



COLUMBIA-MONTOUR AMATEUR RADIO CLUB NEWSLETTER MAY 2014

<http://www.qsl.net/cm-arc/>

SKEETER, WA3IIA, DEMONSTRATES SPARK GAP TRANSMITTER TO CLUB

At the April club meeting, Skeeter, WA3IIA, demonstrated a spark gap transmitter to the members.



In the photo above, Skeeter keys the transmitter as Steve, WA3GQA, looks on.

Skeeter wrote the following article about spark gap transmitters:

The Spark Gap transmitter was used from 1867 to about 1920 and then eventually outlawed around 1930 due to the signals wide bandwidth causing QRM. The operating band for amateurs in 1905 was 400 meters or 750 KHz. When keyed the transmitter generated a signal from 1.2 MHz to 545 kHz.

The spark transmitter consists of an induction coil connected to a battery supply. The battery supply to the coil was keyed to provide a CW signal. The spark gap was connected to the secondary of the induction coil then to a tank circuit that consisted of a coil and capacitor. The tank circuit was connected to an antenna and ground.



The transmitter that was used in the club demonstration used a Ford Model T ignition coil for the induction coil. The spark gap is rotary gap that generates a QUENCHED signal that could be detected by crystal detectors. Previous to the crystal detectors a mechanical detector called a Coherer was used. A Coherer was a tube with one electrode at both ends and a small gap between them that was filled with metal filings. The filings would cohere when exposed to an rf field which caused a low resistance which in turn triggered a bell or other device.

The rotary spark gap is a disk with contacts around the edge. The motor for the rotary spark gap is a small electric desk fan with the fan blade removed and replaced with the disk. Sears & Roebuck and Montgomery Ward sold the spark gap electrode assembly that generates the spark when the disk is spinning.

The coil and capacitor for the tank circuit were homemade, the capacitors were usually made of 7 alternating plates of a metal and picture frame glass then potted in wax.

Thanks, Skeeter, for both the demonstration and the article!

PPL HONORS RACES OPERATORS

On April 17, PPL (which operates the nuclear power plant near Berwick) honored all emergency responders at a dinner at the Berwick Golf Club. RACES operators are a part of the emergency responders group, and RACES members and guests were invited to the dinner. Those attending included the Columbia County Radio Officer, Randy, N3JPV, who attended with his brother Ron Kishbaugh as his guest. Also attending were Skeeter, WA3IIA, and Jere, W3JLV, and Jere's wife, Judy Vietz. Bob, K3QIA, and his wife Carole Foster attended the dinner, too. It was a very nice dinner and program.

CLUB HAMFEST APPROVED BY ARRL

Our CMARC Hamfest has been approved by ARRL. This means that our club hamfest information will be published in the June issue of QST, and we will receive door prizes for our event. Our Hamfest Chairman, Randy, N3JPV, tells us that our Hamfest has been scheduled for June 14, 2014. It will be held at the same location as last year, the Lime Ridge Community Center. The ladies from the

Lime Ridge United Methodist Church (located across the street from the community center) will be providing the food for our event. We will be setting up for the hamfest the day before our event, on Friday, June 13th, beginning at 3 p.m. at the community center. The actual Hamfest will begin around 6 a.m. on Saturday, June 14th, and continue until around noon.

Our webmaster, Matt, KB3JKU, has posted the flyer for our hamfest on our website. Take a look, then come back here and read the rest of the newsletter. Here is the website for the hamfest flyer:

<http://www.qsl.net/cm-arc/hamfest.htm>

We will be discussing our club hamfest at our May and June regular club meetings, so plan to attend.

CMARC FIELD DAY

Each year our club takes part in the biggest operating event of the year, ARRL Field Day. This year Field Day will be held on June 28-29, with set-up taking place on the day before, Friday, June 27th. We have made arrangements to conduct our Field Day activities in the same location as last year, the Kulp Church Grove near Slabtown.

We will put up antennas on Friday, June 27th, then at 2 p.m. Saturday we begin working stations. We need club members to come and take part and get on the air and work as many stations as you can. We also need people to log the stations worked. Field Day goes for 24 hours, until 2 p.m. on Sunday.

You will be receiving much more information about Field Day as the big event approaches. We will be discussing Field Day at our May and June regular club meetings, so plan to attend.

THOSE ARRL CENTENNIAL STATIONS: W1AW/x

ARRL is 100 years old in 2014, and there are a number of ways that ARRL is using to celebrate reaching that milestone. One way is the Centennial QSO Party, which continues for the full year. The party is explained at:

<http://www.arrl.org/centennial-qso-party>

So there will be W1AW portable operations from each state and many U.S. possessions throughout 2014. You may have worked some of the W1AW portable stations already; I have worked a number of them.

At the last CMARC meeting, several members mentioned that the stations were difficult to work on SSB. I have not tried to work them on SSB, but have had 38 QSOs with them on CW, RTTY and PSK. I have had no difficulty working the centennial stations on the digital modes.

Get on and try your luck with the W1AW portable stations!

Club to sponsor Hamfest in June

ALMEDIA — The Columbia-Montour Amateur Radio Club held its meeting April 8. There were brief discussions about the updates to the repeater and the preparations for the upcoming Hamfest on June 14.

A program showing the

construction of an antique Spark Gap Transmitter was presented by Charles Wasko. He went into the details of the history of the operators and those who constructed this device. This radio is no longer used today but his demonstrations of the actual workings of this transmitter held the attention of attendees.

The club will hold its next meeting Tuesday, May 13, at the Shiloh Bible Church in Almedia. The meeting will be conducted by Vice President Randy Kishbaugh. Plans will be finalized for the Hamfest and members will be asked to volunteer that day in various roles.

More information for this event and the upcoming 2014 Field Day can be found on the club website at <http://www.qsl.net/cm-arc>.

LINDA, K3BD, SUBMITS ARTICLE TO PRESS-ENTERPRISE

Our Club Secretary, Linda, K3BD, submits an article to our local newspaper, the Press-Enterprise after each meeting. The Press-Enterprise prints the article in the club news section. I scanned the article, and it is to the left of this text.

Thanks, Linda! Great job!

SHIRLEY, KB3TAX, REMINDS US OF OUR TUESDAY EVENING NET

Shirley Cicero, KB3TAX, is now our net manager for the Tuesday evening ARES net. She has made up the roster of net control stations.

Here are the net control stations assigned in May:

April 29 Shirley KB3TAX

May 6 Linda K3BD

May 13 Dennis N3VMM

May 20 Jack W3GY

May 27 Don K3LRD

The number of check-ins for each Tuesday net in April were:

4/1 10

4/8 9

4/15 14

4/22 14

4/29 11

73

Shirley
KB3TAX

Don't be left out! Join in the fun and check into the net!
Thanks for your organization of the net, Shirley!

Linda, K3BD, is helping Shirley by maintaining the list of stations to be called on the net. Thanks, Linda!

SPORATIC E SEASON COMING ON SIX METERS

Beginning in May and peaking in June, the six-meter band opens frequently with sporadic E propagation. If you wish to see if the six-meter band (or any band) is open, you can see the present propagation paths between stations on a map at:

<http://www.dxmaps.com/spots/map.php>

If the six-meter band is not shown on the map, click the 50 MHz tab.

REPEATER COMMITTEE WORKING ON OUR SYSTEM

Randy, N3JPV, our Repeater Committee Chairman, informs us that the Repeater Committee is very actively working on our CMARC repeater system. The committee is upgrading the system; this process is very time-consuming and will be an on-going procedure for a long time.

The members of the Repeater Committee are:

Randy, N3JPV, Chairman

Jere, W3JLV

Matt, KB3JKU

Dennis, N3VMM

The Committee is aided by Ryan Gross, N3SSL, who is an expert in repeater technology.

The Committee also calls upon the expertise of:

Vic, WA4THR

Doug, KC3HP

The efforts of all the Repeater Committee are much appreciated.

Thanks, everyone!

You will notice continuing improvements in the club's repeater in the coming months. By the way, our club repeater is on 147.225+, and has a tone of 85.4.

Special note: On the repeater coordination (ARCC) website, the new tone for our repeater is NOT listed. Randy has applied for the update, but the folks there have not listed the updated tone of 85.4.

MATERIALS NEEDED BY ANDY FOR HAMFEST

At our hamfest last June, Andy, N3OMA, sold items that had been donated to the club. Andy is a terrific salesman, and he was able to sell many of the items that were donated. Andy is now asking for

more donations; he needs materials to sell at our next hamfest. Our hamfest will not be held until June, but Andy reminds us that he cannot accumulate all he needs to have successful sales at the club table in a short time. So check out your basements, garages, and your radio rooms (shacks), and anything you find you are not using please consider donating to the club. Andy would love to have more items to sell. If you find some items, let Andy know. Andy's email address is:

andrew@shecktor.com

OUR CLUB MAILING ADDRESS

CMARC

% Robert Foster
1586 State Route 93
Berwick, PA 18603

VE TESTING UPDATE

Our VE team is now a "Field Stocked Team". This is a higher level of VE team since we will now automatically receive all testing materials and updates without making a request. This status was achieved due to our monthly testing schedule and hamfest activities. We are currently the only ARRL VE testing team in our immediate area and have tested Hams from as far away as Lock Haven. Thanks to a dedicated group of volunteers, we have maintained a monthly testing schedule and give tests almost every month before our club meetings.

Remember to contact our VE Testing Chairman, Matt, KB3JKU, if you know of anyone who wishes to take an amateur radio license exam.

Matt's address is:

dekb3jku@outlook.com

NET CONTROL STATIONS NEEDED

In order to be prepared to carry on emergency communications when needed, we have an ARES Net on our CMARC repeater, 147.225 +, tone 85.4. The net is activated every Tuesday evening at 7:00 p.m. local time. We need amateurs who will act

as net control stations, and you do not need to be a member of CMARC to be a net control station.

We have a new net manager: Shirley Cicero, KB3TAX. If you are interested in becoming a net control station (and we need new net control stations) please contact Shirley. Shirley's email address is: scicero11@verizon.net

We need more check-ins to our ARES net! Mark your calendar to check into the net on our club repeater at 7 p.m. on Tuesdays! Thanks!

ARRL DX QSL SERVICE

If you are a member of both CMARC and ARRL, we will forward your DX QSL cards to the ARRL Outgoing QSL Bureau. Just make sure I get the cards (you can give them to me at a meeting or drop your cards at my home), and as soon as I accumulate a pound of cards (about 155 cards), I will forward the cards to the bureau. There is no charge to you for this service, but I must have your ARRL membership number in order to forward your cards.

CMARC collects and sends to the bureau about eight shipments of one pound each of DX QSL cards per year. About ten club members use this service at present. The ARRL has increased the rate from \$8 per pound of QSLs to \$12 per pound. Aren't you glad we offer this service?

SPECIAL NOTE! PLEASE, PLEASE, SORT YOUR CARDS ALPHABETICALLY BEFORE YOU GIVE THEM TO ME. IT MAKES MY JOB MUCH EASIER!

IF YOU ARE GOING TO USE THE ARRL BUREAU, PLEASE LOOK HOW THE BUREAU OPERATES AT:

<http://www.arrl.org/outgoing-qsl-service>

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE 2014

The membership drive for 2014 is underway! To become a member of the Columbia-Montour Amateur Radio Club, send in your membership dues:

Regular Membership ----- \$20
Senior Membership (65 years of age or older) - \$15
Student ----- \$10
Associate Member (unlicensed) ----- \$5

If you are a family member of a person with membership, the dues are \$5 less than the primary family member (or if the family member is a student, use the student membership rate).

To become a member, please send a check to me at the following address:

Robert Foster
1586 State Route 93
Berwick, PA 18603

I will make sure Jack, W3GY, our Membership Chairman, gets the check, or you can just give Jack your check (or cash) at a club meeting.

When you send in your dues for 2014, please include the following information: Name, Call, whether you are an ARRL member, your E-mail address, and your regular U.S. Postal Service address.

Please state whether you qualify for a discount because you are the child of a member or if you are a student. Our Membership Chairman will appreciate this very much.

CLUB OFFICERS

The following club members have been elected (or appointed) club offices for 2014: (Those officers who are appointed have a * before the name of the office)

President: Bob Foster, K3QIA

Vice President: Randy Kishbaugh, N3JPV

Secretary: Linda Daring, K3BD

Treasurer: Jack McCann, W3GY

*Assistant Treasurer: Dave Schack, WC3A

Activities Director: Steve Zappe, WA3GQA

*Public Relations Officer: Linda Daring, K3BD

Trustee: Rich Daring, K3RND [Term will expire in December 2014]

Trustee: Matt Lunger, KB3JKU [Term will expire in December 2015]

Trustee: Jere Vietz, W3JLV [Term will expire in December 2016]

*Web Master: Matt Lunger, KB3JKU

*VE Testing Chairman: Matt Lunger, KB3JKU

73, Bob, K3QIA

President of the Columbia-Montour Amateur Radio Club

POSTSCRIPT

If you have any amateur radio news, especially news that our local amateurs would like to know, please send it to me. My email address is:

rlfoster1@verizon.net

I'll be glad to put it in our next newsletter and/or send it out over the Internet.

Check your two-meter radio to be sure you have the correct PL for our CMARC repeater. The PL is 85.4