

YL Amateur Radio Operators

“Their Struggles and Achievements!”

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First Sea-Going Woman Radio Operator

Miss Graynella Packer

Jacksonville, Florida
November 1910 to April 1911

Served aboard the Clyde liner, "*Mohawk*", a US Atlantic, coastal passenger steamer in full charge of the wireless radio room. Prior to this, she worked as a telegrapher on shore for two years. Little is known about Miss Packer, after she left the "*Mohawk*". They say her ambition was to handle atmospheric electricity aboard a big ocean liner.

Later in 1922, she was elected as a member of Oklahoma State Bar Association, in Oklahoma City.

Source of Photographs: U.S. Library of Congress

To read more about this interesting YL, read:
"The Autobiography of a Girl Amateur",
Radio Amateur News, March 1920.

Website: <http://earlyradiohistory.us/1920auto.htm>



Sinking of Titanic in 1912

- After the Titanic disaster, ships were required to carry two radio operators.
- Soon after, a Boston lady (name unknown) applied for a ship's wireless operator position, without success.
- The ship had one male wireless operator and wireless men had to bunk together, due to confined space allotted them.
- Despite company policy, this lady radio operator married the ship's wireless operator and spent their honeymoon at sea.

USA Radio Act of 1912

New Regulations

- With the adoption of licensing, amateurs were restricted to transmitting on a wavelength of 200 meters (1500 kilohertz).
- Call signs were assigned to radio transmitters, not to the operators.
- Number of radio amateurs dropped by 88% in the United States.
- This had a profound effect on the number of women radio operators.



The Book of Wireless

(1915)

Archie Frederick Collins

Born: Jan. 8, 1869 in South Bend, Indiana

Died: Jan. 3, 1952 in Nyack, New York

Image Source: Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
Collins at a radio telephone set in 1904.

"Fancy a boy sitting in his room at home with his finger on a telegraph key and a telephone receiver to his ear thousands of boys are doing this wonderful thing every day and night of the year, and you, my young friend, can do it as easily as they, for any boy can own a real wireless station, if he really wants to." [End of Quote From: "The Book of Wireless"]

Frederick Collins, an experimenter in wireless telephony, owned the large Collins Wireless Telephone Company. He wrote many books. One such book was "The Boy Scientist" which had a positive influence on young boys and a negative one on young women.

During this early period, gender inequality was prevalent not only in the women homes but also in books, magazines, and the work force, etc. Young women had few educational, career and recreational choices. They were not welcomed in the amateur radio community, nor in commercial radio. It took a very confident, brave women to challenge companies who had an all male policy work force. In amateur radio, by sending Morse, women were able to pass themselves off as OMs to get on-air and enjoy conversations, with other operators. Otherwise, women would be ignored, by most male operators.

Electrical Experimenter

(October 1916)

Magazine published the following article titled:

“The Feminine Wireless Operator”

Quote:

“Just because a man, Marconi, invented commercial wireless telegraphy does not mean for a moment that the fair sex cannot master its mysteries.”

Author Unknown

Events Affecting Women

Early 20th Century

- Gender inequality existed in the family, educational institutions and workforce. This impacted on women's feelings and their choice of activities.
- During WWI, a large number of women entered workforce: primarily in traditional "female" occupations: teaching, nursing, secretarial work, telephone and telegraph work.
- By 1917, during WWI (1914 – 1918) amateur radio activity was suspended. Restrictions lifted in 1919.
- In 1918, Canada Elections Act permitted female citizens age 21 to vote federally. Not until 1940, that Canadian women achieved full suffrage, in all provinces.
- In 1929, Canadian women were declared to be persons under the law, thanks to five Alberta women's appeal to the British Privy Council.

First YL

(Licensed Amateur Radio Female)

1914, First Canadian YL

Miss M. S. Colville, XDD, of Bowmanville, ON

- Only 10% of active amateurs were licensed
- Only 79 licensed Canadian amateurs

1915, First U.S. YL

Emma Chandler, 8NH

- Featured in QST issue Oct. 1916

“The Electrical Experimenter”

“The Feminine Wireless Amateur”

(Article in October 1916)



15 year old **Kathleen Parkin**, of San Rafael, CA, “expert radio operator and mechanic”, received a first grade commercial radio operator's license, from U. S. Gov't station's call was **6SO**.

She practiced her code daily, on a buzzer, for many years, prior to receiving her license.

Kathleen made all of her own apparatus, like the ¼ kilowatt set, shown in this picture .

View article & image in:

Thomas H. White <http://earlyradiohistory.us/1915fem.htm>

[Electrical Experimenter Magazine](#) published 1913 to 1920.

BUZZER

- The round object on left side of the wood base is the buzzer.
- Three binding posts: the middle post connection was used when two hams wanted to send and receive morse with each other.



San Francisco "Chronicle" (1916)



Today, when the nation is aroused as never before by the propaganda of preparedness, the eyes of the military leaders are on the wireless amateur—the type shown above. He is recognized as constituting a resource for national defense which has been almost entirely overlooked. Most of the best operators are mere schoolboys, but are active, alert, and efficient.

“Popular Science Monthly” 1917 Girl’s Wireless School at Hunter College, NY

With WWI approaching, “Preparedness” Included Women Radio Operators.

Source of Image: **Popular Science Monthly 1917 Issue Reviewed This Event.**

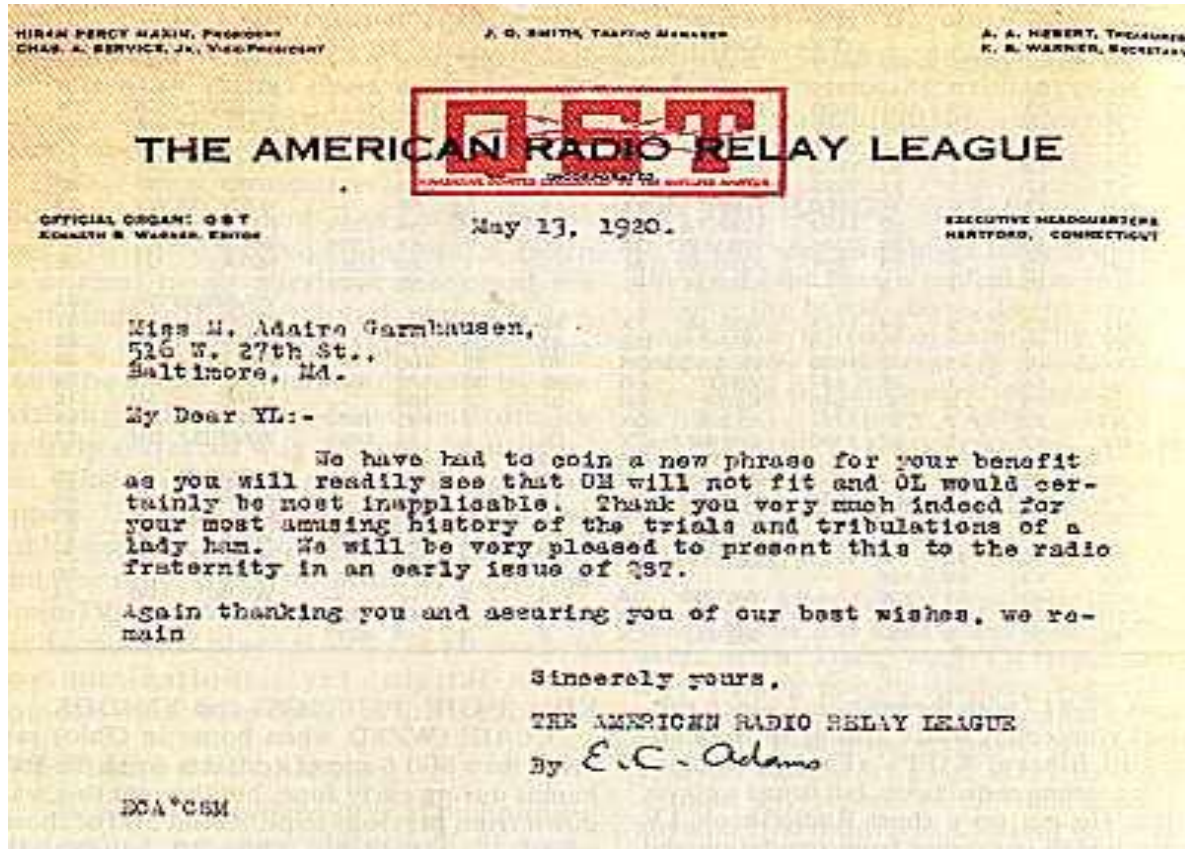
Thomas H. White made mentioned of this in his link to:

<http://earlyradiohistory.us/sec012.htm>



American Radio Relay League (ARRL) Story of Acronym "YL"

Miss M. Adaire Garmhausen 3BCK, the first "Young Lady"



Thank you to ARRL for giving YLRADIO permission to use these two images.

Eunice Randall

1920 - 1925

(1CDP & W1MPP)

A 19 year old engineer and commercial radio announcer, Eunice built her own amateur radio station.

American Radio & Research Company, AMRAD's male colleagues , strongly opposed hiring Eunice. With a team of experts, she demonstrated, built and tested equipment. To keep the company's radio station on-air, this six-foot lady, climbed the tower, when necessary, earning their respect.



The first woman commercial radio announcer in the history of broadcasting was Eunice Randall Thompson.

Ethel Pick VE2HI

QSL Card - 1937



QSL cards confirm that two amateur radio stations have made contact with each other. Station, signal and callsign details are recorded on card. Cards will be exchanged with one another through regular post and/or QSL Bureaus. [SWL stations often send cards to stations they hear.]

Origin of “33”, “73” and “88”

- “33” Adopted by YLRL in 1939. It means, **“Love sealed with friendship between one YL and another YL.”**
- “73” The National Telegraphic Review and Operators’ Guide, first published “73” in April 1857. It meant “My love to you”!
Its meaning now is **“Best regards”**.
- “88” Abbreviation used by wire telegraphers similar to Q signals today.
It means, **“Love and kisses”**.

**First Graduating Class H.D.S.
Wireless Operators 1942**
Radio College of Canada
Toronto, Ontario



Thank you to the Royal Canadian College (RCC)
for giving YLRadio permission to use this image.

Prominent Radio Schools

- **Radio College of Canada** - Toronto, Ontario
- **Eastern Radio School** – Halifax, Nova Scotia
- **Sprott Shaw School of Radio** – Vancouver & Victoria
- **King Edward High School** - “Famous Room 19”
A “nameless” male instructor did not allow women in his class, “period”.



THE UNKNOWN FEW 1939 to 1945

Most Canadians do not know that women radio operators worked on Norwegian ships, during the **“Battle of the Atlantic”**, due to a seamen shortage.

The crews aboard Allied Merchant Shipping vessels, between 1939 and 1945, witnessed ongoing, continuous warfare, from German subs and feared mines and bombing from aircraft.

Twenty-two wartime female Canadian Sparks sailed through the U-boat infested Atlantic Ocean and six (perhaps even seven) sailed during post-war years.

Read about these brave women on YLRADIO “YL Stories” website: <http://www.ylradio.ca>

Post WWII BC YL Wireless Ship Operators

Elizabeth (King) Anderson VE7YL

Olive (Carroll) Roeckner VE7ERA

- Sprott Shaw Radio School - Vancouver
- Posted to VAI , Point Grey wireless station, and put under contract with the Canadian Department of Transport as interceptor operators.
- Job required competency in the Kata Kana, Japanese radio code.
- 1947, Olive, signed aboard Norwegian, "*M/S Siranger*", until Dec. 1950.
- Her book, [Deep Sea 'Sparks', a Canadian girl in the Norwegian Merchant Navy](#) was published in 1994.
- 1947, Elizabeth Anderson signed aboard Norwegian, "*M/S Vito*", for two years, then two more years on the Norwegian, "*M/S Skauvann*".

Number of Amateur Radio Licenses

IARU & AHO Amateur Radio Education Organizations Publish
Statistics On the Web and Publications

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Year</u>
• Japan	1,296,05	1999	489,256	2009
• USA	679,864	2000	696,041	2009
• South Korea	141,000	2000		
• United Kingdom	58,700	2000	67,485	2009
• Canada	44,024	2000		
• India	10,679	2000		
• China	800	2000	70,000 +	2009
• Australia			15,432	2009
• Germany			81,150	2008
• Spain			33,298	2008

- In most countries, the population of operators is overwhelmingly male.
- In the USA, in the year 2000, approx. 15% of the operators were women.

Reference Websites : <http://www.dxzone.com> "AHO Amateur Radio Licensing Statistics" Web page.
They list statistics presently for 6 countries.

IARU Region 3 Conference Oct. 2009, "The Status Report of Amateur Radio in China" reported by:
<http://iaru-r3.org/14r3c/docs/019.doc>

YL National Organizations Worldwide

- **USA** Young Ladies' Radio League (YLRL) 1939
- **Japan** Ladies Radio Society (JLRS) 1953
- **New Zealand** Women's Amateur Radio Organization (NZ WARO) 1961
- **Canadian** Ladies Amateur Radio Association (CLARA) 1967
- **Australian** Ladies Amateur Radio Association (ALARA) 1979
- **British** Young Ladies Amateur Radio Association (BYLARA) 1979
- **Korean** Ladies Amateur Radio Club (KLARC) 1984
- **Scandinavian** Young Ladies Radio Amateurs (SYLRA) 2003
- **Italiano** Radio Club & **German** YLS DL-YL

International YL Meets

Stockholm, Sweden	1991 (first of many to follow)
Japan	1993
Berlin, Germany	1996
Svalbard, Norway	1998
Hamilton, New Zealand	2000
Palermo, Sicily	2002
Seoul, Korea	2004
Mumbai, India	2006
South Africa	2008
Munich, Germany	2010
Adelaide, Australia	2012

Palermo 2002 YL Meet

QSL Card



International YL Meet 2002

Palermo, Sicily



Ruth IT9ESZ was in charge of this International YL Meet.