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Hudson Maxim

By Bob Wexelbaum, W2ILP

Many hams know that Hiram Percy Maxim founded the ARRL. Many gun buffs may know that H.P. Maxim's father, Sir Hiram Stevens Maxim; (1840-1916) was knighted by Queen Victoria for inventing the machine gun. Relatively few people know much about Hudson Maxim, H.P. Maxim's uncle. What has he got to do with Ham Radio? Read on and I'll tell you.

Hudson Maxim (1883-1927) was born Isaac Maxim, but early in his life he changed his first name to Hudson. He claimed that he did so because he wanted to have a name that sounded more American. When his brother went to Europe to build and sell machine guns, Hiram called Hudson to help him with the mechanical engineering that was required to build the guns as well as the chemical engineering to develop the ammunition for the guns. Hudson had invented smokeless powder and methods necessary to economically produce effective bullets. Hudson did not like working to arm the European nations. He understood that there might be a war in Europe and that the US might eventually be involved with it. He pleaded with his brother to return to the US and to manufacture weapons in the U.S. [His prophesy became reality when World War One started, after H.S. Maxim had died]. Aside from those facts there were personal reasons why Hudson disputed with his brother.

Hiram Stevens had become a citizen of Great Britain and had joined with the Vickers Brothers to manufacture machine guns. He was recognized as a great inventor not only by the British, but by the French, the Austrians, the Germans and the Turks who bought his guns, while he gave Hudson no credit for the work that Hudson had accomplished to help perfect his inventions. He treated Hudson as if he was only a technician and not a co-inventor. H.S. Maxim had no intention of returning to the US. He had divorced his American wife and remarried. In actuality, he had deserted his American children, (Hiram Percy Maxim and his two sisters.) When H.S. Maxim first arrived in Europe he had sent his 12 year old son, Hiram Percy, a letter promising to send for him and show him Europe. As his decision to remain in England was made firm, Hiram Stevens changed his mind about his American citizenship and ceased all communication with his American family. He never wrote to Percy again, nor did Percy try to contact him. We do not know if H.S. sent money to help support his American family. He probably did because he had grown wealthy and could easily afford to do so. Sir Hiram intensified his hatred for his brother Hudson, partly because he feared being challenged on patent rights, but also because he knew that Hudson was a patriotic American. Hudson felt that Hiram Stevens had not only deserted his American family but he had deserted his country. At any rate, Hudson left Europe, never to return. H.S. Maxim refused to ever speak directly with his brother again. H.S. Maxim was a man who never forgot to hate people, while Hudson was quite the opposite. Hudson befriended all the American inventors of his time, especially Thomas Edison, who H.S. Maxim despised because of the loss of patents involved with the development of the electric light bulb. In an article in the New York Times of Nov. 8, 1914, Hudson replies to allegations made by Sir Maxim, which had accused him of changing his name to Hudson, so that he could set up a company called H. Maxim and masquerade as his famous brother. Hudson countered that he had changed his name to Hudson long before he had invented explosives and smokeless powder and his U.S. patents could not be claimed to be his brother's inventions. Hudson was a man of many trades; He was a wrestler, a boxer and a tennis player. He was a printer and publisher. He was an author of a book about penmanship, as well as a book (continued on next page)

HUDSON MAXIM (continued)

called "Defenseless America", where he warned about the threat of war with a well-armed Germany. He wrote his own biography "Autobiography of an American Inventor"...but his best book "The Science of Poetry and the Philosophy of Language" (*see Internet link of this month*), shows us that Hudson could span the realms of scientific engineering with the abstractions of liberal arts. He was in that way like Aristotle. There are few people who lived in his time or in ours who would attempt to do so.

Hudson sold Dupont his patent rights for Maximite, an explosive that could pierce a steel plate and blow up on the other side and Motorite, an explosive that could propel torpedoes. These devices were used by the U.S. Army and Navy.

From his writings we learn that Maxim believed strictly in Darwin's theory of evolution. He believed that heredity was more responsible than environment for the innate talents of individuals. Had not his family and others succeeded as pioneers in the American wilderness to invent and build most of the wonders of his time (telegraph, railroad, radio, electric lights, airplane)? Because of his belief that Hiram Percy Maxim had inherited the family talents, he mentored Percy after Percy's father had deserted him. He consulted with Percy during the development of internal combustion engines and mufflers for his automobiles. He saw that Percy inherited much of the wealth of Sir Maxim and he also left an undisclosed inheritance to Percy.

Yep...Were it not for Hudson's help Hiram Percy Maxim might not have become a successful man, wealthy inventor and beloved gentleman. And if Percy had not so succeeded he would not have had the motivation and the time and money to found the ARRL...and if there was no ARRL to lobby for us there might not be any ham radio today.

Hudson was an extrovert and he had a sense of humor. He appeared on an Atlantic City, NJ parade float dressed as Father Neptune. Hudson Maxim was a very diverse man. He did many things single handed...for you see... he had lost his left hand in one of his dynamite experiments!

<p style="text-align:center">PRESIDENT'S NOTE by ED GELLENDER, WB2EAV March 2009</p>
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Last month I mentioned trying to get in touch with the Larkfield Radio Club. With the help of the new ARRL NLI section manager, Mike Lisenco, N2YBB, we got it worked out. We will continue to exchange newsletters, but now by e-mail, and both of us will save printing and postage. Speaking of the new NLI-SM, he has indicated that he will visit our March meeting to say hello and maybe give a little talk. I will have to call or e-mail him to set it all up.

We also will discuss Field Day at the March meeting. Last year we had a really great location and we will have to look into doing the same again. Everybody seemed to have a really good time despite poor propagation, and having a good time is what it is supposed to be all about.

Now to my favorite obsession – the Bethpage repeater. I was wrong. I admit it. When I saw water dripping out of the coax coming down from the antenna, I assumed that the coax line was ruined; many of my friends and acquaintances reminded me of horror stories that once you get water in a coax, it is toast. Well, after waiting for what seemed like forever, Northrop Grumman finally removed the coax...all 175 feet of RG-214/U and gave it to me. We put it on a network analyzer and to my absolute shock the cable loss was right on specification! So if it is not the cable, it must be the antenna. Here is where it gets interesting. My friend Tom runs the company antenna lab (he's the one with the network analyzer) and he realized that under the right conditions he can go on the roof to work with his antennas. Funny thing about Tom – he knows all the antenna stuff, but never was interested in a ham license. I guess he is satisfied to operate on all those frequencies where we can't. We were able to go up to the roof and connect my 2M HT to the antenna. With that height the rubber ducky keyed up the Hauppauge repeater even though it never does at ground level. The big antenna didn't. Game over. Since the weather has not cooperated; for the moment I put up a simple antenna at a low but convenient spot to get the repeater on the air. It is now only running with a few miles range, but we are working to improve that. When the weather improves, we will run the old coax back up to a simple antenna at full height. Then we will get a new repeater antenna. If things still are looking good at that point we will replace the coax with a low-loss type. With access to the roof and a willing compatriot, the sky is the limit.

**GRUMMAN AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING 2/18/09**

By Karen, KC2OPX, secretary.

The meeting was called to order by Gordon at 5:50 PM.

TREASURERS REPORT – Ed, WB2EAV

Finances continue to be in good shape.

REPEATER REPORT Gordon, KB2UB

Northrop Grumman removed the coax from the Bethpage repeater antenna. It measured 175' long. Ed will look at it and order new low loss coax.

VE REPORT – Bob, W2ILP

1 Applicant (a Northrop Grumman employee) passed the Extra Class exam and upgraded. 5 VEs were present They were AB2EF, AB2NT, AB2ZW, KC2OPX, and W2ILP.

NET REPORT- Zack, WB2PUE

Thursday night net on 330 had a good turnout, about 7 people checked in.

OLD BUSINESS

Next month we'll start talking about Field Day

NEW BUSINESS

We'll have an ARRL guest speaker at our next meeting.

PROGRAM

Dave, AB2EF brought a video from the Amateur Logic. TV web site. It showed an interview with the President of MFJ Enterprises. He explained how he started the company and showed Ham Radio products. MFJ makes over 2,000 products.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM

GARC NETS:

40 Meters: 7.289 MHz at 7:30 AM EST Sundays.

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

145.330 MHz (-600 kHz) at 8:30 PM EST Thursdays

[Tone for both repeaters is 136.5 Hz]

(ARES/RACES) Mondays

MEETINGS

General Meetings of the GARC are held on the third Wednesday of each month, starting at 5:30 PM. The meetings are usually held at the Ellsworth Allen Park in Farmingdale. Driving directions and maps 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 eight days before the General Meeting.

GARC WEB SITE

The web site of the GARC 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

Continuing the subject of this month, "Hudson Maxim", I have decided to make the Internet link of this month a Link where, if you have Adobe Reader, you can read one of his books in its entirety. I needed Adobe Reader to read the instructions for my New York State Income Tax, so I trust that most of you may have it or need it too. The book is called "The Science of Poetry and the Philosophy of Language". It was published 99 years ago. This book contains much more than the title would lead you to believe. It begins with an explanation of sound which shows that Hudson knew the basics of audio engineering: frequency, amplitude, and harmonics... music, noise... At a time before there were oscilloscopes!...but he also explains the emotions that are added to the sounds of language to further enhance the meaning of communication, which may seem unique to humans but are also used by some birds and beasts for their survival. Hudson is one of the only authors who I have read who can span the realms of realistic science with the more abstract fields of the liberal arts. As an observer of birds, bats and bees he is also a naturalist. In this book he defines words and phrases as if they were atoms and molecules. He quotes from the Bible and from Shakespeare and many familiar poets; defining from a scientific prospective, what he believes to be prose or poetry. He also quotes from the attempts of academics who have tried to define poetry and calls them idiots. Hudson Maxim's definition of poetry (like poetry itself) is, in my opinion, too abstract to be pure science. That might be my own limitation. What do you think?

The link is:-

[http://books.google.com/books?id=cF0LAAAAMAAJ&dq=Hudson+Maxim&printsec=frontcover&science=bl
&ot](http://books.google.com/books?id=cF0LAAAAMAAJ&dq=Hudson+Maxim&printsec=frontcover&science=bl&ot)

That is a lot of typing to enter in your address window. If you get one character wrong it won't work. Thus I suggest that you just put <Hudson Maxim> in the Google tool bar <Search> box and when you get all the stuff about Hudson that will be listed, click on the book title by name.

PUZZLE

The puzzle is for me this month. What did I do with my copy of last month's newsletter? I can't click it up on my new computer or find it on my old inoperative computer at the present time. When I find it I'll print the solution to the February 2009 newsletter puzzle in a future newsletter. If anyone solved it send the solution to me by e-mail. -w2ilp--

Here is another cryptogram:

**SH AG CESZY ASIV ASWYUP, NOY ASIV RUEQNDG, NOY ASIV JNISGORG, IVUWG
IVNI RUPG NHIGQ EW ASZZ CG VGZJGY CK UEQ AUQT. -YASDVI PUQUA--**

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All the members of GARC (we hope!)

CQ de WA2LQO is published monthly by the Grumman Amateur Radio Club for its members and friends. Send articles and amateur equipment advertisements to: W2ILP. Articles may be sent by e-mail or postal mail. They can be in MS Word format or simply in plain text. Articles will only be edited when permission is granted by the author.

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS

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EDITORIAL

I had bought a new computer at the time that I started editing this newsletter. Now my old one's hard drive is completely destroyed. It had both hardware and software trouble, so it was time to buy a new computer. I bought a Studio XPS Dell tower, with Windows Vista operating system. I won't bore you with the details of the many items that I had to find to set up so that I could continue doing the stuff that I did with my old computer. Because of a major failure I could not import files from the old to the new hard drive.

Anyway I think that I am now getting there and I will be able to do what I did even better than before. It is amazing how much we store in the files of our computers as we search the web and save addresses and data. Installing software such as MS Word, and drivers that are not preloaded in new computers takes time, but once things work properly you don't need to change anything. There are some features that Vista has that make the MS Word program work better, and I have to learn how to use them to best advantage. This is a lot worse than getting used to a new Ham Radio SSB transceiver; but once set up it is immune to sun spot cycles.

73,
Bob w2ilp (Identified Loaded Printer)... automatically with USB connection.

GARC VE EXAMS

We are continuing to proctor exams for all classes of ham licenses on the second Tuesday of each month, starting at 5:00 PM.

The present exams are:-

The Element 1 CW exam is no longer required.

Element 2: Technician

Element 3: General

Element 4: Amateur Extra Class

The fee for 2009 is \$14.00 for all exams taken in one sitting. The ARRL-VEC now charges \$15 but EW5YI-VEC has decided not to change the required fee.

Applicants for upgrades should bring their present license and a photocopy of it and know their FRN number.

New, first time applicants should be aware that their Social Security number will be required on their application form, unless they register with the FCC for an FRN.

All applicants should bring picture ID such as driver's licenses.

Until further notice exams will be given at:-

Briarcliffe College

1055 Stewart Avenue

Room: Long Beach #5

Bethpage, NY

Briarcliffe, Bethpage is located in a building that was formerly part of the Grumman complex.

All applicants should contact W2ILP to register, so as to confirm location. If no applicants apply, the exam session will be cancelled.

For any information e-mail w2ilp@optonline.net or phone-(631) 499-2214

Study material is available at the web sites of the ARRL

<http://www.arrl.org>

or W5YI

<http://www.w5yi.org>

All VECs use the same Q & A pools.

Since the beginning of the VE program the GARC has provided opportunities to take the ham exams monthly, during all 12 months of every year.

Bob Wexelbaum, W2ILP and the GARC VE team.

GRUMMAN AMATEUR RADIO CLUB OFFICERS FOR 2008

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GRUMMAN AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
Sixty Four Years 1944 -2008
P.O. Box 0644
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FIRST CLASS

DO NOT DELAY

DIGITAL TV CONVERSION

The mandatory date for analog TV stations was delayed for four months, but 220 TV broadcasters had switched to digital before February 17th and another 421 TV stations have switched to digital since February 17th. The FCC's new deadline is June 12th and by then the entire US will have digital broadcasting on all of the nearly 1800 full powered commercial TV stations. It is a rare situation when the FCC asks hams specifically to perform a public service beyond the optional services mentioned in Part 97's Basis and Purpose. That is exactly what the FCC Deputy Bureau Chief; George Dillon (now retired) did when communicating with the ARRL. The ARRL had suggested that hams help their neighbors with any technical problems involved in setting up for digital TV. The FCC then officially

asked all hams to help the folks in their communities, who use indoor or outdoor TV antennas to hook up the new set top boxes that will be required if they remain using analog TV sets. Where I live (Commack) we are in a fringe area for the major New York TV channels. There are only a few families who still have TV antennas on their homes. Most subscribe to cable (Cablevision), fiber (Verizon) or direct satellite TV. In each case the service provider will supply a set top box and help in installing it, if necessary. The goal of the FCC is to enable even the least affluent folks to have some TV service for local news and emergency broadcasts. If you know of any people who need help, it is suggested that you lend a hand in connecting up their converter

boxes. While indoor VHF antennas, such as rabbit ears, may not suffice for most of Suffolk County, there are cases where indoor UHF antennas may be practical. An example is receiving Channel 55 of Riverhead. UHF signals penetrate buildings better than VHF signals. A small directional UHF antenna may work well to receive Channel 55 and other UHF channels within reasonable range, including ones in Connecticut. Such an antenna is highly directional and manually positioning it for each channel of interest may take some practice. If one was to erect an outdoor broadband TV antenna with a rotator the cost might exceed subscribing to a cable, fiber or dish provider. The nice thing about DTV is there is no snow on the screen when there isn't a good signal. -73 w2ilp--