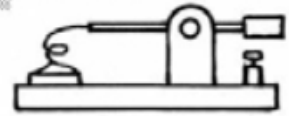


Spark-Gap Times



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The Old Old Timers Club



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OOTC Inc.

Phil Sager, WB4FDT

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VOLUME 51, NUMBER 1, SPARK-GAP TIMES
JANUARY, 2014

NEW domestic member \$26. (\$10 initiation + \$16 yearly sustaining fee).
NEW International member, \$28 (\$20 initiation + \$18 yearly sustaining fee).

Note that the Initiation fee is a one-time fee to new members. These fees include receiving the Spark-Gap Times via email or via the OOTC website.

Renewing USA members \$16 yearly, \$18 Canadian and foreign. These fees include receiving the Spark-Gap Times via email or via the OOTC website.

If you wish to receive the PRINT Spark Gap Times the additional fee is \$5.00 yearly for USA members, including Life Members, and \$7 yearly for Canadian and foreign members, including Life Members.

Life Membership dues: Under age 75-\$250.00. Ages 75-79-\$200. ages 80-85-\$150. 86-89-\$100. 90-94-\$50.00 95 and above—Free. Note that Life Membership dues do not include the print Spark-Gap Times. The \$5 yearly fee must still be paid for the print copy.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT. You are eligible if you had two-way wireless communication 40 (or more) years ago (eligible on Jan 1 of the 40th year) OOTC recognizes your first two-way communication by CB, Amateur, commercial or military operation. Provide proof if possible. If never ham licensed but had eligible 2-way communication, you may also join.

OOTC wishes to have extended information about each member, activities and background. This information becomes a permanent and important part of your record as a member of OOTC, making it possible for us to publish your life work and experiences. Information is saved in OOTC archives. We would a photograph. Send a biography and/or story suitable for publication in the Spark-Gap times on separate sheets of paper, or via email attachment to our Secretary.

Notice: Call letters shown were calls they used, subject to reissue since then.

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1969 BERT GAMBLE	W5ZC
1970-1976 RAY MEYERS	W6MLZ
Assistant LEE MANN	K6KP
1977-1978 RAY MEYERS	W6MLZ
1979-1986 A. J. GIRONDA	W2JE
1987-1991 BERT AYERS	W6CL
1992-1993 WESLEY RANGLES	W4COW

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1956-1957 EARL CLINE SR	***W4PPZ
1958 RICHARD KLEINBERGER	W2AEC
1959-1964 EARL WILLIAMS	W2EG
1965-1967 EUNICE THOMPSON	*****W1MPP
1968 T. FRANK SMITH	W5VA
1969 BERT GAMBLE	W5ZC
1970-1978 RAY MEYERS	W6MLZ
1979-1986 A. J. GIRONDA	W2JE
1987-1988 BERT AYERS	W6CL
1989-1990 WESLEY RANGLES	W4COW
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HOW TO GET A HAM LICENSE IN 1913

Taken From "Electrician and Mechanic" magazine, January, 1913, page 58:
(Tnx to W4TY)

"Wireless operators rush to get Licenses"

Since the first of the month, the office of the electrical school at the Brooklyn Navy Yard has daily been crowded with veteran, neophytic and embryonic wireless operators, all panting to write down what they know about radio communication, its uses and abuses, and so get a license from the Department of Commerce and Labor.

All this rush is due to the fact that on December 13 there goes into effect an act for the regulation of radio communication, whereby all wireless operators and all apparatus which work across State lines or can communicate with ships at sea are required to be licensed.... Examinations are being held at United States navy yards and army posts all over the country during this month, and according to reports, thousands of operators are availing themselves of the opportunity of getting certificates as regular flashers before December 13.

The fact that there are some 10,000 wireless stations, most of the amateur ones, around New York accounts in the minds of the examiners at the Brooklyn navy yard for the daily crush in their office.

Anybody who wants a license must first go to the Custom House or to the electrical school at the navy yard and present an application, telling whether he knows anything about the Berlin International Radiotelegraphic Convention and regulations, and the Continental and Morse telegraph codes. He must also show how much experience he has, and a dozen other things. Then he must let the examiner at the electrical school fire a lot of questions at him. His answers must be written ones, and they are corrected by the examiners under the supervision of the Department of Commerce and Labor.

One of the questions which is likely to hit a trembling beginner in the face is "How can you tell if your antenna is radiating?". The applicants for commercial licenses, of which there are now five grades, may be asked to "describe in detail the adjustment of a transmitter for a certain wave length (such as 600 meters) so that only a single hump would be present." Everyone, regardless of class or grade, swears to keep secret any messages he may pluck out of the air, unless ordered to divulge those messages by a court of competent jurisdiction.... Furthermore, the beardless dabbler in sparks solemnly vows to cease troubling the air with his machinations when there are important messages flaring around the sky.

Apparently, the amateur about New York are right up to the scratch when it comes to knowing their business, for 90 per cent of all the applicants examined at the navy yard during the first three weeks passed, according to one of the examining officers."

In 1975 your editor interviewed George Robinson, W3FE, who was one of the eight radio amateurs licensed in Virginia in the first 1914 call book of the Department of Commerce.

George said he took a train at age 16 by himself to the Norfolk, Va navy yard to take his ham

exam. His examiner saw on George's application that George was on the air, and asked him to make a block diagram of his station and to explain what sort of antenna he was using. The examination only took a few minutes, and George has passed his exam.

THE RIDE TO THE RESCUE

(A synopsis of a story by Harold Castner, W1ILE (SK). From August 1965 SGT)

In this year of the ARRL's 100th anniversary, it is interesting to reflect how this small incident might have permitted amateur radio to exist after WWI...

Memory takes me back for over a half a century to my radio shack at 69 High Street, Portland Maine...During those years before 1915, we simply got resonance and blasted. We contacted ocean liners and reported docking time to agents; worked anything and, particularly old 1ZE on the New York Boat. You have to be a real OOT to remember WBF on Filene's in Boston, in addition to that grand old lady, WCC.

Well, one night in the summer of 1912, I tuned to WBF and intercepted a message addressed to Senator Hale, of Maine, from President Taft, on the Mayflower. It seems the president had not intended to visit Portland, but apparently had changed his mind, and the message advised Senator Hale that the President would arrive in Portland the next morning at 9:00AM. Well, this was pretty short notice, and it was late evening already. We knew how important this message would be to Senator Hale. Furthermore, I knew that Senator Hale was not in his home in Portland, but was at his summer home in Falmouth, about 5 miles north of Portland, where there were no telephones.

I quickly contacted several locals hams in town, and the group reasoned that the message would be telegraphed from Boston, and probably delivered to his Portland home by western union bicycle. There would be quite a delay before the message would get to him in Falmouth. One of our group owned a car, so we decided to deliver this important message ourselves.

It was quite late and one of our group compared our ride to Paul Revere's!. After a few minutes, we entered the large estate where the Senator and knocked on the door. After some time, a light came on and a sleepy butler opened the door slightly, giving one of us to say we had an important message for the Senator. The butler immediately closed the door and locked it.

After a few minutes, Senator Hale opened the door, wearing a bathrobe, and seemed rather cautious about this commotion. Senator Hale was handed the message, and the group waited. After reading the message, and receiving further explanation, the Senator realized the importance of the message, and immediately the entire household was aroused and hasty preparations made to meet the President the following morning.,

Senator Hale thanked us, and said he was very grateful and if the opportunity ever arose, he would like to return the favor. The next morning, the Mayflower docked in Portland and was met by Senator Hale, the Mayor and a delegation of city fathers.

Five years later we were involved in WWI, and I enlisted and became a Chief Radioman

in the US Navy. After the war was over, the ARRL began urging the reestablishment of amateur privileges. I applied for a license, and was given the call IUG, but difficulties arose. It seems the government was considering steps to limit the amateur radio privileges, and perhaps do away with it all together.

I became personally acquainted with H. P. Maxim and together we discussed what might be done. The situation did not look promising, but I learned from Maxim that a Senate committee which was considering this restriction of amateur privileges was headed by Senator Hale, of Maine!!

I sat down and wrote Senator Hale a letter. I emphasized how much the self-trained amateur had contributed to the war effort and closed the letter by reminding him that I was one of the boys who brought him that message so long ago, and asked him if he remembered. I received a most cordial reply from Senator Hale. He was sympathetic with our cause and stated that he felt the self-trained radio operator was a justifiable argument for continuing the opportunity by which experienced operators would be trained and radio in time of national emergency.

In his last paragraph, he briefly stated that he did recall the favor we had done him years ago, and that he did remember.

No one will every know, but to his dying day Hiram Percy Maxim believed that letter did the trick, and all of a sudden, the amateur privileges were re-established and have continued to this day.

We are reminded in Holy Writ to "Cast our bread upon the waters" and it seems it came back after some 8 years, as an investment in the future.



I found this wonderful true photo postcard at a postcard show some years ago. The card says; "wireless station, W. H. Carroll, 6334 McPherson ave, St Louis, MO. Call at present C.H.W."

From the OOTC President.....

Sitting here at my operating position while reading today's e-mail I came across one from Pip, our new OOTC Executive Secretary politely reminding me that my "president's message" was due. And there are a lot of things on my mind as to what I should say. First, OOTC is getting through the transition of executive secretaries and Pip, WB4FDT, is getting the job done. It's hard to imagine the difficulties he faced in moving databases, software, files, hardware, etc., across the country all the while facing a steep learning curve! But, the few wrinkles and blips are getting squared away and my hat is off to Pip.

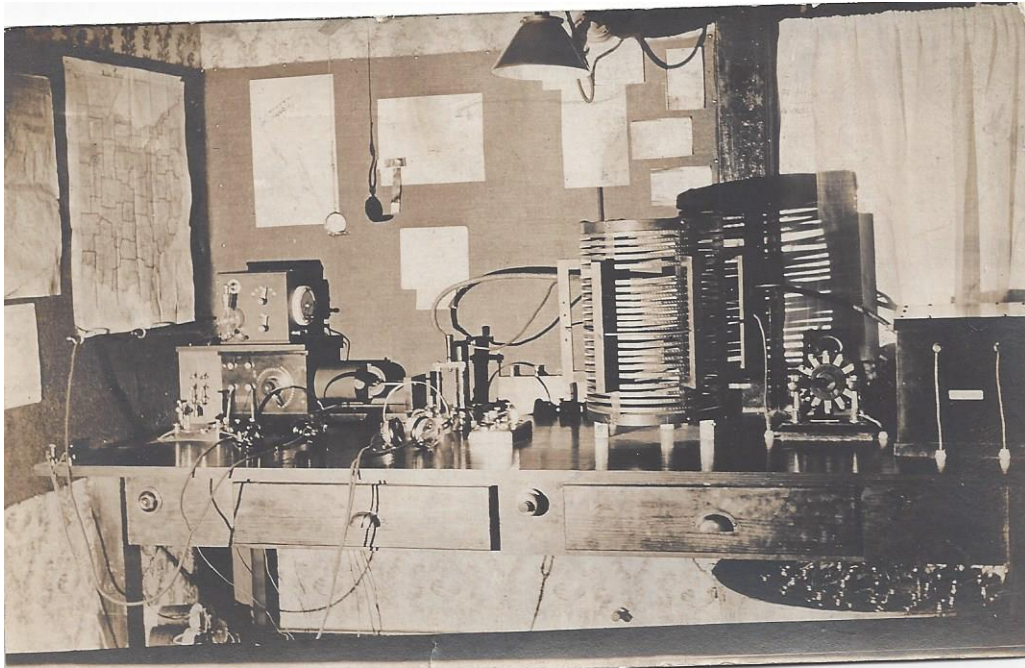
I imagine you have noticed a surprising upswing in the solar flux. Some have suggested a dual peak sunspot cycle. Regardless, it is certainly a pleasure to get on the air and work both friends and DX. A new piece of equipment always helps in the fun and I have been enjoying my new "bug" built by Tom Withers, G3HGE, named the "Olympic". You can see it here: <http://www.twradio.co.uk/TWOlympic.html> I belong to a couple CW clubs and I get a bit of practice working members. First is FISTS (<http://www.fists.org/>) and second is SKCC (<http://www.skccgroup.com/>). I recommend these friendly clubs as a way to staying active in CW.

OOTC is still struggling to meet expenses just as many others are. Please consider making a donation. Actually there are two types of welcomed donations to OOTC. A gift to the general operating expenses of the club and also a scholarship fund donation are excellent ways of helping.

Hope to catch you on the air.

73,

Troy, W6HV



Another true photo postcard. On the back is written Wireless station 8TO or perhaps 8TI, Tiffin, Ohio.

OOTC LOGO on www.Gifts4hams.com

OOTC Member K5YRT has put our OOTC logo on his gift web site. Now members can order everything from mugs to keychains with the OOTC logo. Just go to the website listed above.

Morse Telegraph Club

Many long-time radio amateurs have likely heard snippets of telegraph history here and there. After all, radio amateurs share a considerable heritage with the railroad and commercial telegrapher. While the codes may be different (radio amateurs use the "Continental Code" whereas commercial telegraphers use the "Morse Code,"), many of our most familiar operating procedures actually originated in commercial and railroad telegraphy.

The general public largely views Morse Telegraphy as a technology that faded out in the 19th Century. Even the best-selling author Tom Standage, in his work entitled "The Victorian Internet," implies that the telephone displaced telegraphy. His history stops in the 1870s as if to imply, quite incorrectly, that technologies are somehow mutually exclusive. In reality, manual Morse Telegraphy continued to be used into the 1980s when it was finally displaced by computer networks and effective mobile two-way radio systems.

Another common misconception is the idea that the use of the American Morse Code was generally limited to the railroads. In reality, this original American Morse Code continued in use well into the post war era for a wide variety of applications ranging from commercial telegram service (Western Union, Postal Telegraph, Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Telegraphs), railroad service, stock brokerage and commodities work, pipeline companies, press, sports play-by-play and so forth. Even the phone company used telegraphy for its internal communications because telegraph circuits could be composited on valuable voice toll circuits, allowing the latter to remain in revenue service.

As you might imagine, there are a surprising number of individuals alive today who worked as telegraph operators or in other phases of the telegraph industry, such as testing and regulating and other phases. These men and women have their own association dedicated to preserving the history and traditions of telegraphy and the telegraph industry. This organization, founded in 1943, is the Morse Telegraph Club.

MTC membership is open to anyone with an interest in the history of telegraphy and the telegraph industry. In addition to the men and women who worked in the field, our membership consists of many radio amateurs who share an interest in the history of telegraphy and telecommunications.

MTC activities are quite diverse. Local Chapters demonstrate telegraphy at steam train excursions, Civil War re-enactments, historical events and the like. Some of our members regularly present talks on the history of telegraphy for radio clubs, engineering societies, historical associations and the like. Other members collect and restore antique telegraph instruments.

MTC maintains a telegraph hub system as well as an Internet based system, which allows members to interconnect personal or museum telegraph offices. Using this system, the authentic telegraph instruments behave just as they would on a traditional telegraph current loop. If one were to bring an operator back from 50 or 75 years ago, he would not know that the telegraph circuit is simulated by a computer and software unless one showed him the modern technology running in the background.

MTC also publishes a Quarterly Journal entitled "Dots and Dashes," containing articles on telegraph history and club activities. "Dots and Dashes" is undoubtedly our club's most attractive feature.

Radio Amateurs are invited to learn more about MTC at the following web sites:

www.morsetelegraphclub. or www.facebook.com/morsetelegraphclub

The Rules Say....

John B. Johnston, W3BE #3946

What Was Incentive Licensing?

Q. Just what was incentive licensing?

A. That term is so tarnished as to best not say it aloud in ham radio conversation. It can evoke painful memories and outrage. Its intent resides in Section 97.1 where it states that the rules in Part 97 are designed to provide an amateur radio service having a fundamental purpose as expressed in five principles, one of which is: (c) Encouragement and improvement of the amateur service through rules which provide for advancing skills in both the communication and technical phases of the art.

Q. What was the uproar all about?

A. It began innocently enough. Ground was broken in 1949 with a FCC Notice of Proposed Rule Making in Docket No. 9259. The subsequent 1951 Report and Order adopted rules replacing the former Class A, B, C operator arrangement with our current Novice to Amateur Extra Class structure. Initially, however, General, Conditional, Advanced and Amateur Extra Class operators all had full privileges.

It became of growing concern to our amateur service community, however, some dozen years later when petitions were filed calling for frequency privileges exclusively to the higher class operators. Their underlying premise was that there should be such rewards to licensees in turn for advancing their communication and technical skills; from that, the term incentive licensing was coined.

The ensuing Notice of Proposed Rule Making in Docket No. 15928 cited statements from a retired Chief Signal Officer of the U.S. Army, a bar association librarian of a large city, the president of a leading electronics manufacturing company, a college engineering instructor, and a state civil defense communications director. They all deplored the low level of technical expertise within our amateur service.

Many in our amateur service community consider the 1967 follow-on Report and Order to be a most unfair and disruptive regulatory overkill. It withdrew sub-band segments from the privileges of General, Conditional, and Advanced Class operators, thereby disrupting long-established HF practices. Only Amateur Extra Class operators were spared spectrum access loss. Incentive licensing's infamous reputation resulted from that upsetting meat-cleaver transition.

Some General, Conditional, and Advanced Class operators reacted to regain their lost privileges; they passed the written and high-speed telegraphy examinations. Others resigned themselves – often irately - to their diminished privilege status. Still others simply dropped out.

In the 1980s, those who had attained Amateur Extra Class were called upon to design and

assemble our volunteer examiner system. Most amateur operators listed on the ULS today became first licensed as a result of their efforts.

The Rules say

Our amateur service community organizers during that tumultuous episode had no comprehension of repeaters, satellites, personal computers, internet, systems, and the other capabilities that we now utilize in our intercommunicating; their know-how was CW/AM station vacuum tube, piece part, analogue technology. Many innovating newcomers have since joined our amateur service community and helped to make it more functional. Although it has undergone numerous - and usually contentious - rule makings, that which began as a telegraphy-driven operator structure has had to reinvent itself - awkwardly - into our present no-code artifact.

Q. Is Section 97.1 effective?

A. For over six decades, there have been no further outcries about our ineptness heard from those military, legal, manufacturer, academia, and civil defense critics. Either we are now meeting their expectations, or no longer matter to them. Whether our continued existence is because of - or in spite of - Section 97.1 is debatable. The issue, obviously, is no longer one of whether or not critics consider our hobby as fulfilling our critics' needs. Increasing the ULS numerical listings, rather, is now our self-selected preoccupation. Amateur operator license examination administration has taken on a life of its own. Building upon the work of our 32,000 uncompensated volunteer examiners, there has emerged a tangential commerce in publishing, distributing, retailing, training, writing, and other marketable services.

A HAM RADIO MYSTERY

Samuel Beverage, W1MGP #2261

In the summer of 1940 I was back at my home location on North Haven Island, Maine which is 12 miles out in Penobscot Bay. I had been working in Mass. for several years but came back for the

Summer before going to another job that Fall.

For several years my Schoolmate, Alex, W1MIR and I had been building a rig together. We had visited Ed, W1HSO at Stonington, ME and knew we just had to make a wooden rack with a plywood panel same as Ed's. I built the rack and a modulator. Alex built a CW deck, so now it was complete and I had it in a corner of my Dad's garage. The operation was mainly on 160 and 75 AM phone with a power of at least 40 watts!

These were the days before TV and other media entertainment. So there was no complaints of TV! or BCI, in fact we soon learned that anyone who had a radio that would almost tune up to 1.8 Mc (Yes it was still Cycles!) could hear us and we were their favorite program!

Feeling bold, I stenciled my call letters W1MGP on a rough sign and put it out on the fence at the main road.

One of my aunts was the Cook at a Summer Estate in the village. There were several hired maids there also and one day they told her that they had taken a long walk and gone way up to where the "foreigner" lives. My aunt said, "Why, what do you mean?" They said "there was a sign there saying Wimgp, that must be foreign". When told we all had a big laugh and thought nothing more of it.

I came back briefly in June 1941 before reporting to the Draft Board and was surprised to find a nice sheet metal sign and mounting bracket hanging on the fence! It was painted a dark green with black lettering saying "Sam Beverage, W1MGP" . The mystery remains, as to made it as W1MIR had left to join the Merchant Marine and my Dad didn't know how or when it got there.

Samuel H. Beverage, W1MGP 2261

163 Middle Rd.

North Haven Island, ME 04853-3116

OOTC Silent Keys

John Barber, W1PRT, #2843-- John served in the Army/Air Force during World War II and the Korean War. He was a past Master Mason, and a Shriner. At age 13 he heard a local ham on 160 meters on his AM radio and was hooked. He was licensed in 1946 as W1PRT. He took a home built CW rig with him to Korea during the Korean war but no ham transmitting was allowed! He was active in the Connecticut traffic nets for a number of years.

William Kafka, W2YAV # 3522 . Bill was licensed as W8QUN in 1937 and served in the Coast Guard during World War in 1945, the Coast Guard continued to employ him as a civilian in the Great Lakes area, installing and repairing electronics on various Coast Guard small boats and tugs, icebreakers and even lighthouses. He also held W6VTE. He retired in 1971 from the Coast Guard in 1971.

Edward J. Calhoon, Sr, W3CA #3569. Licensed in 1956 as KN6TYP, and also held K6TYP and W3DEQ. Joined the Army at 17, and became a member of the US Army Field Band and Fort Mead, Md. Served in Vietnam as a company commander. He retired from a career with the US Department of Commerce where he was a computer analyst.

Alan Shawsmith, VK4SS #1823. Alan was first licensed in 1935 with the call VK4SA. Served in the Australian army during WWII. He is well known for his many amateur radio stories and articles published during the 1950's-70's. He was also an active DX'er and a avid collector of early radio equipment. Alan was also a member of the SOWP, AWA and RSGB.

John Thomas III, W3FAF #4116. First licensed as WN3FAF in Pennsylvania in 1956 at age 14. John held a PhD in Solid State Physics and retired as an industrial physicist. He was

an avid CW traffic handler and had served as Central Area Net manager. He had lived in Minnesota for over 20 years, and had returned to Pennsylvania shortly before his death.

Heinz Kutzner, DL9IE, #2898. First licensed in 1939. Heinz was a member of our European Chapter.

Louis Geis, W5JHP, #3675. First licensed in 1953 as KN2DYA. He lived in El Paso, TX.

William Smith, K3SIS, #4080, Carmel, IN. First licensed in 1962 as KN2SIS. Served in the Department of State Foreign Service

Edward "Ted" Dillard, W1RPM, #2783, Harvard, MA. First licensed in 1948 Ted was a graduate of Boston University, a member of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity, and served in the US Navy with an Honorable Discharge in 1946. He was an Electrical Engineer, and worked for the Massachusetts Electric System from his graduation until his retirement in 1992. He was President of the Westminster Rotary club, and was an avid biker and sailor.

JOHN TROSTER, W6ISQ #1909

Virtually all of us hams knew John. Licensed in 1935 at age 14 as W2ISQ, in Yonkers, New York. He became W6ISQ after moving to California in 1972. John is best remembered for his many usually humorous articles in QST. He served as president of the Northern California DX club and the Northern California Contest Club. An ARRL Charter Life member, as well as 5BDXCC and the USA Counties Award (all CW). He was a member of the CQ DX Hall of Fame, and the first Pacific Division representative on the ARRL DX Advisory Committee. He also was a QCWA Director and wrote the QCWA column in **WorldRadio**. He retired from the Marine Corps after 25 years in the Reserve. He served in WWII as a Marine Corps radio/radar officer. He was a Petroleum Engineer and geologist. He was one of the founding members of the amateur radio satellite community, serving on the Board of Directors of the original project OSCAR (Orbiting Satellite Carrying Amateur Radio). John was a life member of OOTC and had been a member for nearly 38 years.

Charles Bennett, N5CFN, #4419. Hattiesburg, Miss. Joined the Mississippi Army Reserve National Guard in 1956. First licensed in 1956. Collected and repaired antique radios.

Willard Henderson, W5UZV, #3961. Bethany, OK. First licensed in 1947 as J9XXX while stationed in Okinawa as a member of the Army signal corps. Later J9ABY. QCWA #26157.

Blanche Randles, W4GXZ, #3288. Amherst, MA. First licensed in 1954 as W4GXZ. Her husband was W4COW (sk). She was active in a number of amateur radio clubs in the Massachusetts and Florida areas. QCWA #12616.

Charles “Chuck” Stinger, W8GFA, #4047. Hamilton, OH. Worked at WLW in 1947, and later for VOA. Retired from VOA as a plant manager. First QSO in 1950. He was proud of being one of the original members of the Antique Wireless Association, and was a veteran of the Army Air Corps. Chuck had written articles and spoke many times about the pioneering work in broadcasting by WLW. His other hobbies included beekeeping and antique clocks.

NEW MEMBERS

David Hanson, W7BJ, #4627, Prescott, AZ. First licensed as KN0TWO in 1959. Upgraded to Conditional one year later and became K0TWO. Joined the army in 1967 and went to radio school at Ft Gordon, Ga, and became a field radio repairman. Upgraded to Extra and became W7BJ. Member 10-10, QCWA, and several local radio clubs.

M. R. “Steve” Stever, W6JBO, #4632, Roseburg, Oregon. First licensed as WN6JBO is 1971, and later licensed as WA6JBO. Steve was in the Air Force from 1954-8 and is active on 75 and 40 meters, 2 meters, 440, and on Echolink.

Hans-Jurgen Dornig DK8RE, #4633 Germany, first licensed in 1973 as Y59ZF, and also held calls Y23EF and DL8UDD.

David McNeil, W6PHO, #4634, Columbia, CA. First licensed in 1957 as KN5GRT.

William Stoltz, Jr, K5YRT, #4635, Pearl River LA. First licensed in 1959 as KN5YRT. Also licensed as KE5WJR.. Member Air National Guard from 1966-72.



A special event envelope honoring the ARRL's 90th anniversary in 2003. Cancelled in Newington, CT.

