



The Sparkgap

Newsletter of the Wellesley Amateur Radio Society

Founded in 1950



Volume 34, No. 7

September 2008

President's Message

Hope you had a great summer! At our June meeting we had elections for the board and officers for the next season. A few changes occurred. I wish to thank all of you who offered to be in the new and old positions. We'll have a fun year. See page 4 for further information. We capped the spring season with our June Field Day. Many people stated they enjoyed the event very much. Details on page 6. The program committee met and we have new topics for the new season (see page 4).

Our next meeting on Tuesday September 16th will be a talk by Steve Schwarm W3EVE about the NYC "9/11 Emergency response, Tales From The Real World (WTC Disaster)". This will be a very moving presentation. Our meetings are usually held on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30 PM in the Kingsbury room of the Wellesley Police Station, 485 Washington St. (Rte 16), Wellesley.

73, Dan W1DAN

Framingham's 75th Anniversary!

By Dan W1DAN

June 14th was the 75th anniversary of the Framingham Amateur Radio Association (FARA). The W1FY gang celebrated by having a dinner at the Marlborough Courtyard Marriott where they showed a 1933 silent movie about FARA.



Photo from the FARA web site

FARA is well known for their license in a weekend classes and meets at the third Thursday of the month at the Danforth Museum in downtown Framingham. Their web site is <http://fara.org/>

Re-Elect W1MPN!

By Dan W1DAN

Mike Neilsen is running for ARRL Eastern Massachusetts Section Manager again. After taking a hiatus, Mike is interested in continuing on his years of service as SM. In the past, he was also Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC) for the eastern Massachusetts area.

During Field Day, Phil Temples K9HI visited us and while chatting he requested that our club endorse Mike for re-election. As we had most of the board there, we had an impromptu vote to endorse Mike. I composed an endorsement note to Phil who posted it on the W1MPN web site:

"Mike has provided very good service in the past, knows what we need in amateur radio and he has been a strong proponent in emergency communications as well as other subjects in our radio service." --Dan Brown, W1DAN, President, Wellesley Amateur Radio Society"

Mike has also been a significant driver and contributor to the eastern Mass ARRL web site <http://www.ema.arrl.org>. It would be helpful for you to log into his site and personally endorse Mike. Go to <http://www.w1mpn.org/> or email Mike at w1mpn@comcast.net. Election ballots should be mailed in October. See July and August QST's.

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Why are we called "Hams" ?

By Charlie Bures, WA3ITR

Have you ever wondered why we radio amateurs are called Hams? I got curious the other day and typed "ham origins" into my search engine. Was there a single answer? No, only 869,000 variations! Here are some of the top matches which I hope you will find humourous, thought provoking and do some exploring yourself!

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etymology_of_ham_radio

Ham is an informal term for an amateur radio operator, and, by extension, "ham radio" refers to amateur radio in general. This use of the word first appeared in the United States during the opening decade of the twentieth century — for example, Robert A. Morton in "Wireless Interference", from the April, 1909 Electrician and Mechanic, reported overhearing an amateur radio transmission which included the comment: "Say, do you know the fellow who is putting up a new station out your way? I think he is a ham." However, the term did not gain widespread usage in the United States until around 1920, after which it slowly spread to other English-speaking countries.

<http://www.qsl.net/ae0q/ham.htm>

From the 1969 ARRL "The Radio Amateur's Operating Manual"

"Ham: a poor operator. A 'plug.'"
That's the definition of the word given in G. M. Dodge's The Telegraph Instructor even before radio. The definition has never changed in wire telegraphy. The first wireless operators were landline telegraphers who left their offices to go to sea or to man the coastal stations. They brought with them their language and much of the tradition of their older profession.

In those early days, spark was king and every station occupied the same wavelength--or, more accurately perhaps, every station occupied the whole spectrum with its broad spark signal. Government stations, ships, coastal stations and the increasingly numerous amateur operators all competed for time and signal supremacy in each other's receivers. Many of the amateur stations

were very powerful. Two amateurs, working across town, could effectively jam all the other operators in the area. When this happened, frustrated commercial operators would call the ship whose weaker signals had been blotted out by the amateurs and say "SRI OM THOSE #&\$!@ HAMS ARE JAMMING YOU."

Amateurs, possibly unfamiliar with the real meaning of the term, picked it up and applied it to themselves in true "Yankee Doodle" fashion and wore it with pride. As the years advanced, the original meaning has completely disappeared.

Finally, since I am running out of space, you might know that Harvard and MIT have a running battle over whose radio club is the oldest! Well, I once belonged to W1MX and so I'm biased. But I am willing to include what that young pup college down the River is saying - -

An alternate theme is found at:

<http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~w1af/hamorigin.html>

Well it goes something like this--the word ham was applied in 1908 and was the call letters of one of the first amateur wireless stations operated by some members of the Harvard Radio Club (sic). They were Albert Hyman, Bob Almy and Peggie Murray. At first they called their station Hyman-Almy-Murray. Tapping out such a long name in code soon called for a revision, and they changed it to Hy-A1-Mu, using the first two letters of each name. Early in 1909 some confusion resulted between signals from HYALMU and a Mexican ship named Myalmo, so they decided to use only the first letter of each name and identified their station as HAM.

In the early pioneer and unregulated days of radio, amateur operators picked their own frequencies and call letters. Then, as now, some amateurs had better signals than some commercial stations. The resulting interference finally came to the attention of Congressional Committees in Washington and they gave much thought to proposed legislation designed to critically limit amateur activity.



(Continued on Page 3)

"Hams" Continued

In 1911, Albert Hyman chose the controversial Wireless Regulations Bill as the topic of his thesis at Harvard. His instructor insisted that a copy be sent to Senator David Walsh, a member of the committee hearing the Bill. The Senator was so impressed that he sent for Mr. Hyman to appear before the Committee. Hyman was put on the stand and described how the little amateur station, HAM, was built, and he almost cried when he told the crowded committee room that if the bill went through, they would have to close up the station because they could not afford the license fees and other requirements which were set up in the Bill.

The debate started and the little station, HAM, became a symbol of all the little amateur stations in the country that were crying out to be saved from the menace and greed of the big commercial stations who didn't want them around. Finally the Bill got to the floor of Congress and every speaker talked about the poor little station, HAM.

That's how it all got started. You can find the whole story in the Congressional Record. Nationwide publicity identified the station HAM with amateurs. From that time to this, and probably to the end of time, in radio, every amateur is a ham. I think the last account sounds like another Harvard attempt to win the Hastings' Pudding Trophy, so I'll place my money on the ARRL version which seems to have some corollary support from the Wikipedia account! 73, WA3ITR

Club Cabinet Moved!

By Dan W1DAN

Arline needed to make some room. She had the club's radio cabinet that was in her basement room where we have the Christmas parties.



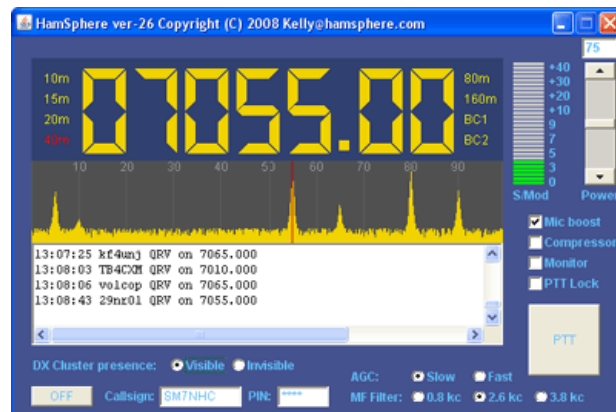
The Club's operating cabinet

This cabinet was very well built by club member John Gerdes KD1TI and makes for a great hideaway station. It was taken apart and moved by Pat W1HIV to his home. Thanks Pat!

No More QRM Free internet Audio!

By Bob K5IQ

I've often joked that the digital/Internet radio experience isn't the same as good ol' shortwave and that someone should come up with a way to use DSP to simulate all the fading and noise inherent to HF. I joke no longer:



www.hamsphere.com

Well, I tried it and it sounds just like 40M--including an old ham grouching about something stupid. Actually, the noise and fading and CW and such are pretty good, but the audio quality is too "FM" to be SSB. I like that there's a "numbers" station on there and a time signal...and, I really did hear an Old Man complaining.

Seems someone was playing way over-modulated music and somehow or another was causing it to appear at several spots across the "band". The OM was going on and on about how he was going to e-mail the guy who wrote the program and complain about such foolishness. In that regard, I am amazed at how accurately this program reproduces "real" radio.

73, Bob

NV1T's 90th Birthday!

This summer NV1T had his 90th birthday. I spoke with Jerry him and he is alert and joking, but unstable on his feet and not active on the radio. As Mr. Driscoll has been a major contributor to WARS, we'd like to say "Happy Birthday Jerry!"

WARS PROGRAM SCHEDULE

September 16 (Tuesday)-Steve Schwarm W3EVE about the NYC "9/11 Emergency response, Tales From The Real World (WTC Disaster)".

October 20 (Monday)-Dinner Meeting – 6:30PM – Agostinos Restaurant on Natick Center.

November 18 (Tuesday)-Larry Coyle – VLF Receivers & Operations

December 7 (Sunday)-Christmas Party at Arline's

January 2009 (Tuesday)-Charlie Bures-Propagation

February 2009 (Tuesday)- Dan-SDR and DTV Update

March 2009 (Tuesday)-Rich-Movie Night

April 2009 (Monday)-Spring Fling Dinner

May 2009 (Tuesday)-Larry and Dave-Famous Inventors

June 2009 (Tuesday)—Field Day Planning

Extra-Activity!

- VHF-Contest & Lake Steam Boat Operations – Sept 6/7 in Lake Winnepesaukee, NH

Other possible:

- Tour of ARRL HQ in Newington CT
- NWS – Taunton – Dan to email Rob Macedo (SkyWarn)
- Blue Hill Tour

Election Results!!

We have voted in a slightly new roster at the June meeting! The following positions have been filled: Rich WF1V has agreed to be Vice President. Jack Logan N1TPU has agreed to be on the board. Don Koch NT1L and David Fox WA1QGC have agreed to be on the board. Thank you for donating your time and effort to our group!

Also, thanks to Charlie WA3ITR and Rich WF1V for being the election committee!

WARS Officers

President: Dan Brown W1DAN

w1dan@arrl.net

Vice President: Rich Kumpf WF1V

wf1v@arrl.net

Secretary: Larry Coyle K1QW

lmcoyle1@verizon.net

Treasurer: Elaine Kile KB1IBF

starbird@gis.net

Board of Directors

David Fox WA1QGC

Fox.david@verizon.net

Jack Logan N1TPU

n1tpu@comcast.net

Barbara Holdridge N1ICQ

dholdridge@verizon.net

Don Koch NT1L

aardvark@krl.com

Charlie Bures, WA3ITR

c.bures@comcast.net

Hurricane Matt Exercise!

By Dan W1DAN

Rich WF1V and I participated in the Mass RACES/ARES/SKYWARN statewide Hurricane Matt drill. On Monday August 4th, we visited the Wellesley fire station and operated the club's 2 meter rig for the exercise, providing fake town disaster reporting. Organized by ARES Skywarn coordinator Rob Macedo, further information can be found at <http://ares.ema.arrl.org/>

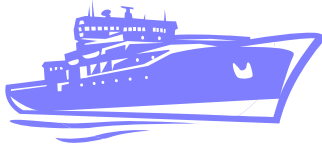
WRNO Worldwide On The Air!

By Dan W1DAN

Last year I wrote an article for Monitoring Times magazine about WRNO Worldwide was about to go on the air. Well it has taken some time to get things ready. World of Radio's Glenn Hauser told me he heard a carrier on their frequencies so I tuned in and heard their first test transmission. I have requested QSL card #1. We'll see if I get it!

New England Historical Radio Society

By Steve WA1HUD



A number of months ago I was asked if I could help restore the radio room on a World War II destroyer, I could not answer YES fast enough. After getting involved, one of the guys thought it would be neat if we had a commercial coastal CW station on marine frequencies that museum ships could legally talk to and pass traffic like yesteryear.

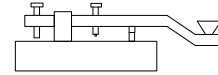
At first I thought this was a totally impossible task but pursued the idea. This is when I learned about stations KSM/KPH and KFS being back on the air running serious power, and 2 new stations being licensed. I then decided we must somehow put a coastal station on the air.



This sure brought back memories of my listening to WCC, WLO and many more stations including the big powerhouse WAX that was run by my uncle in Florida. Well one thing has led to another and a group of us has formed The New England Historical Radio Society. The text below is the overview of what this is all about and the final goal.

The New England Historical Radio Society is an organization that was formed in an effort to preserve the time honored traditions, skills and history of commercial Morse code transmission using wireless telegraphy. The current management team includes myself as president, Jim WB1FVY as the VP, Bonnie DiMarino, Jims XYL as treasurer; her call escapes me at the moment and my XYL Karen N1MSF as secretary. Other heavily involved people are Mark K1RMC, Frank WA1VNR, Harold KB6 ???, an ex NAVY radio transmitter technician. There are others who are interested. Incorporation papers were filed in MA. at 12:25 PM on Sat 7/26/08. The next hurdle is the IRS 501c filing and that could get complicated, but full speed ahead. We have vowed to restore equipment and keep it from being lost to history along with educating the young with a museum and operational coastal telegraph station.

The primary use of Radiotelegraph Morse code was for communicating with ships on the high seas and it has served the world very well and with unrecognized honor, being taken for granted. Over the years many radio operators have gone down with there ships.



For many years all ship to ship and ship to shore traffic was sent by Morse code at the hands of these radio operators. We now depend on complicated computer controlled equipment to protect us and pass message traffic. The USCG has ceased Morse code transmission and has gone to highly automated systems which need redundancy. Internationally all of the time honored distress radio frequencies and working frequencies are no longer monitored by the USCG and other government agencies around the world. We are now depending on satellites for all communication and what happens when these flying radio relay stations break, get jammed with too much traffic or some other failure occurs and no time or someone to fix it? I have been told that there are still some ships including various museum ships that still have radiotelegraphy equipment that can be used. There is one large station that has been restored on a nonprofit basis and is operating on a limited schedule in California that covers most of the Pacific Ocean. Two more have been recently licensed in Florida and Washington.

The NEHRS goal is to build a coastal station and museum to demonstrate this method of radio on a nonprofit basis and to carry on a long tradition. Almost all of the commercial shore stations have been shut down because they say there is not enough money in it to keep them going. Many lives have been saved by radio operators at a telegraph key over the past 100 years, I say why eliminate it? Granted it is slower but it sure is reliable.

It is time radiotelegraph operators from around the world are recognized for there contribution to the world communications and their methods are not forgotten. We are looking for money, land and assistance from enthusiastic donors. If there are any interested individuals or organizations who would like to get involved in this massive project in any size, shape or form please step forward, we could use your help. Please contact WA1HUD@Yahoo.com or go to Yahoo Groups and then go to NEHRS.

WARS Field Day

By Dan W1DAN

On the last weekend in June we held our annual Field Day. Our site at the junction of Route's 16 and 135 in Wellesley provided a very public demonstration of Amateur Radio operation. The volunteers for this fun event were:

Rich WF1V	Dan W1DAN
Lee K1VZI	Don KB1OTQ
Elaine KB1IBF	Larry K1QW
Tom WA1UMA	Tom N1CPE
Charlie WA3ITR	Don NT1L

There were others that I probably forget!



Members of WARS (Lee K1VZI, Larry K1QW, Tom WA1UMA, Don KB1OTQ, Rich WF1V and Charlie WA3ITR) check for RF hotspots on the antenna

Members of WARS erected a large tent (brought by Tom N1CPE), four different antennas and set up a ham radio station. This station was powered by a both a large 180 watt solar panel with deep cycle battery (that Rich and Charlie engineered) during the day as well as a portable generator rented by Charlie during the evening. The station's power output was 100 watts from the club's FT847.

Using SSB and CW on portions of the HF, VHF and UHF radio spectrum the gang made radio contact with about 150 other field day stations around the US and Canada during the weekend.

Many visitors stopped by and asked about amateur radio as well as this Field Day exercise. After answering the visitor's questions, a copy of the club's newsletter was given to each guest and they were invited to attend a meeting in the fall.



Rich Kumpf, Charlie Bures and Don Bumpus set up the solar panel system

The Wellesley "recyclemobile" unit was also set up in the area for an easy location for residents and the radio group to recycle their bottles, cans and cardboard. Being technical geeks the "R.D.F." on the back reminded us of the term "Radio Direction Finding"!



The Recyclemobile!

Saturday evening member Don Koch (NT1L) Bar-B-Q'ed ribs for dinner; and more radio stations were contacted after fingers were cleaned of his tasty homemade BBQ sauces. A good time!



Don Koch starting dinner

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Wellesley Amateur Radio Society
17 June 2008**

Location: Wellesley Police Station, Main Street, Wellesley, MA

Attendees: Dan Brown, W1DAN; Don Bumpus, KB1OTQ; Odette Bumpus; Charlie Bures, WA3ITR; Larry Coyle, K1QW; Tom Deffley, WA1UMA; Lee Herterich, K1VZI; Dick Jansson, KD1K; Rich Kumpf, WF1V; Jack Logan, N1TPU

The meeting was opened at 7:35 PM by President Dan Brown, W1DAN.
Treasury balance was reported as \$2767.25 by Treasurer Elaine Kile, KB1IBF

Old Business: None

New Business: The annual election of chapter officers and directors was conducted. Following some discussion, the following slate of candidates was read by Dan Brown:

Officers:	President:	Dan Brown, W1DAN
	Vice-President:	Rich Kumpf, WF1V
	Secretary:	Larry Coyle, K1QW
	Treasurer:	Elaine Kile, KB1IBF

Board of Directors:	David Fox, WA1QGC
	Jack Logan, N1TPU
	Barb Holdridge, N1ICQ
	Don Koch, NT1L
	Charlie Bures, WA3ITR

A motion was made, seconded and approved by a show of hands to proceed to a vote on this slate of candidates. Next, a motion was made and seconded to accept the above slate as read. This motion was carried by unanimous vote of the members present.

The next order of business was planning Field Day (June 28-29). We intend to depend as much as possible on solar power. Rich Kumpf, WF1V, has arranged for the purchase of a charge controller to work with the solar panel and battery we will be using. Rich described the system he and Charlie Bures, WA3ITR, have put together which will suit our needs for this Field Day.

As a backup system, it was proposed to rent a portable generator. A motion was made, seconded and passed to authorize this expenditure. Also, a motion was approved to refurbish and sell the old generator presently owned by the club.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM

Submitted by: Larry Coyle, K1QW, Secretary

The Wellesley Amateur Radio Society
P.O. Box 812223
Wellesley, MA 02482-0015

First Class Mail

The Wellesley Amateur Radio Society (WARS)

WARS is a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of Amateur Radio through instruction, fellowship, public service and encouragement of participation. Annual membership in the Society is: Individual - \$25.00; Family - \$30.00; Legally blind - \$5.00. The Club year runs from September through August. For more information about the Society, please write to:

The Wellesley Amateur Radio Society
P.O. Box 812223
Wellesley, MA 02482-0015

Visit the WARS web site at <http://wars.krl.com/>

WARS Weekly Net - JOIN US!

All hams are welcome to check into the Wellesley Amateur Radio Society Net on Wednesday evenings at 8 pm on the W1TKZ repeater 147.030 MHz +600 kHz. WARS also operates the W1TKZ repeater on 444.600 MHz +5 MHz (PL tone 88.5 Hz). It is linked to the two meter 147.030 +600 kHz W1TKZ repeater.