

CQ de WA2LQO

Sixty Nine Years: 1944 -2013

The official voice of the Grumman Amateur Radio Club

December 2013 VOLUME 86 NUMBER 12

MERRY CHRISTMAS * HAPPY CHANUKAH * HAPPY NEW YEAR

HOLIDAY PARTY DECEMBER 18th (see president's message)

How I Became a Ham (continued from November 2013)

By Bob Wexelbaum, W2ILP

Synopsis: Until now I have discussed my early interest in amateur radio, which became serious when I was in fourth grade in elementary school and I learned about the requirements for passing ham license exams. As always it was possible to earn a ham license at any age. I will now continue with my high school experiences (9th to 12th grade) and try to articulate only about those which relate to ham radio whenever possible. However the chronology of world events became relevant to my technological education.

James Monroe High School was a very large school, serving students from a large area of the east Bronx. As a member of the honor class I was able to get the best teachers; Some held PhDs; Many wrote text books. Those students who showed no special talents were relegated to the James Monroe Annex, which was on the other side of the Bronx River. Sometimes these kids did have some classes with us in the main building. Engraved in stone above the main entrance there was the following quote: *Where law ends tyranny begins.* – *William Pitt.* Monroe High was not a lawless school when I attended...but Pitt's quote might have been prophetic as to marking the threshold of future tyranny. The school had several large gymnasiums and a large swimming pool and all students were scheduled for physical training and swimming lessons in the main building. All might become members of the school's famous football team, orchestras, marching bands, chorus, etc. The school had a professional stage where Gilbert & Sullivan operettas were performed yearly. It actually had the largest stage in NYC; a foot and a half wider than the runner-up, Radio City Music Hall in Manhattan! It also had a world class organ. Stagecraft was taught by William Englander (aka Mr. E, pronounced "Mystery"), who managed his students like a professional stage manager would, ordering them to do the tasks that professional stage crews perform, more like employees than students. To become a volunteer member of Stagecraft I had to get permission from a Grade Adviser and I had to pass an interview given by Mr. E. It was easy to get the Grade Adviser's approval when I entered Monroe and had no previous record of bad grades. Stanley Milgram and I both were interviewed by Mr. E. Mr. E. puffed on an oval cigarette during my interview. He was the only teacher who smoked on the job. Mr. E. asked, "Are you afraid to work at great heights?" I lied and said I wasn't. Next I was asked, "Are you afraid to work with high voltage electricity?" Here I answered truthfully, "I'm not afraid of electricity, but I know how and when to respect it." Both Stan and I passed our interviews and were issued uniform coveralls, which our parents had to get laundered. They were spotted with paint which couldn't be removed. My mother said that she didn't like me volunteering for such a dirty job. Most of the stage work was after the normal school hours. Stagecraft was an education because I learned a lot of stuff that might be applied to Ham Radio. For example, I learned how to properly strip shielded microphone cable and connect it to connectors. I learned about the careful mounting of expensive ribbon microphones and their directivity patterns. Microphones were often attached to rods that were raised overhead and unseen by the audience. There were also instrument pick-up mike jacks in the orchestra pit, where there were electrical outlets for up to a hundred music stand lights. Back stage right there were mixer boards that connected the microphones to the amplifier system. The place to be respected was behind the

gigantic electrical control board, with its exposed knife switches and dimmers controlling most of the stage and house lights. Only the Klieg spotlights up near the projector room, and the Model 8N Kliegs on the sides of the balcony, were manually controlled and dimmed by irises. Some stage and house light dimming was accomplished by rheostats, but the highest power dimming was efficiently controlled by moving the cores in and out of saturable reactance inductors. The G & S show that we were preparing for was "The Yeoman of the Guard," and my first job was to paint bricks on canvas flats, that when joined together, would simulate the walls of the Tower of London. I was surprised by how real it looked when illuminated with the proper color jell filtered stage lights. The stage lighting is an art in itself. The angles of the different lights can produce shadows of one color and highlights of another. Colored lights can make wood look like metal and whitewash look like mortar. The cyclorama lights at the back of the stage could light up a sky that might appear like anything from sunset to sundown, as well as a storm, an approaching tornado or a serene starry moonlit night. Ah...but I'm spending too much time telling about my fond memories of Stagecraft when I had intended to tell you more about how I became a ham. Did I want to become a professional stage hand? Nah...I wanted to become an Electrical Engineer. Stagecraft could be a hobby, but Ham Radio was not just my hobby...It was my passport to a profession. Ham Radio at its most advanced stage was closer to design engineering than the art of stage illusion designing.

I'm getting ahead of this time now and skipping to the summer between my second and third high school years. I had told you about my free subscription to "The Capacitor" which was a monthly publication of Cornell-Dubilier. The back pages of each issue were devoted to a classified section where subscribers could place free advertisements to buy or sell radio and TV parts, ham gear, etc. Occasionally there were Position Wanted ads as well. In the July 1949 issue I read the following:-

POSITION WANTED:- As radio shipboard operator. Have 2nd telegraph and 2nd telephone licenses. Single, willing to travel, worked for airlines, army experience on both air and ground stations, one year television course at Manhattan Trade Center. Joel Weichelbaum, 1516 Crosby Ave., Bronx 61, N.Y.

Joel was my first cousin! He was the son of my father's brother Dave. (My dad had changed the spelling of our last name) Was Joel a ham? Could he help me practice Morse and study theory? I called my Aunt Elsie, who was Joel's mother. Yes, she said that Joel was a ham and he had a ham station at home but he was presently away at sea. He didn't know that I was interested in radio operating. He would contact me when he got home. Did I want to be a shipboard operator? Traveling the world would be adventuresome. I might want to do that for experience...but I set my goals higher because I wanted to be an electrical engineer. Next month I will continue about my failures and successes in high school and more that eventually led to my finally getting licenses in July of 1951. (To be continued)

PRESIDENT'S NOTE by ED GELLENDER, WB2EAV
HOLIDAY PARTY ON WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 18th AT 5:30 PM

We are having our holiday party at Kwong Ming, the same Chinese restaurant as we have for the past two years. Everyone has always had a great time and it only costs the members \$20 each (the club picks up the rest). As always, we expect staggering portions of delicious food.....They are the only place around that serves wonton soup loaded with greens and strips of pork. We will meet at 5:30 and start at 6.

Directions: Southern State Parkway to exit 28 South – Wantagh Avenue, and proceed one half mile to Jerusalem Avenue. Turn right and the restaurant comes up immediately on your left. If the front lot is full, there is plenty of additional parking in back. Street address is 3342 Jerusalem Avenue, Wantagh.

Don't forget that Ham Radio University 2014 is coming up on Sunday, January 5th 2014 at Briarcliffe College in Bethpage. It is always very interesting and I highly recommend going. This year the keynote speaker is ARRL Hudson Division Director – and friend of the club - Mike Lysenco N2YBB, who always has interesting things to offer. There are also many seminars on a variety of ham radio subjects, and it is a terrific place to catch up with old friends. Check it out: hamradiouniversity.org. I'm looking forward to seeing you there.

- Ed, WB2EAV

**GRUMMAN AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING 11/20/2013**

By Karen, W2ABK

The meeting was called to order by Ed at 5:40 PM

TREASURER'S REPORT – Ed, WB2EAV

Finances continue to be in good shape.

REPEATER REPORT – Gordon, KB2UB

Repeaters are working..

NET REPORT – Karen, W2ABK

Thursday night net at 8:15 PM on 146.745 MHz had 2 check-ins.

Thursday night net at 8:30 PM on 145.330 MHz had 2 check-ins.

Sunday morning net at 7:30 AM on 7.289 MHz had 3 check-ins, but no Gene W4JMX

VE REPORT – Ed, WB2EAV

The VE Session was cancelled this month.

OLD BUSINESS

We need programs for our meetings.

NEW BUSINESS

The election for 2014 GARC officers was held with the following result:

President: Ed Gellender, WB2EAV

Vice President: Gordon Sammis, KB2UB

Secretary: Karen Cefalo, W2ABK

WA2LQO Trustee: Ray Schubnel, W2DKM

2 yr. Board Member: Jack Cottrell, WA2PYK

1 yr. Board Member: Dave Ledo, AB2EF

1 yr. Board Member: Jack Hayne, WB2BED

1 yr. Board Member: George Sullivan, WB2IKT

PROGRAM

Karen, W2ABK and Bruce, OM showed a DVD of Denmark

GARC NETS: 40 Meters: 7.289 MHz at 7:30 AM EST Sundays

Net Controller: Eugene, W4JMX

2 Meters (repeaters) Thursdays: 146.745 MHz (-600 kHz) at 8:15 PM

145.330 MHz (-600 kHz) at 8:30 PM. Tone for both repeaters: 136.5 Hz.

GARC Net Controller Karen, W2ABK

ARES/RACES NETS: Mondays.

SILENT KEY

Sid Wolin, K2LJH passed away in November. Although not a GARC member, Sid was a well known active ham. He was a past president of LIMARC and was honored on November 2, 2013 as Grand Old Ham.

MEETINGS

General Meetings of the GARC are held on the third Wednesday of each month, starting at 5:30 PM, at the Ellsworth Allen Park in Farmingdale. Driving directions and map can be obtained from <http://www.mapquest.com>. It is suggested that the GARC web site be checked to be certain of meeting location, which may change after this newsletter is distributed. Board meetings are held a week before the General Meeting at the Bethpage Skating Rink. *This month we change location for the holiday party. See page 2.*

WEBSITE

The GARC web site can be found at <http://www.qsl.net/wa2lqo> . Webmaster is Pat Masterson, KE2LJ. Pictures of GARC activities, archives of newsletters, roster of members, and other information about the GARC may be found there.

INTERNET LINK OF THE MONTH FOR INTERNERDS

I must apologize for last month's internet link because by the time this newsletter was released the article about China's new nuclear subs was no longer there. In the future I will not link to newspaper sites...because news may have a very short shelf life before it gets old and is deleted.

This month I have a very important website for you loyal internerds. Here it is:-
<http://www.americanradiohistory.com>

There are many ways to utilize this site and you are on your own to discover whatever may interest you. Here's how I started to get to the archives of Hugo Gernsbach's Radio News Magazine (originally known as Radio *Amateur* News) starting with the December 1919 issue. [There was no ARRL or QST magazine at that time. In Hartford, CT. there was a local amateur radio club that was beginning to form a national relaying organization.] To follow my suggestion on the top of the home page click on: <Early Journals & Site Features.>. Then click on: <Radio News 1919 – 1950>. This will bring up a matrix of available issues. Click on the dot in the 1919 row below DEC and there you have the Radio Amateur News for December 1919, which has a picture of a sailor on the front cover. After looking at that issue you might want to continue on to later issues. I won't comment about the interesting advertisements. Some were for Gernsbach's own publications and his radio parts store which used the same Fulton Street, NYC address. My prime purpose in going through this old material is to confirm my previous essays about the early inventors, which I wrote about using other sources before I knew about these archives. I now have lots of material to confirm and clarify stuff that I had written about. I suggest that you read as many of the Gernsbach's editorials as you can. He mixed fact with science fiction and he certainly motivated hobbyists and experimenters and promoted early radio products in the days when wireless was still thought of as *magic*. The most interesting are his predictions. In one of his editorials he predicted the transistor. He said that like the Audion (vacuum tube triode) the crystal diode would someday have the capability of having a third element that could make it into an amplifier...but then he went wrong in predicting that such a device would have to be enclosed in an exotic gas.

For you who may be interested in Commercial Radio Broadcasting and old movies, [such as those that you might have seen on the Turner Classic Movie (TCM) Channel.] You can find many early Radio, Movie and TV magazines with pictures of all the famous stars...including some who you might have never seen, because they were only on the radio. Reading these archives in my opinion is far more accurate than anything that is being published today, simply because they were written at a time when the miracles of radio were first forming a very important part of American culture.

PUZZLE

Last month I asked the following physics question:-

What is the Frisbee effect?

Who first noticed it? What government agency spent lots of time and money researching it?

Answer: Since the subject requires a long explanation I have written an essay about it. Please see page 6.

The following is a question to be answered next month:-

Who invented the first junction diode?

Why was this invention very important?

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GARC 2013 Officers

President: Ed Gellender, WB2EAV M/S:X08-14 516-575-0013 edward.gellender@ngc.com
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Vice President: Gordon Sammis, KB2UB Retiree 631-666-7463

Secretary: Karen Cefalo, W2ABK 631-754-0974

Treasurer: Ed Gellender, WB2EAV (see above)

WA2LQO Trustee: Ray Schubnel, W2DKM Retiree

2 Yr. Board Member: Jack Cottrell, WA2PYK Retiree 516-249-0979

1 Yr. Board Member: Dave Ledo, AB2EF

1 Yr. Board Member: Jack Hayne, WB2BED

1 Yr. Board Member: George Sullivan, WB2IKT

Newsletter

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Editor: W2ILP 631-499-2214 W2ILP.RADIO@gmail.com

Contributing writers: All GARC members (we hope). To submit articles or ham equipment advertisements contact the editor. Articles will only be edited when permission is granted by the author.

GARC Webmaster

Pat Masterson, KE2LJ Retiree 813-938-4614 Pat-Masterson@tampabay.rr.com

GARC VE Exams

We normally proctor exams for all classes of ham licenses on the second Tuesday of each month, starting at 5:30 PM. The exams may be given at various locations. Ham Exams are: Element 2 – Technician, Element 3 - General, Element 4 – Amateur Extra Class. All applicants must pre-register to determine the location of a VE session by contacting Ed Gellender WB2EAV. Time and location of exams are subject to change. If there are no applicants VE sessions will be canceled. The fee for 2013 is \$14 for all exams taken at one sitting. New first time applicants should be aware that their Social Security Number will be required on the application form unless they register with the FCC for an FRN. Applicants for an upgrade should bring their present license and a photocopy of it. All applicants should bring picture ID such as a driver's license. Study material may be bought from the ARRL-VEC or W5YI-VEC <http://www.arrl.org> or <http://www.w5yi.org>. All VECs use the same Q & A pools.

Editorial

Happy Holidays to all from my wife Ethel, my children David, Mark and Rachel, and from me, W2ILP. I have been ill some days and have been feeling somewhat better some days. I don't care to discuss medical details here, but I do hope to be able to continue putting together this newsletter in 2014. --w2ilp--

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FIRST CLASS MAIL

Do Not Delay

THE FRISBEE EFFECT

By Bob Wexelbaum. W2ILP

The first Frisbees can probably date back to the ancient Greek Olympic sport of discus throwing, if you want to believe that they are really bronze-age Frisbees. When a disc of any type is thrown in a manner that imparts tangential acceleration on the disc, it will rotate as it travels and may be stabilized in the geometric plane in which it was launched. This is not a true gyroscopic effect, because the disc does not spin around a fixed axial point. It does however spin around its own center of gravity and offers stability for the same general reason that gyroscope wheels do. Later, people started playing “catch” on beaches with pie plates at the water’s edge. These were probably the guys who were too chicken to go surfing with surfboards so they skimmed pie plates instead. Aerodynamically the pie plates offer some lift because of the shape of their rims acting like airfoils. Thus the lift and stability has been studied by engineers at DARPA as well as students who wrote extensive research papers on this subject in order to earn higher degrees.

The Frisbee was named for the Frisbee Pie Company of Bridgeport, CT, because that was the name embossed on the tin pie plates that were named for CEO Walter Russell Frisbee. Yale University was near the pie factory and that is where academic adults noticed that kids were sailing pie pans in the air in the 1940s. The use of Frisbees became banned on many east coast beaches because their landing was usually uncontrolled, but the sport did survive in California, where folks seem to be braver at risk taking. Frisbees became a fad in the 1960s along with crazed UFO sightings (“Flying Saucers”). This led to the selling of plastic Frisbee toy discs manufactured by the Wham-O-Toy Company of San Gabriel, CA which were said to have been designed by Walter Fredrick Morrison who was a UFO promoter. As time went by the Frisbee fad died in the US along with hula hoops. Ham Radio was also said to be a passing fad but it has survived universally and so it is with the Frisbee which has become a national sport in France. The French make games of everything and they have a form of Frisbee golf being played at about 500 official locations, including the Japanese 2001 World Games. Frisbee fetching is even recognized as an official Dog Show event.