

BARA Facts

Newsletter of the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association

August 2007

Website: <http://www.wtsn.binghamton.edu/bara>

The President's Corner

Time for a picnic! Please see the note later in this issue regarding our annual Picnic. It's always fun and we hope to have a good turnout.

Our August Board Meeting concentrated on the Club and in particular on developing a slate of Officers and Directors for 2008. Family and School commitments prevent several Officers and Board Directors from running again and we will need to recruit replacements from among You, the members.

Please consider carefully the possibility of serving our Club. If you are interested, please let me or our Vice President, Jim, know and if someone approaches you to serve, please consider saying "yes". You will find that the duties are not difficult and there is satisfaction in being a part of the BARA Organization.

Think about it. We are the oldest active Radio Club in the triple cities and our history stretches back to the days of spark. Over the years our Club has adapted to the times and our members have been active in both our Hobby and our Community. We should all take pride in BARA and satisfaction in being a part of this group.

What does the future hold? I don't have a crystal ball and my predictions are usually a bit shaky, but I think we can see changes coming down the pike. Amateur Radio tomorrow will be different from today with new techniques and new modes developing and enhancing the way we operate. Our great-grandfathers measured success in blocks and then in miles and it is instructive to remember that when that upstart Armstrong suggested Frequency Modulation the "establishment" *knew* that it would never catch on.

So there, with some fluff, is my map to the future. Let's all be an active part.

Our July meeting was interesting and a nice variation on the usual run of business. A note from

Elaine Frost, KC2IKW, expressed her appreciation for being selected as the Esther and William Valky Scholarship honoree and Jack, WB2GHH, offered some "color" on Field Day up at the Shack. Additional participation for Field Day would have been nice, but everyone who was there had fun. Most of the general business concerned the Hamfest and we note that there have been some responses to the request for volunteers. Please keep sending those names in.

What happened at the end of the meeting was perhaps the best part. We relaxed and chatted and socialized and instead of a mass exodus, we broke up leisurely and departed in peace. It was nice. — *DE Ed, KB2SCF*

Wallpaper

Jack, WB2GHH, reports that we are another 108 square inches (or so) closer to recovering the Shack interior walls. BARA achieved a Clean Sweep in the 2006 Sweepstakes and we have the certificate to prove it. Ray Terry, K1OW, is the operator we should thank him (and thump him on the back and perhaps lift him on our shoulders) and, as Jack has noted, our site, limited though it may be at present, works!

August Picnic

Our August General Meeting will be the Annual Summer Picnic, so don't bother to stop by the Hall, come out to the park instead!

We will be at the Pavilion near the Garden Plots in Otsiningo Park (Off Bevier St. at Front St. in Binghamton) on Wednesday, August 15th.

Setup will commence around 4:00PM and the "formal" festivities will commence at 5:00 PM and run until dark.

Meats, soft drinks, bread, and related "stuff" will be provided by the Club and we ask everyone to bring a dish or dessert to pass.

As usual, we will have a mini-swapfest, so bring

your treasures and priceless *objets 'd wireless* for evaluation by our Club *cognessetti*.

Come as you wish, come as you are, come with your friends and family — but come. We hope to see you in the park on Wednesday the 15th of August. To assist in planning for the event, a call to Jack, WB2GHH, at 724-8822 to confirm the number attending would be appreciated.

Silent Keys

It is with regret that we note the passing of several friends.

DON BENNEDUM, K2JIQ, passed away in July. Don was a long-time member of BARA and active to the end. He will be missed.

We are informed that **TED LABARON, N2LZO**, passed away some time ago. We regret that no further information is available.

Club Website

When surfing the “net”, don’t forget that BARA has a Website at <<<http://www.wtsn.binghamton.edu/bara/>>>. Why not add it to your “favorites” and check in occasionally to see what is news. You can download a copy of the *Facts* from the site and there are occasional notes of upcoming activities and events as they become known.

Wireless Tales

Out on the Net, Thomas H. White has a vast collection of early radio documents under the title “United States Early Radio History”. You can find the material at <<<http://earlyradiohistory.us/>>> and it is well-worth perusing out. Besides documents on Technology and Technique, there are articles on the social and economic impact of Radio and on the intersection between Radio and History. Herewith for your pleasure is an extract from a true tale of spy-chasing during the First world war...

...After two weeks of “watchful waiting”, I too decided the case to be another “false alarm” and was preparing to report my belief; in fact, had actually sat down to do so, when gazing absently out of the window of the shack we were stopping at I noticed on a distant hill a familiar telephone and telegraph pole on which were hung several wires. Of course there was nothing unusual about this, but I began to wonder just where this line led to, for I had not even seen or heard of a telephone in this vicinity, nor did the farmer know of one. Now I have always been interested in telephone and telegraph work; in fact, when I was a youngster, to learn telegraphy at the local railroad depot, I used to

climb telegraph poles, tap various lines thru a portable set to ground and thereby have a “load of fun” with train dispatchers and towermen. I was finally caught in the act and shall never forget the experience. But that, as Mr. Kipling says, is another story.

Upon seeing this particular line, so far removed from its usual surroundings, I decided to look it up. I accordingly reached the spot of one of the poles where I saw there were exactly two wires stretched on the one crosstree carrying the usual glass insulators. Since the line was nowhere near the main road, curiosity led me to follow it which I did for a distance of about 1,000 yards. Imagine my surprise when upon reaching this spot the string of poles *terminated*, and so did the wires! The four wires simply were fastened to four glass insulators and stopt there. I concluded that the line was probably a discarded one and was thinking seriously of climbing the pole and testing each wire when I first decided to see how far the line went in the other direction. Accordingly I walked a distance of less than a quarter of a mile where I was again surprised to note once more the end of the poles! This, however, was at a place covered by a considerable number of trees but imagine my amazement when by close scrutiny I noticed that the two telegraph wires reached a “common joint” to another well insulated heavier wire leading from the last pole thru the trees in a carefully insulated manner. There was only one answer to this unusual telegraph wire arrangement — it was a disguised *wireless antenna*! I could hardly contain myself with excitement as I pushed my way thru the trees and heavy underbrush keeping my eye on what I now felt sure was a long wave listening-in station. After going down hill for a short space I began to hear the familiar waterfall and the overshot wheel of the grist mill, and finally I came to a slight clearing and noticed with satisfaction that the wire led, in a cleverly disguised manner, thru one side of the mill. I was now fully convinced that the place was equipt with at least a long distance receiving outfit. However, nothing could be done just then without arousing suspicion, as it was still daylight. I accordingly returned to the farmhouse and explained my find to my two companions. These gentlemen were for pulling out all artillery and making a “grand sweep” upon the mill, a suggestion which I quickly tabooed.

My plan was to come back at night, try to force our way into the mill, which I had previously noted could be easily done, and thus see what was actually “going on.” We carried out this plan and found no trouble in slipping in at a point near the overshot wheel,

and owing to the terrific racket it made, what noise we did make could not be heard. The three of us kept close together and prepared to make a stealthy but systematic search of the entire building. It took us exactly one hour to do this, after which we had heard absolutely no strange sound nor seen any gleam of light which might suggest the presence of anyone "listening-in." The place, to all appearances, was absolutely deserted at this hour of the night. Remembering the side upon which the lead-in was inserted, we decided to look again for a possible unexplored section of the building. We therefore climbed to the very loft and for fifteen minutes or so carefully and quietly listened for any unusual noise. After a short time our eyes had become accustomed to the darkness, and it was then that one of my companions touched my side and pointed my face towards what I saw to be a tiny gleam of light. We carefully moved in this direction and reaching it I applied my eye to the crack. My hair literally stood on its ends as I looked and was a young man, telephone receivers on his ears and in the act of "copying." On the table and directly in front of him was what appeared to be a complete receiving set with several vacuum tubes burning brightly. What little noise we had made, of course, could not have been heard by the listener, owing to the telephone receivers clamped tightly on his ears, a fact which I communicated to the two men close to me.

Our flashlights disclosed a door which being unlocked enabled us to walk right into the room, where withdrawn revolvers we suddenly faced the young man. He never batted an eye, and in fact hardly seemed surprised, taking the whole proceedings as a matter of course and part of the day's work. While my two companions were attending to the young man, I looked at what the operator had been copying and saw it was coded words similar to those which were frequently transmitted during the war by European high-powered stations. Upon listening-in myself I heard the familiar spark of "POZ" beginning its usual sing song "groupen, etc."

Upon questioning the operator we were unable to secure any information whatever, so we took him over to the farm house for the rest of the night. Next day upon looking over the grist mill we found an explanation for the use of the mysterious armature. In one part of the building a large motor-generator was in the water power. A large transformer and a considerable number of Telefunken radio telegraph parts were found about the place preparatory, no doubt, to the erection of a transmitting station probably capable of

communicating with submarines at sea thru the use of the excellent telegraph line antenna possessed of unusually long wavelength.

Changes on '73

Users of the 146.73 Repeater are advised that interference and related issues have made it necessary to change the Machine so that a CTSS Tone of 100 Hz is decoded on input to the Repeater. If you want to get into '73, you must program your transmitter accordingly.

If you, like your editor, have difficulty figuring out how to turn the tone on for your transceiver, this might be a good time to get out the manual and photocopy the pages that describe memory, tones, splits, and related matters and make sure that a copy is in your car and in your "jump kit". Every time I reprogram a channel on my transceiver, I am reminded of how complex the functions have become and how puzzling it can be to navigate the menus. An emergency is not the time to find out that you can't change the setup of your radio.

Wireless is a thrilling pastime. Fancy a boy sitting in his room at home with his fingers on a telegraph key

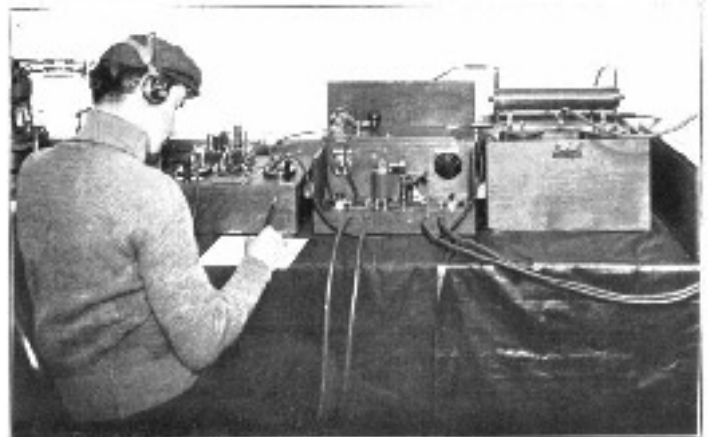


FIG. 17 - Calk Foundation Station

and a telephone receiver to his ear listening-in to the news of the world as it is flashed out from the great coast stations or by ships far out at sea! It's a great experience. Yet 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. — A. Frederick Collins, *The Book of Wireless*, 1915.

Binghamton Amateur Radio Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 853
Binghamton, New York 13902

First Class

Club Officers and Committees			
President	Ed Plesnar	KB2SCF	754-3810
Vice President	Jim Lawson	KC2JED	797-1583
Secretary	Blake McCabe	KC2GQX	748-9808
Treasurer	Paul Slocum	N2NCB	687-2057
Directors	Jack Connors	WB2GHH	724-8822
	Warren Marks	KC2NGR	648-6840
	Bob McCabe	KC2DSS	748-9808
	Lee Savidge	W3EFE	669-4188
W2OW Trustee	Mel Snitchler	WE2K	723-9612
Newsletter	Ed Plesnar	KB2SCF	754-3810



BARA, The Binghamton Amateur Radio Association is an ARRL Affiliated Club

e-Mail Address: w2ow@arrl.net

Next General Meeting

7:30 PM, Wednesday, August 15th
Town of Binghamton Town Hall, 279 Park Avenue, South of the
Ross Park Entrance

Board Meeting

7:00 PM, Wednesday September 5th
Broome Community College Campus, Office of Emergency
Services (West Side of Campus)

Exam Session

7:00 PM Monday, August 27th
Vestal Public Library, Route 434 Vestal

BARA Dues

\$18/year Single Member; \$27/year Family

DX Cluster

W2OW on 145.070 MHz with a Data Rate of 1,200 baud;
questions to n2bc@stny.rr.com

Local Repeater Nets

146.73 MHz STAR Net (NTS Feeder) Every
Evening at 6:30 PM Local Time
146.82 MHz BRAT Net (Informal BARA) Sunday Evening at
8:00 PM Local Time



*Our Printing Sponsor: Unicorn
Electronics, Valley Plaza Drive,
Johnson City, NY*