

# THE LISTENING POST

## Azalea Coast Amateur Radio Club

May 2013

**Editor's Note** – Our next major ACARC event is Museum Ships weekend, on June 1 and 2. This is a premier opportunity for ACARC to show off "our ship" and our commitment to amateur radio operation. It is also a premier opportunity for club members to get some solid operating experience and share in the pride of participating in a national event. Finally, for those members who are a bit rusty, it is a good warm up for Field Day, on tap in just a few weeks (June 21, 22, and 23) after Museum Ships. Put these dates on your calendar and plan to participate.

Field Day, the annual ARRL national contest event will require a big turnout by all club members who can volunteer. This is a great occasion on which to test your operating skills and resistance to sleep deprivation. Our next two club meetings will be filling in the blanks on planning and opportunities for you to sign up for a variety of tasks in preparation for the event.

Jeff Wingfield, KI4JDE

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**PRIORITY MESSAGES** - The next meeting of the club will be Tuesday, May 21, 2013 at Cape Fear Community College on the North Campus. Our ACARC web page has directions.

Steve Wilder (AJ4JJ) announces that Mary Ann Bradberry and Anne B. Matthews passed their examination for the Technician License at the test session on Saturday, April 13. Congratulations to both.

A VE Test Session will be held on June 8, 2013 at the McKeithan Building, Cape Fear Community Collage North Campus. Testing will start at 10:00 AM. Steve requests that all ACARC members who are designated Volunteer Examiners join him. If you can, meet the team at K&W Cafeteria for

breakfast at 0800 before the exam session.

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.

**CHIEF RADIO OPERATOR MESSAGE** - I am still thinking about what a great program we had on competitive sailing by Harwin Smith (KI4TGG) at our last meeting. It was so interesting but more important is the fact that there are many lessons to be learned there about contingency planning for emergency communications and serious contesting.

Case in point came with me two weekends ago. I decided to go out to Miller's Pond Park to operate in the QRP Take it to the Field contest. I took my QRP gear and my trusty Toshiba laptop computer that sends code and logs contacts. I got everything set up nicely and low and behold I could not find my cursor on the laptop screen - it was a problem with the amount of light out on a picnic table in the park. I started trying to work and would work one station and spend fifteen minutes trying to locate the cursor. So the first hour and a half or so resulted in very few contacts. Finally the light level diminished in the afternoon and I could finally see the cursor. I knocked out thirty-two very quick contacts before the battery in the laptop gave out, even though my little battery powered QRP rig was still going strong. So, I have learned two important lessons about operating out-of-doors on battery. I need a light box for the laptop and I need more backup power for the computer battery.

Allan (KX2H), Norman (k4xxx) and myself went down to the Train Museum this past Saturday to provide a demonstration of Morse Code for the visitors at Train Day. Allan and I had our stations setup at opposite ends of the Museum. People would stop by Allan's station and learn about the code and some of the uses during railroad days. They also had the option to send themselves a message, which they could pick up on the way out (assuming Charlie copied it correctly). All reported perfect transmission and copy of the message. We explained that it was magic. This included one message that was hand sent by one of the kids touring the Museum (best copy Allan sent all day). We had a great time and met a lot of interesting people.

The gang there at the Museum has really done a great job with it, as it is

very interesting and informative now. I walked back in the back where the large train layouts are and one little boy was so "eaten up with trains" that he took my hand and guided me around and used my finger to push all the action buttons. He was so cute!

We have had some additional guest operators down from Goldsboro and it is my understanding that they had a great time - including one member of the party that has his first SSB QSO. We also have a couple of visitors coming down from the RARS in early June. They are part of the group that now sponsors the NC QSO Party.

The response to the listing of items available from the liquidation of Ed Reddington's antenna farm has been much less than desirable. If you are interested in any of it you should let me know.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at the next club meeting. It is also time to begin to zero in on Field Day 2013.

Charlie Vaughn, K4UWH

**FROM THE RADIO ROOM** - The working season on the NORTH CAROLINA is coming to a close. Temperatures are going up and the battleship personnel have not had a chance to re-connect the motor-generators for the primary radios. It seems we may be limited to modern transceivers for Museum Ships weekend, but that will not hinder our efforts to be on the air on multiple bands.

As one season ends another begins, Allan, KX2H and Linwood, NT4F hosted a group of amateur radio operators from Wayne County for one of their regular outings to enjoy our guest operator privileges aboard the ship. We have two more groups scheduled to visit in the next few weeks, including a guest operator from Italy.

Underline your schedules to include Museum Ships weekend on June 1 and 2nd. This is our biggest operating event of the year. As in the past, we will alternate between logging and operating and will plan to have at least two radio rooms active. All Wilmington area hams are invited; we also may have some of the Wayne county club members join us.

Jack Jacobs, WD4OIN

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

**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 less than two months from now. Planning is under way. Volunteer.

**A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ON A MAY HOLIDAY** - Cinco De Mayo has an other-than-usual significance for me. I moved into my home here in Wilmington on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2004, a sunny, 80-degree day. Another moving day hangs in my memory of a short ride sitting on the tailgate of a moving van with my father when I was three and a half. The move occurred as my parents moved out of rental apartments into the first house of their own, the house that I grew up in.

For my parents, this move up the socio-economic ladder was accompanied by their upgrading from an icebox to a refrigerator. They bought a Philco unit. That design had a rounded top because the newest models had finally moved the old style monitor top radiator to the back exterior wall of the unit.

As a promotional bonus they received a Philco model 42KR3 table model radio. This was no ordinary table radio. The model number (42KR3) translates to 1942 Kitchen Radio #3. Its wooden cabinet was bullet shaped, rounded on each end and the bottom was curved to match the top line curvature of the refrigerator.



The radio itself was the basic five tube AM (broadcast band only) superheterodyne using Philco's Loctal versions of RCA's Octal tubes to avoid patent royalty costs. We had this radio at least up through the late fifties when I left home. I don't recall seeing it in any of the apartments my mother lived in after that time.

Then at an annual Antique Wireless Association Conference flea market I found one for sale. It was in terrible condition and the seller wanted \$75 for it because of its peculiar design and relative rarity. We negotiated a better price based on my story of having grown up with this radio.

I took the radio home and set about restoring it. It used the common (for that time) electro-dynamic speaker. That is, rather than having a permanent magnet for the voice coil to work against, it had an electromagnetic coil which served double duty as the choke for the 35Z3 half-wave rectifier. The voice coil in turn had a small reverse wound coil associated with it to reduce the AC hum from that electromagnet. This was called a hum bucking coil.

On my new purchase, the choke/electromagnet coil, voice coil and hum buck

coil were all intact but the paper speaker cone was in shreds. I replaced the speaker with a PM speaker and tucked the choke coil under the chassis still serving its smoothing function. As usual I replaced all the various waxed paper capacitors and one or two resistors that had gone way off value. The white cabinet had to be stripped completely and repainted.

So on May 5<sup>th</sup> 2004 when I moved into my new home in Wilmington my restored 42KR3 was placed atop the kitchen cabinets and it sits there today. Tucked into the back are Internet copies of the Rider's service pages and two, two-inch square photos of the kitchen of the house I grew up in that show that radio on the kitchen table.

Allan Pellnat, KX2H

**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](http://ac4rc.org)) has an abundance of information about the club, events, and links to other amateur radio activity.

**CORRESPONDENCE** - The Train Day effort by some of the club members is noted above in Charlie's (K4UWH) message. Allan (KI4YSY) offers additional perspective and closes with a "thank you" note from the Railroad Museum.

Charlie and I did the CW work and Norman was there too, exercising his new hip joint. Bear in mind that Norman made the effort to help scarcely two weeks after hip surgery and despite being a no code operator. That is dedication to the club.

I sat at the telegraph desk in the museum and asked people as they passed by if they would like to send a message to themselves by Morse Telegraph (stretching the point just a little). They would write out a single line message, several "Happy Mother's Days" for example. I would call up Charlie on 20 meter CW with only about eighteen inches of wire for an antenna. He would respond and give me a QRV. I would rap out the message, Charlie would respond with QSL. Then on their way out the patrons passed Charlie's table and picked up their copy of the message on a

dummied up message form with the heading "Western Museum".

The demonstration attracted mostly women and children. Men just walked past with a shrug.

*(Editor's Note: It is difficult to determine whether Allan, in writing the final sentence above, was being overly modest about the sex appeal of the club threesome or whether he was offering a keen insight to the contemporary male interest in telegraphy.)*

**From:** Mark Koenig <[wrrmnc@bellsouth.net](mailto:wrrmnc@bellsouth.net)>

**To:** [kx2h@att.net](mailto:kx2h@att.net)

**Sent:** Mon, May 13, 2013 10:15:21 AM

**Subject:** National Train Day

Hello Allan -

A great big thanks to you and Charlie and others for your telegraph demonstrations. A big hit with the visitors and a great way to demonstrate your group's activities. Hope we can do it again sometime!

Mark Koenig  
Wilmington Railroad Museum

73, KI4JDE