed by the St. Paul Radio Club, the Rochester Radio Association, the Rochester Radio Club, the Radio Club of Rochester, the Triangle Radio Club and the Society of Rochester Transmitting Amateurs.

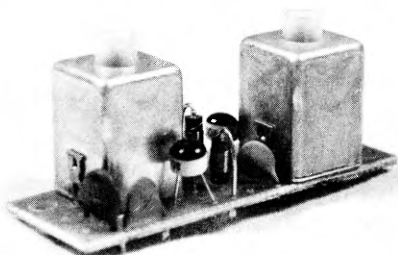
In 1930, the Rochester Amateur Radio Association was formed and has continued as the principal club in the Rochester area since that time. Here is a list of RaRa's presidents:

- 1930-36 *John Long, W8ABX
Al Balling, W8ALY
Ken Gardner, W8BGN, W2BGN
Jerry Hall, W8AHK, W2AHK
*Ray Lucia, W8BEN, W2BEN
Joe Hertzberg, W8JE
- 1937 *Charlie Snyder, W8ATH, W2PWY
1938 *Doc Smith, W8RGA, W2RGA
1939 Bill Bellor, W8MG, W2MG
1940 Al Grabb, W8DOD, W2DOD
1941 Bill Hamp, W8HZD, W2QEW
1942 Geo. Olsen, W8TWN, W2TWN
1943 Geo. Olsen, W8TWN, W2TWN
1944 Bruce, Kelley, W8ACY, W2ICE
1945 Fran Sherwood, W8NCM, W2QCF
1946 Sam Caputo, W2RSL
1947 Dick Fish, W2OWF
1948 Jerry Fink, W2TTQ
1949 Link Cundall, W2QY
1950 Wes Jackling, W2YUT
1951 Hank Blodgett, W2UTH
1952 Lee Wight, W2VBH
1953 Bob Wetherall, W2CZT
1954 Orv. Bauer, W2TEX
1955 Chas. Brelsford, W2CTA/K2WW
1956 Fred Halik, W2PFI/K2EU
1957 Russ Deane, W2ZS
1958 Jack Williams, K2JFV
1959 Roger Dunham, K2EQK
1960 Ernie Siegmund, K2ITM
1961 Stan Hazen, K2SSB
1962 Charles Oneske, K2YCO
1963 Edward Capauldy, K2UXF
1964 Cliff Milner, K2SKO
1965 Harold Smith, WA2KND
1966 Eddie Dunn, WA2KMI/W2ECH
1967 Charlie Hooker, W2SXV
1968 Ernie Crewdson, WA2FVG
1969 Al Mumby, WB2MCP
1970 George Negus, K2OIU
1971 Rich Koehn, WB2SNA
1972 Ed Holdsworth, WA2EKR
1973 Bob Lauzon, WB2NSD

There are still 25 presidents who are active members of RaRa. There are only 4 silent keys. Of the earlier clubs, three of their presidents are RaRa members: Cy Staud, 8AP, K2DQ; George Batterson, 8TC, W2GB; and Ducky Dengler, 8KS, W2LK.

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