

THE LISTENING POST

Azalea Coast Amateur Radio Club

March 2013

Editor's Note – Here we are almost at the end of the first quarter of the year and a scan of the membership list shows eighteen members yet to get their dues to the Treasurer. That is 35% of the members on the rolls who have not ponied up for 2013.

That same review shows only fifteen ACARC members also maintain an ARRL affiliation. The national organization is part of the glue that binds together hams across the country and around the world. If you are not a member, give it some thought - and remember to support our club with your presence at events and with your dues.

Finally, congratulations to Charlie Vaughn (K4UWH) for his performance in the CQ WW WPX Contest. Great work on QRP.

Jeff Wingfield, KI4JDE

PRIORITY MESSAGES - The next meeting of the club will be Tuesday, March 19, 2013 at Cape Fear Community College on the North Campus. Our ACARC web page has directions.

Club dues (\$20) are now payable to Treasurer Allan Pellnat, KX2H. Bring a check or cash to the meeting or mail a check to him at the club address. Put your call sign on the check.

Linwood Todd (NT4F) is helping the Usher family by brokering the sale of Bill's amateur radio equipment. There are still a few items remaining. See or call Linwood for a list.

FROM THE RADIO ROOM - The ACARC has received a new QSL card for NI4BK. It has taken a number of months working with the battleship staff, but we now have a thousand new cards purchased by the ship. The card is not a traditional QSL card design, but looks nice and has a lot of information about the club and the battleship. Alan Pellnat (KX2H) is the QSL manager for NI4BK.

We still do not have a vintage transmitter on the air. During the time we have been waiting for the repaired motor-generators to be installed, we have been working on antennas. A feed line for our TBK-7 transmitter has been routed to the deck so that we will be able to put an antenna on this transmitter.

MARCH MEETING PROGRAM - It will be a surprise for all attending.

PRESIDENT'S RESONANT CIRCUIT - I am sorry that I missed the Battleship operation during the NC QSO Party. The reports I hear indicate that it was a great event here in Wilmington and in talking with other hams around the state it seems it was fun for everyone that took part. I only wish a few more Wilmington hams would have gotten their feet wet. It was a great effort by the team here. Jack, Norman and Allan do a great job working with the Battleship. It is a win-win for all.

I am looking forward to the next club meeting and seeing everyone there. I expect there are a lot of ham stories for our members to share so come prepared.

I went to the Charlotte Hamfest again this year. It had a new format – Open Friday evening for a while and then all day Saturday with NO Sunday. In my opinion it is not as good as it has been in the past. It seems fewer vendors and the flea market is nothing to write home about – but I did find everything I was looking for with one exception. The forums are nothing to write home about either as I had heard the only two of the forums that I had interest in. I am sure many people like this format better but it does not fit my liking. Historically, I have traveled with my wife to Charlotte and we went up Friday afternoon, did Charlotte Friday night together, then separate activities Saturday day and then together activities Saturday night and finally

home on Sunday. It made a very nice social event on several accounts including my XYL. This schedule is clumsy for that type of activity.

Raleigh Hamfest is coming up the last Saturday in March. This event has been gathering steam and for the most part is better than Charlotte presently. The only drawback is that it is the day before Easter, but then that is when RARS can get leverage to hold the event center there. I can recommend it for as many as can go.

The bands have been pretty good. I haven't been on a large amount due to other conflicts, however when I have gotten on I have usually had some pretty good DX contacts. I am already about half way to 100 countries so far and that is without any major contest activity. So there are plenty of stations on to work.

I am kind of proud of myself. As some of you may remember me talking about getting my little QRP rig from Ten Tec a couple of days before the CQ WW WPX Contest and my decision to operate single band (20 Meters). Well I did that with a mighty 4 or 5 watts into my GAP Titian Vertical. I worked some 130 odd stations for a score of 35,451 points after all the deductions in my log (and I really was not all that accurate). I got an unexpected Certificate in the mail today from CQ. First Place 4th Call Area for single operator, QRP, unassisted, 20 Meters. The information also indicated #2 in the US, #3 North America and #14 World. I am happy with the achievement. It also indicates that most anyone can make contacts if they want to work at it.

Good Hamming and I will see you at the club meeting.

NORTH CAROLINA QSO PARTY UPDATE - Speaking of participation in events, the North Carolina QSO Party on February 24 was the most recent opportunity for ACARC members to get together and to test our operating skills aboard *NORTH CAROLINA*. The lineup below lists participating hams, including three who drove up from Myrtle Beach:

Jay Barton	N3QH	
Allen Pellnat	KX2H	
Ron Walsh	VE3GO	Monitoring Times, Canada
Bill Morine	N2COP	
Bob Kiehlmeier	WA3IRG	
Bob Froelich	KK4KSY	Grand Strand Amateur Radio Club

Jack Jacobs	WD40IN	
Norman Clemmons	KI4YSY	
Jim Kapetski	K3DEP	
Jeff Wingfield	KI4JDE	
Dean Webb	KK4DRQ	Grand Strand Amateur Radio Club

We made a total of 592 contacts this year , that's up from 486 in 2012.

253 SSB contacts on 20 meters

266 SSB contacts on 15&40 meters

73 CW contacts

It was a successful day.

CLUB ACTIVITIES - Several activities for club members occur regularly. Every one is encouraged to participate.

- Club Net at 2100 EST on 147.18 each Monday
- Noon Lunch Bunch at a location announced via e-mail each week. Often includes a show and tell or discussion of topic of interest. Dutch treat.
- Alternative weekly ham-oriented lunch groups. Ask at club meeting about getting on the announcement list.
- Ham test sessions conducted by Volunteer Examiners at 1000 EST on the second Saturday of even months at Cape Fear Community College. Check the ACARC web site for February details.
- Field Day is our annual challenge to simulate emergency communications. It is also a competition between clubs in which we did very well in 2012. This June event is a great opportunity to learn, operate, and get better acquainted with each other. The event is just over two months from now. Planning is under way. Volunteer.

POKING AROUND THE PARTS ROOM - Before moving to Wilmington from Rochester, New York in 2004 I worked as a volunteer at the Antique Wireless Association (AWA) Electronic Communication Museum, as it was known then.

Today the facility is simply called the Antique Wireless Museum and will partially open its newest exhibition space in May in Bloomfield, New York. The official grand opening will take place during their 62nd annual conference in August.

Working a half day once a week on Tuesday mornings in the unheated “Annex” storage facility I spent a little over three years sifting and sorting the contents of the “Parts Room”.

When we browse through hamfests or estate sales and flea markets looking for that rare something to add to our collections we seldom give any thought to the people who made it or bought it brand new or the impact it may have had on their lives. Here is a story that only has a tangential connection to ham radio.

While sifting through boxes of parts one day I came across a panel meter with “The Zunner Machines Co., Rochester, New York” marked on its face. “Aha”, I said to myself, “another item for the Made In Rochester display and a new company name to research”.

The panel meter measured about six inches in diameter and with its black cast iron case weighed in at a little over six pounds. The movement was of the usual D’arsonval type with a bright shiny chrome plated zero adjust lever mechanism set into a slot in the bottom of the case. The full round face was circumscribed with a chrome plated bezel that was a bit dented and scratched. The scale read zero to eight hundred with no indication of the units of measurement and it was non-linear with compression at both ends and the greatest scale expansion in the five hundred to seven hundred range. Two large binding posts at the bottom of the case were provided for connections.

A few days later I went to the public library to do the usual basic research on the origins and lines of business of the Zunner Machines Company. Based on the appearance of the meter I estimated that it was probably made in the

first twenty years of the last century. So I started with the 1910 Rochester city directory.

I didn't find The Zunner Machines Company but I did find The Zunner Construction and Equipment Company. The president and treasurer of this company was given to be John H.G. Zunner, a resident of Rochester. A classified advertisement under the heading of Contractors specified "Builders of Special Machinery and Cold Storage Houses. Sole owners and manufacturers of John H.G. Zunner's patents.". This did not strike me as a likely maker of unusual panel meters.

Bracketing to earlier and later directories revealed the brief history of Mr. Zunner's enterprises. Up until 1906, Mr. Zunner's occupation was given to be a brewer. Rochester was a beer brewing and drinking town then as now. His construction company saw the first light of a business day in 1907 and became The Zunner Machines Co. in 1911. He remained as President of the company up through its demise in 1917. Here now is the point where this yarn takes a turn.

In the 1913 directory under the listings for The Zunner Machines Company and its president was also a single line entry reading: "Irvin W. Zunner, Died Jan 7, 1913, age 21". From 1911 on Irvin W. Zunner was employed at the address of the Zunner firm and boarded at John H.G. Zunner's residence address. There is no mention of him before 1911 when he would have been just 19 years of age and still a student. What a shame that he died so young I thought to myself. I wondered what the circumstances were.

So from the city directories I went next into the newspaper archives. It didn't take me long to find my answer in the Rochester Union & Advertiser for January 8, 1913 in a single column item captioned "Rochester Man Killed in Wreck" over a picture of a handsome young Ervin W. Zunner.

Ervin W. Zunner died in a train wreck on the "Big Four" at Stockwell, Indiana. The news item rather garishly refers to telegrams exchanged between an Indiana undertaker and the bereaved father regarding disposition of the "mangled beyond recognition" remains. It reports that Ervin W. was his parent's only child, had been an outstanding football player during his high school days and left school before graduation to join his father's business of manufacturing brewery machinery. He had worked as an enumerator in the 1910 census. He carried the title of Sales Manager and

was on a “tour of inspection” on behalf of the company when the accident occurred.

Another AWA volunteer tested the odd panel meter for me and determined that it read full scale on a current of 10 mils and the coil measured about 1.5 ohms resistance. I disassembled the meter at home and could find no other indications of the source of manufacture other than the The Zunner Machines Company printed on the meter face below that odd zero to eight hundred compressed-on-both-ends scale. My guess is that the meter probably was calibrated to read temperature as registered by a thermocouple. It probably belonged to some of the elder Mr. Zunner’s patented brewery machinery and as such really has no place in the AWA collection.

Here was a brewer who moved his family to Rochester from Boston around 1905, worked at his trade, patented some inventions and set himself up in business to manufacture and sell his ideas. He had one son who left high school before graduation to join him in his flourishing enterprise only to lose him in a train wreck at the age of 21. It leaves me still wondering, did his business fail just a short four years later for lack of entrepreneurial energy or lack of Ervin W. Zunner.

I kept Mr. Zunner’s meter on a shelf as a reminder that the artifacts we collect represent more than just scientific history. They also represent the lives of people.

SAY AGAIN - Other items of interest to club members might include:

- Weekly swap meet managed by the Wilmington VHF Association takes place on Thursday evenings at 2000 EST on 147.345. A great place to find what you need or unload what you do not.
- The Azalea Coast Amateur Radio Club web site (ac4rc.org) has an abundance of information about the club, events, and links to other amateur radio activity.

73, KI4JDE

