

Journal of the Lakehead Amateur Radio Club

Meetings 2nd Thursday of every month - rm. 245 McIntyre Bldg. Confederation College - 7:30 P.M.

Rambling... VE3AHD

The VE land amateur radio activities ceased in September 1939 with the outbreak of hostilities of World War II.

I received a telegram from Trans Canada Airways (TCA) in Winnipeg, in reply to a job application for radio operator that I had submitted the previous year. My application was unsuccessful because I could not type. There were not any "on the job training programmes" in those days.

I did not want to return to Fort Frances and live off my father. Instead, I joined the RCAF on October 10, 1939. I served until August 1945 in both Eastern and Western Air Command and had a short stint in the 4th Service Flying Training School (SFTS) in Saskatoon. Classified as a Wireless Electrical Mechanic (WEM), I was transferred to Goose Bay Labrador in July 1943. After flying from Dorval airport Montreal in an RCAF DC-3, I arrived in Goose Bay and was assigned work with Flight Sergeant Al Stapley on a Goose Bay project.

The base was built on a massive sand plateau. The un-cleared areas were heavily forested with merchantable spruce timber and pulp wood. I was amazed to see a site the contractor was excavating; snow, ice and frozen sand were being dug up in the later part of July.

The people of the Goose Bay area were Inuit Eskimo natives. They travelled by canoe in summer and dog sled in winter. They seemed like a happy lot, free and easy going. We took a picture of a native holding his 22 calibre rifle in one and a large crow in the other. We asked what he was going to do with the bird. He said "Eat em." Sure enough, the following evening Al and I visited their camp and saw the bones of the crow around the tin stove. The natives purchased their supplies at the Hudson Bay trading post at the North West Bay, located on the Hamilton River that bordered the base. Many of the workers in the station laundry were local women.

Our project was the installation of an HF ground based direction finding (DF) station. It was a very interesting assignment because of the unusual conditions that we encountered. The DF site was

about 15 miles from the main base. We travelled to and from the site in a 4 x 4 vehicle. Because we cooked our own noon meal at the site, we picked up the grub at the NCOs Mess each morning. The NCO cook treated us very well as he provided a good variety of food.

Our DF system design was based upon an Adcock antenna consisting of two vertical antennae separated by 10 to 20 feet. Rather than rotate such a large system, a DF antenna array was constructed using two pairs of Adcock antennae vertically mounted and fed, by shielded cable, to a pair of fixed coils. The exploring coil, the only moving part, rotates in the field of the two fixed coils. It is mechanically coupled to a rotating wheel with an indicating pointer on a compass card calibrated in degrees.

With the sense antenna switched into the goniometer circuit and with the correct signal value, one of the received maximum signals can be cancelled entirely. Thus the correct compass card bearing can be read, as indicated by the null.

The contractor built the 14 foot square DF building and electrical service was provided by an underground cable. Four poles were erected to carry the two pairs of Adcock antennae and a ground rod was driven at each pole. Centred on the antenna array at a radius of 50 to 60 feet, marker stakes were placed in a circle every 10 degrees. A surveyors' transit was employed to ensure accurate placement of the marker stakes.

Calibration of the system required a signal source comprising a battery powered 3.2 Meg oscillator with a telescopic antenna. The oscillator was lined up with the stake and the DF building (antenna array), rotating the exploring coil the signal was received placing the sense antenna in the goniometer circuit a null was obtained and recorded, this procedure was carried out at each 10 degree stake. The readings were all recorded on a deviation chart. Reviewing the recorded data soon indicated the deviations varied from day to day. The reason for this variance was attributed to poor electrical grounding due to the conductivity in the sand. The condition would vary depending on the amount of precipitation

encountered.

Attempts were made to overcome the problem by driving additional ground rods at the base of the poles and tying all grounds with number six copper wire. Even with the additional work on the grounds the bearings were still unreliable.

It was thought that the moisture content would be more constant at a greater depth, and so, a hole large enough to work in was dug to permit the driving 10 foot ground rods. In the course of digging the hole, we observed, exposed in the walls of the hole, veins of iron oxide running at random through the sand. The veins were at a depth of 30 to 45 inches and varied in thickness from 1/8 to 3/8 inch. Further examination of the veins indicated their lengths also varied. Using a Simpson 270 meter with the positive probe on the iron oxide and the negative in the sand, we determined there was a potential difference of 0.25 to 0.50 DC volts.

We concluded that these radical conditions placed the Adcock antenna in a magnetic flux and that it would be impossible to obtain reliable bearings. Therefore the project was abandoned.
73s...Harry VE3AHD.

FOUNDING PRESIDENT

Patrick Joseph O'Shea was the first president of the Canadian Lakehead Wireless Experimenters (later renamed the Lakehead Amateur Radio Club). He was, also, in those early days, Radio Inspector at Fort William, Ontario. Also he gave amateur examinations for Amateur Radio Operator certificates. At that time certificates were issued by the Department of Marine, under the provisions of the Radiotelegraph Act, R.S. of Canada 1927, C195. My certificate was signed by P.J. O'Shea, 18 June 1930. No. 1084. The late Brien O'Brien's similar certificate was also signed by Pat O'Shea.

A paper by an unknown writer on "The House of Providence" Dundas letter head gives us some of the very interesting history of Patrick Joseph O'Shea, which will be reprinted in HI-Q.

Unfortunately, Pat was killed in an accident at Dundas, Ontario.
Les Harris VE3AYZ

The following article on Pat O'Shea that Les has given us, is, as he indicated written on "House of Providence" letterhead, from Dundas, Ontario, dated January 1970, and there is a handwritten notation at the top "Article printed in Dundas paper on Pat O'Shea - VE3FW".

The Editors

Octogenarian Amateur Operator

Far removed from the popular image of the garrulous Irishman of stage and screen, Patrick O'Shea is a quiet, reserved man whose fresh colouring and erect carriage belie his eighty-nine years. His counterpart is probably a tweed-clad country gentleman strolling with dog and gun over the green acres of the homeland, but to our Mr. O'Shea, the leisure years represent merely a change in activities. No longer gainfully employed, he is a full time ham radio operator, call No. VE3FW whose base is the House of Providence in Dundas, Ontario.

Pat O'Shea is not an easy man to know. He does not care for small talk, and although unfailingly courteous, he avoids the groups where his contemporaries converse at length about personalities and the weather. The author of "The Lonely Crowd" probably described best this attitude of the individual who walks alone, surrounded by many whose interests touch him but briefly, but when one can have the latest news from Caracas or exchange views with a radio friend in Whitehorse at the turn of a dial, he is not likely to miss local politics or the probabilities of snow tonight.

Early Beginnings

Patrick Joseph O'Shea was born 1881 in Athlone on the Shannon, County Westmeath, Ireland. At the age of nineteen, he joined the army and went off to the South African War. In the army he learned International Morse Code and served as a signaller, marking the beginning of life-long interest in transmitting and receiving. When the war was over, he returned to England, and after a few years in London, he came to Canada in 1908 and embarked on a long and varied career. Like many another newcomer to this country, he started with work in the bush, followed by several years on the railroad. He had been trained as a pressman-printer in the old country, and in time he had the opportunity to practice this trade on the Calgary Herald. It was during his years in Calgary that he married a girl who shared his interest and who in time became a licensed amateur operator in her own right.

In 1914 he went to Fort William on the Times-Journal. Recognized as an expert in printing machinery, he was later brought to Toronto as a printing plant engineer, a career he followed until his retirement at the age of 67. After some time spent in Peterborough, he took up residence in 1965 at the House of Providence in Dundas.

The World at his Fingertips

Retirement made more time available for Mr.

O'Shea's hobby. First licensed as an amateur operator in 1925, he is now the oldest member of the Radio Society of Ontario, which includes all active amateur operators in the province. During the forty-five years which have elapsed since his licensing, operator VE3FW has transmitted and received messages from operators around the world. Riffing through the cards he receives and examining his record of calls is the equivalent of arm chair travel: Guatemala, Sweden, Russia, Japan, China, Greenland, Norway, Australia, Brazil, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Cuba, Ecuador, and many more. It is with some chagrin that Mr. O'Shea describes the great tragedy which befell him when he was leaving Fort William, when by mistake the contents of his filing cabinet which contained countless such messages, was burned. Asked about the special calls which represent high drama to the uninitiated, Mr. O'Shea recalled one received while in Fort William from the Canadian Ship Bonaventure. He was able to telephone the operator's mother who happened to live in the same city, and put her in touch with her son, then on the high seas. On another occasion he made contact with two Canadians and two Americans manning the most northerly weather station on Ellsmere Island and put them in touch with their families. Mr. O'Shea claims that as the years go by, he has less interest in establishing contact with new and distant places, and spends more time chatting with radio acquaintances he has made through the years. Many are known to each other only by their call numbers, but they are nevertheless very real friends, mutually interested in the other's welfare and family. Birthdays are honoured by both radio and card and Christmas greetings exchanged. Mr. O'Shea spends considerable time, too, in keeping touch with members of his family, not by letter, for letter-writing has become labourious, but by tape, chatting with his daughter in Burlington, a niece at Oxford, a nephew in London, a son-in-law in Thunder Bay, and receive their replies for recording. Through his pastime, windows have been opened for this man upon some of the world's famous places, but only one country calls to him now, the land of his birth. He would like to visit his sister in Ireland, but travel at eighty-nine is precarious, and so reminiscences must serve in its place. These are not lacking: Belfast for instance, and his unit returning from south Africa and he a member of the honour guard of fifty for the visit of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra, every man of them with a medal, a rarity at that time (not until the war of 1914 did a man come back with a chestful of medals).

His choicest yarn is possibly one about John McCormack. The great tenor had been his class-mate at school, and when class was once called upon to sing for a visiting Inspector, the two fourteen-year-olds were paired to sing together. John McCormack even then was being acclaimed as a singer and was much in demand for concerts. "I had the voice of a crow, to be sure" he recalls, "but just this once I sang with John McCormack" The days are not dull for Pat O'Shea. Up with the birds, seven days a week, he serves as altar boy for the early morning Mass, and makes his daily visits to the chapel. The occasional trip to town for mysterious bits of equipment, the intricate tinkering, and steadfast devotion to his hobby fill his days, and no doubt account to a considerable extent for his continuing good health. For operator VE3FW life is well worthwhile at eighty-nine.

NOTICE... Area Campers Re. Phone Patches

Regretfully, most local amateurs are only too aware that recently, the VE3YQT phone patch has been down more often than it has been up. This is because the phone line belongs to CKPR, and while extensive construction is in progress at the site they have to disconnect our feed line to free the line for their own communications. A number of possible solutions are presently in work or being considered, however area campers should be aware that phone patches cannot be guaranteed this summer.

Welcome to Amateur Radio...

The Lakehead Amateur Radio Club offers congratulations and a warm welcome to the following new amateur operators.

Linda Bell	VE3XLB
Tony Lai	VE3WAI
Mark Lyngstad	VE3WAZ
Robert Hansen	VE3RVA
Chris Bel	VE3KSU
Don Bel	VE3KUZ

Thankyou, Bagmen!

Thanks to the stalwart bagmen who braved the dimly lit, and unfamiliar streets during this year's Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal. Your positive response on such short notice was very much appreciated by the Army and your dispatcher. Participants this year were: Ed VE3SNW, Terry VE3TKA, Jim VE3UA, Tim VE3WCT and Eric VE3XET. Hope to see you at the dinner.

Prez Sez

Hi, how's it going? Welcome to the May Issue of HI-Q. Looks like spring has finally arrived and don't forget with the onset of spring comes the end of antenna season so you better get out there and finish those projects before it gets too nice out. The phone company doesn't seem too hopeful about a new phone line up to VE3YQT in the near future so work continues on a UHF link. The phone patch may therefore be intermittent during the summer. We may be able to come up with a schedule of when it will be available to avoid as many frustrations as possible ... stay tuned.

The next meeting is on for the 14 of May and we will be hearing from Les Harris VE3AYZ and his partner who will fill us in on the Lakehead Search and Rescue. Be sure to come out if possible. Also please try and come up with a club logo or some design if we are ever going to get club jackets or hats etc. and bring it to the meeting. See you there 73 de VUK

Mark your calendar!

We learned of the following date while in Duluth.

- Friday & Saturday, July 10 & 11, 1992--
Electronics/Computer Swapmeet & Show--Aldrich
Arena--Maplewood, MN.
- Saturday, August 29, 1992--Lake of the Woods
Repeater Assoc. HAMFEST--Roseau High School
Gym,--Roseau MN.
- Saturday, October 31, 1992--HAMFEST Minnesota &
Computer Expo--St. Paul Civic Center--St. Paul MN.
- Saturday, February 13, 1993--MIDWINTER
MADNESS Hobby Electronics Show--National Sports
Center - Blaine MN.

Ed Sez...

Classes are over for another year, but I would like to remind anyone that requires additional help that they can call me (622-1216) and we'll get together and try and straighten out any problems you might have. My kitchen table/testing centre has been busy, but there are just a few left that haven't written yet. Please call and arrange a time for your test soon. I would like to thank all of the students and instructors for their support, and I'm looking forward to next year's classes. To those who have just received their licences, as you put together your own stations you'll realize that your education is just beginning. You'll notice that every nut and bolt is exactly the wrong size, in the wrong place, and the translated instructions don't make any more sense than the Japanese original. Hi-Q is going extremely well, VE3UA has taken on many of the burdensome tasks

and has left me with more time for classes and exams. We still need more articles, especially those technical in nature. If you have trouble getting your ideas onto paper, we'll help! Summer's coming, have fun!

Ed .. VE3SNW

**VOLUNTEERS URGENTLY NEEDED FOR THE
LEGION 10 MILE ROAD RACE MAY 18,1992 - JUST
A COUPLE OF HOURS IN THE MORNING.
CONTACT NORM - VE3XRC - 577-9316. GOOD
OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW OPS!**

**STATISTICS OF INTEREST -
CANADIAN AMATEUR LICENCES**

	1988	1989	1990	1991
VEO	165	172	177	201
VE1	2,105	2,158	2,149	2,249
VE2	4,474	4,594	4,882	5,505
VE3	9,086	9,256	9,715	10,723
VE4	842	841	893	1,033
VE5	830	826	864	940
VE6	2,024	2,049	2,144	2,471
VE7	4,249	4,393	4,600	4,912
VE8	90	85	73	87
VO1	483	499	540	640
VO2	32	29	29	47
VY1	50	50	48	39
VY2	-	-	163	168
VY9	-	2	2	2
TOTAL	24,430	24,954	26,279	29,017