

CQ de WA2LQO

Seventy Years: 1944 -2014

The official voice of the Grumman Amateur Radio Club

SEPTEMBER 2014 VOLUME 87 NUMBER 9

HOW I BECAME A HAM (continued from July 2014)

By Bob Wexelbaum, W2ILP

Synopsis: I will continue to discuss inputs from my friends and teachers during my high school years. Not all of my Elmers were actual hams.

It was on a Friday night in October that Al Miller, W2ESU and I agreed to meet at the home of Lew Pascal, W2LTQ, in order to get Al's unfinished homebrew ham AM transmitter on the air. There would be no school the next day, so we agreed to meet after supper at 7:00 PM, assuming I would be home before 10 or 11 PM but that was not what transpired. Lew donated not one, but two, large variable capacitors, spaced and insulated so that they could handle RF voltages as high as 3000 Volts to Al's project. He suggested that Al might try to use not just two 1625s in parallel, but go to three or even four as long as Al's plate transformer could deliver the current. More 1625s would result in more RF power output. The trouble was that on 10 Meters Al might not be able to develop a practical plate load impedance using 1625s in parallel. Lew suggested that Al read the Class C specifications for 1625 tubes for the screen dropping resistors and the self-biasing arrangements required. He didn't know for sure what LC ratio it might take to load the final amplifier into 50 ohm coax efficiently. Al would be making his own final inductors, using No 14 enamel coated wire and keeping the coils spaced properly with polystyrene strips. I don't remember whether it was Testor's airplane glue or DuPont household cement that was said to be best for gluing the coils to the strips. Lew said that Al might need a pi network at the final output rather than a serial tank circuit. The pi network would require two variable capacitors and that is why he gave Al two. Al asked how he could tell which circuit would be best. Lew replied that Al would have to try both for himself. In any case he would have to try to dip the plate current to resonate the final into a dummy load. A simple way to measure the final output power was to disconnect the receiver antenna and tune the final until there was a maximum S meter reading or minimum AGC level voltage. This technical discussion did not end our conversation with Lew. We talked about other members of The Bronx Radio Club and many of the local and DX hams we had heard on the 10, 20 and 75 Meter bands. We left Lew's apartment at about midnight. I was so engrossed in the subject of ham radio that I forgot about the time and I began to walk Al home to his apartment on Bryant Ave, even though it was much further from my apartment than Lew's was. It was a dark moonless night. We crossed the bridge over the Bronx River and were a few blocks from Al's home when we ducked into a little store lobby, between its glass showcases, to avoid the cold October wind and continue our long winded chatting...

BAM! ... I found myself blinded by an intense light and being thrown to the ground. I felt a great pain in one of my knees and the searing feeling one gets in a hand that has been scraped on concrete. Al had also been shoved down in a similar manner. As my irises adjusted to bright flashlights, I realized that Al and I had been thrown down by two policemen who were in the process of handcuffing us. Next the policemen made us remove everything from our pockets. They were puzzled by the two variable capacitors that Al had in his two front pockets. One of the cops seemed certain that they were glass cutters and we were going to use them to break into the store. We explained the purpose of the capacitors for building a ham station. Luckily one of the cops knew something about ham radio and they uncuffed us and let us get up. They made no apology for the rough treatment we had endured. In those days nobody thought much about racial profiling or police brutality.

The cops asked us why we were out so late. We had no excuse. I also had no excuse for my worried parents when I finally got home at 1:30 AM. I realized that it would be wonderful when I would finally get licensed to transmit because I could stay up late at night chatting with other hams from home. My parents had never complained when, as an SWL, I listened to my radios using earphones, so long as I was safe at home.

As I continued as a volunteer assistant in the high school Physics Lab. As a sophomore I got to know Dr. Sydney Lehman who was the Physics teacher, who later became my Physics teacher as a senior. I also got to know Mr. Pedro who was the Lab Manager of all the science labs.. There were three lab assistants who worked at different periods in the Physics lab. They were Byron R. who was studying to get his ham license, Albert Miller, W2ESU, and myself. Dr. Lehman told us that a friend of his had passed away and his widow gave Dr. Lehman a complete set of QST magazines up to the then present month, that were all in the 6.5" x 9.5" format. He told us to tell our parents that we would be late getting home the next day. Dr. Lehman lived alone in a luxury apartment in Manhattan. As planned, he drove us to his apartment with his Buick. The QSTs were stacked in chronological order. The next thing he did was to deal the QSTs out into three files so that each stack of magazines had every third date. I did not like this ... but why complain when we were getting all those magazines for free? We were given a roll of strong brown cord and we each bundled our stacks of QSTs in order to carry them home. They were quite heavy and we had to return home to The Bronx by subway with them. I was glad to have gotten them. Now I could read old copies of QST that were no longer available at my local public library. Old ones had schematics of old ham radios, so ancient that all the vacuum tubes types were only two digits. My mother was not so thrilled by my acquisition. There wasn't much room left in our three room apartment with all the magazines and radio stuff I was accumulating. She scolded me about the QSTs and told me to get rid of them as soon as possible. I kept them for several months, reading as much as I could, and thinking about selling them. I was told that it wouldn't be easy to sell an incomplete set consisting of every third issue. I didn't want to lose the QSTs, so I decided to store them in Johnny the steamfitter's cellar. He promised to temporarily hold them for me there and I agreed that it was OK for him to read them himself. As it happens I never asked to see them again and I have no idea what Johnny finally did with them.

Next month I'll tell you more about Dr. Lehman and Mr. Pedro and how I spoiled our friendships by not being able to hold my tongue.

PRESIDENT'S NOTE by ED GELLENDER, WB2EAV

The club dinner out, replacing the picnic, went quite well and everyone had a wonderful time. While Crab Meadow Beach put it a bit out of the way for some members, the view made up for it

As Northrop Grumman Bethpage empties out, the end is approaching. While a small number of people are to remain (at least for now), everyone else is either quitting, moving to Florida, or being laid off. The place resembles a ghost town. As for myself, so far I have nothing solid beyond October 17th and am continuing to work on it. It is possible that I will find a job that is a significant distance from Bethpage, and the 5:30 PM meetings will no longer be viable for me. We will have to see how things work out.

We have a few interesting things coming up in the next few months. On Saturday November 8th the ARRL Hudson Division is having the Annual Awards Dinner at noon at North Shore Towers, just off the Northern State on the Nassau/Queens line. The Awards luncheon takes place every year but usually too far away to make them worth going to. This time it is right in our backyard. I understand it costs \$50 to attend. Details will follow next month.

Of Course, every January we have Ham Radio University at Briarcliffe College right here in Bethpage. This year it on Sunday, January 4th, so save the date. The HRU admission is only \$3, but there isn't any sit down lunch included for that price. If you are not familiar with it, I highly recommend trying it once. It is always a nice day. [*Except when it snows?—w2ilp*]

Ed, WB2EAV

**GRUMMAN AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING 8/20/2014
By Karen, W2ABK**

This was the picnic dinner meeting. It was informally opened by members as they arrived at an outdoor patio area overlooking Crab Meadow Beach and ordered beverages of their choice. The members chatted about the history of the GARC.

TREASURER'S REPORT – Ed, WB2EAV

Finances continue to be in good shape.

REPEATER REPORT – Gordon, KB2UB

No report, *but both repeaters seem to be working – w2ilp--*

NET REPORT – Karen, W2ABK

Thursday night net at 8:15 PM on 146.745 MHz had 1 check-in

Thursday night net at 8:30 PM on 145.330 MHz had 1 check-in, but there seems to be a problem hearing audio at W2ABK's station.

The Sunday morning net at 7:30 AM on 7.289 MHz had 1 check-in.

VE REPORT – Ed, WB2EAV

Two applicants applied for the Technician exam and passed.

Three VEs were present: Ed, WB2EAV, Bill, WB2QGZ, and Karen, W2ABK.

PROGRAM

This meeting was held at the LaCasa Café in Northport. Eighteen members attended. The desert was a custard strawberry cake with "GARC 2014" displayed upon it. The food was good and there was a beautiful view of the long Island Sound which served as a background for group pictures that were taken before the meeting was completely closed and we went to our cars for the trip home.

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

GARC Net Controller Karen, W2ABK

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.**

MEETINGS

General Meetings of the GARC are held on the 3rd 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. *Meetings may be cancelled or relocated. Check the website.*

WEB SITE

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 have been a member of LinkedIn for some time now. If you aren't familiar with LinkedIn it is a large chat group, much like Facebook, where people can post their own resumes as well as their photographs. LinkedIn tends to attract more professional types than Facebook. It has many special interest groups including several devoted to Amateur Radio. Unfortunately I have become addicted to Facebook because I can't resist posting to threads written by "experts" who claim to know everything about subjects that I egotistically believe I know better. Spending time posting on LinkedIn has prevented me from working on this newsletter but I couldn't avoid doing so.

One ham radio thread was started by an academic professor who claimed to know all about the history of transistor radios. He started right off with Sony, without recognizing Regency and even Emerson Radio which manufactured early transistor radios when transistors were made with germanium and not silicon. Another thread was started by a man who said that there were no 3D HF antennas. A young guy who joined that group has promised to mail me a schematic of an FM detector that offers gain (more than a FM discriminator?) I don't know why an FM receiver circuit would need to offer gain (considering gain is purposely limited in and FM receiver by a limiter), but I offered to look at his circuit as a free consultant.

So, LinkedIn's radio amateur (ham) threads are the Internet Links for this month. The way my Windows 8 works I can't read the web addresses that links take me to. so I won't give you any <http://www....> Type addresses this month. I'm sure that you can find LinkedIn and register there if you have not already done so. You can find my messages there and be free to add your own comments.

PUZZLE

Last month's question was:-

Who was the first man to successfully transmit and receive amplitude modulated audio (sound, voice and music) by radio at distances greater than a mile?

Answer:

There is no doubt that the prolific inventor Reginald Fessenden (1886-1932) was the first man to modulate continuous wave carriers with voices and music. He even is believed to have achieved transatlantic two way radiotelephone communication at a time soon after Marconi had achieved one way Morse Communication. He was born in Quebec, Canada but did most his radiotelephony broadcasting in Pittsburg and in Connecticut. His important patents were finally sold to RCA. It is a shame that he is not as well-known as Marconi, Armstrong and Tesla. There is no room here to detail his many inventions and original concepts. I suggest that you Google up Fessenden and read more about him for yourselves.

This month's question is:

Which signal mode or modes have been designated as Amplitude Modulated (AM) Modes by FCC definitions?

- 0 An unmodulated continuous wave (used as a beacon)
1. A Morse Code keyed continuous wave
2. A Morse Code keyed tone modulating a continuous wave carrier
3. A voice modulated continuous wave carrier
4. Facsimile
5. Television video
6. All of the above

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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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

It is Thursday night and I am so busy finishing up this newsletter that I missed signing on to the WAG net! My apologies to Karen, W2ABK and any other sign-ins.

I think that I can well understand what Ed Gellender is now experiencing. I have been laid off by four companies, all at critical times in my life. Two of them offered me a job if I would relocate but I did not want to sell my home in Commack. I have suffered depression and the loss of self-esteem, which comes with unemployment, but fortunately I have always managed to quickly come back among the employed, even when it meant doing so for lower pay and a lower position or starting all over again. Although I never learned to hold my tongue I managed to succeed not because I was well liked or respected but because I was well educated and experienced...I think... Well... It is not considered good manners to talk about oneself. You may read the GARC history book to find that I was only Vice President of the GARC at the time that Ed Talley was President. Nobody wanted the vice job at that time and Gordon was busy with company business so he gave it to me. While GARC Vice President, I volunteered for a temporary assignment in Melbourne, Florida because there was a lull in the EA6B Program.. When I returned to Long Island, I was no longer an officer of the GARC but I volunteered to be its Contact VE, (because the previous CVE had left Grumman).. CVE was actually a more important and responsible and time consuming position than being Vice President anyway.

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FIRST CLASS MAIL
Do Not Delay

THE QUARTER CENTURY WIRELESS ASSOCIATION – Chapter 81
By Bob, W2ILP

There is no longer a Quarter Century Wireless Association (QCWA) Chapter 81. It was the Long Island NY Chapter and has not existed since its last president, Marty Miller NN2C, passed away and nobody else volunteered to replace him. Today, the nearest QCWA Chapter meets in Yonkers, too far away for regular meeting attendance. In the past, many GARC members would regularly attend QCWA-Chapter 81 meetings. Most who had been licensed for 25 years or more could join QCWA but there were some GARC members who hadn't been licensed for the required 25 years and were welcomed at the QCWA meetings anyway. Some presentations given at GARC meetings were then repeated at QCWA meetings, and at one time Chapter 81 regularly used the GARC repeaters. The relationship between the QCWA headquarters, which is now in Arlington, Texas and Chapters of the QCWA is similar to the relationship of the ARRL headquarters in Newington, Connecticut with the many ARRL affiliated clubs that meet all over the USA.

It is ironic that the QCWA began in New York City and most of its original charter members were W2s. Today the greatest QCWA activity seems to be in western and southern states. When the wireless was young you could brag about being a ham for 25 years because it meant that you must have been on the air in 1922 or earlier. Today 25 years of hamming means a lot less.. In fact there are now tens of thousands of old timers who have been licensed for over 50 years.

I used to receive the "QCWA Journal" by postal mail four times a year. Now it is a monthly newsletter that is available to members only at the QCWA website. The first president of the QCWA was John DiBlasi, W2FX(sk) who was given membership Number 1 when QCWA began in 1947. There were 55 charter members at that time. Since then memberships have been designated in numerical order. Number 4 was Dave Tally, the father of GARC's ex-president Ed Tally, W2IVA, and I am Number 22033. I'll include a list of famous Hams who have been Presidents of the QCWA next month if room permits.