



The KLARION

Newsletter of the Keuka Lake Amateur Radio Association
Summer 2018

The year was 1952 and according to early minutes found, on November 26 at 2 PM a group of individuals met for the purpose of organizing an Amateur Radio committee. The following were present: Dr. Robert Luckey, Dr. Claude Ries, Mr. Alton Liddick, Mr. Everett Gilbert and Dr. Floyd Reese. Dr. Luckey was elected chairman.

Discussion took place and the objectives of the group were discussed: the radio station was to be associated with Houghton College, and its purpose was to serve and aid missionaries around the world. It was agreed the name should be Missionary Communications Service.

Al Smith (K2CAC) and the committee visited a proposed site on Fancher Hill suitable for the radio building and antenna. The site was approved, and it was decided to begin the construction of a one story 28-foot by 30-foot concrete building. Construction was under the direction of Mr. Robert Fiegl and Mr. Everett Gilbert. The building consisted of two rooms: a main operating room and a room for storage. The building was heated by an electric heater.

Due to the interest of several men at Houghton, Houghton College and the Houghton Wesleyan Methodist Church undertook the construction of the transmitter building which would house the radio station. It was truly a community effort as many men from the area donated their labor. Even the children at Vacation Bible School gave funds for the purchase of equipment.

On June 26, 1953, Missionary Communications Service was incorporated and the following were elected to carry the project forward: James Arthur Vaus, noted evangelist and president of Missionary Communications Services, Inc, - president, William Nyan - treasurer, V. Raymond Edman, President of Wheaton College and Clyde Taylor, Executive Secretary of Evangelical Foreign Missions Association.

On September 29, 1953, a joint meeting with the Missionary Radio Committee and Houghton College Administrative Committee took place, and it was agreed the ownership of the radio station should be under the supervision of Houghton College.

In November of 1953 one hundred and twenty-five companies dealing with electronic supplies were contacted. By Fall '54 the building was ready for occupancy. The equipment consisted of a Collins KW-1 Transmitter and Collins S-line Receiver. Getting the antenna tower to the site was quite an undertaking that saw a group of men carry it to the remote site for installation.

It was a high moment when the visions and purpose, prayers and faith, gifts and labor invested in Missionary Communications Service, Inc. culminated on September 27, 1954, with the dedication of the new Missionary Radio Building. Open House took place at the new building at 1:30 PM. At 6:30 PM the radio building was dedicated to the Lord for his service. The cement

block building, built sacrificially by donated labor with many at-cost materials was a mere \$2,700 (this did not include equipment).

After an invocation by Dr. Stephen Paine, president of Houghton College on whose land the building stood, Dr. Floyd Reese presented the keys to the new building to Dr. F. R. Birch of the College Board of Trustees. With appropriate remarks, Dr. Birch transferred the keys to James Arthur Vaus, MCS President. Mr. Vaus expressed his gratitude to God for His continued blessings in prospering MCS and especially for the completed building - a monument to God's grace and glory.

Continuing in his remarks, Vaus said he felt the keys should be placed in God's hands for His service rather than in his own. Concluding Vaus commented, "This is of God. The keys are His and the building is His." Overlooking the Genesee River Valley from an elevation of 1300 feet the station was ready to serve missionaries around the world.

With the construction of this new radio station, service to missionaries will make possible

- 1) speedier medical care and attention
- 2) faster service in requisitioning supplies
- 3) closer contact with headquarters
- 4) information and news exchange, and
- 5) direct communication with home and family.

For the next couple of years the Amateur Radio Station (K2GQG) continued to serve the Houghton community with weekly phone patches from missionaries around the world.

When I was a Senior at Rushford Central School, Al Smith (K2CAC), Manager of the Houghton College Print Shop, was instrumental in getting me into Amateur Radio and in November of 1963 I received my Novice License (WN2LUX).

Al would invite me to visit the Radio Station after school when he had weekly schedules (skeds) with EL2F in Monrovia, Liberia. One memorable sked happened when Al Smith had his missionary contact with Africa piped into a chapel service at Wesley Chapel.

In the mid 60's the Collage Radio Station (K2GQG) was moved from Fancher Heights to Al Smith's residence.

During my college years at Houghton my interest in Ham Radio wanned, and it wasn't until I obtained a teaching job in Canisteo Central School that my interest revived when one of my fellow teachers persuaded me to upgrade my license.

The late 60's saw me as WB2SQX, and Al Smith once again encouraged me to join the ARMS (Amateur Radio Missionary Service) net which met on the air three mornings a week for Christain fellowship, to share the latest news of missionaries around the world, run phone patches

and to pray for one another's concerns.

The Radio Building sat vacant for a number of years and was a target for vandalism resulting in bullet holes in the walls, trash and broken windows. In 1968 the building was purchased by Dean Liddick and was remodeled to serve as a private dwelling. Although it has changed hands, it still remains today as a monument to its glorious beginnings.

In early August 2017 I researched the internet and found that the call sign K2GQG was available, so I applied for it and received it as my new Ham call four weeks later - a fitting legacy to a call sign that had played an important role in my Amateur (Ham) Radio hobby.

Some of the equipment at K2GQG:



Thank you to John Babbit (K2GQG) for the article and picture.

Is the internet, millennials or FT-8 killing ham radio?

Amateur radio bloggers love to write about the demise of amateur radio. To wit, we have:

- K0NR's [Is the Internet destroying amateur radio?](http://www.k0nr.com/wordpress/2017/11/internet-destroying-amateur-radio/) (<http://www.k0nr.com/wordpress/2017/11/internet-destroying-amateur-radio/>)
- N0SSC's [Millennials are killing ham radio](http://n0ssc.com/posts/583-millennials-are-killing-ham-radio) (<http://n0ssc.com/posts/583-millennials-are-killing-ham-radio>)
- PE4BAS' [Is FT-8 damaging amateur radio?](https://pe4bas.blogspot.com/2018/04/is-ft8-damaging-hamradio.html) (<https://pe4bas.blogspot.com/2018/04/is-ft8-damaging-hamradio.html>)
- NZ0T's [Did Joe Taylor K1JT Destroy Amateur Radio?](http://www.ei5di.com/jt.html) (<http://www.ei5di.com/jt.html>)

Of course, none of these posts are really saying that the internet, millennials, or FT-8 has killed amateur radio. What they are saying is that all of these are changing amateur radio as we know it. Well, duh, the way we live our lives changes every day. Why should amateur radio be any different?

For example, Bob, K0NR, discusses how the operation of remote stations is changing the game of DX. Can you really claim that you worked a DX station if you rented time on a super station? [I've written about that topic, too](https://www.kb6nu.com/dx-advisory-committee-wants-to-put-the-screws-to-remote-operation/) (<https://www.kb6nu.com/dx-advisory-committee-wants-to-put-the-screws-to-remote-operation/>).

There has also been much written about how FT8 is changing the amateur radio game. [One blog post](https://ve7sl.blogspot.com/2017/10/160m-ft8-end-of-era.html) (<https://ve7sl.blogspot.com/2017/10/160m-ft8-end-of-era.html>), talking about the effect of FT8 on 160m operation, even goes so far to say that this is the “end of an era.” On DX World, the results of the poll, [“FT8 – Damaging to Amateur Radio?”](https://dx-world.net/yes-or-no-a-poll-on-ft8/) (<https://dx-world.net/yes-or-no-a-poll-on-ft8/>) show more than half of the respondents think that FT8 is damaging amateur radio.

I specifically used the word “game” in the previous two paragraphs because that’s exactly what’s changing. The physics of amateur radio certainly isn’t changing. Our transmitters are still generating electromagnetic waves like they have been for decades, and on the HF bands, anyway, those radio waves are bouncing off the ionosphere just as they have been for more than the past 100 years.

What’s changing is the human component. By that I mean what’s changing is how we think people should participate in the hobby. The hams that are complaining that the internet or millennials or FT8 is killing amateur radio are really just complaining that people aren’t participating in amateur radio the way they want them to participate.

Here’s where we talk about millennials. In his blog post, Sterling, N0SSC, suggests that setting up remote stations is one way to engage young people. He writes, “I believe that remote operating, and other internet-assisted means of ham radio operation, are critical to youth engagement.”

He’s also big on an idea he calls “ham radio hackathons.” He writes,

“A hackathon isn’t a coding competition. It’s explained well in [this Medium article](#)

(<https://medium.com/hackathons-anonymous/wtf-is-a-hackathon-92668579601>). It goes even further than that, not limited to coders and engineers, but open to thinkers, doers, philosophers, system engineers, math people, teachers, students, artists, stakeholders...anyone with an interest in **solving a problem with technology.**”

I support both of these ideas, but I think that millennials (and, to be fair, it isn't just millennials we're talking about here, but any newcomers to the hobby) need to step up and get these things going. I don't think it's my job to try to get kids interested in amateur radio. I don't even know if that's really possible. What I can do, however, is be there to encourage and support kids (and anyone else that expresses a sincere interest in amateur radio).

For example, I'm not sure how fruitful it would be to set up my station to be remotely operable and then saying to some kids, "Hey, come and operate my station." What I think would be more fruitful is to say to a kid, "Hey, come help me set up my remote control station, so that we both can use it." Then, it turns into a learning situation, and we both gain from the exercise.

The same kind of thing has to happen with ham radio hackathons. The motivation has to come from the ground up, not the top down. I do hope that this idea gets off the ground, though, and I'm standing by, ready to support this effort however I can.

I think that millennials (I'm really getting tired of that term, by the way) need to grab the bull by the horns and take amateur radio in the direction they want it to go. Feel free to kill amateur radio as we know it. Make it better!

When he's not trying to figure out how to save amateur radio, Dan (KB6NU) builds stuff, blogs about amateur radio at KB6NU.Com, teaches amateur radio classes, and operates CW on the HF bands. Look for him on 30m, 40m, and 80m. You can email him about what you think is killing amateur radio at cwgeek@kb6nu.com. This article is copyrighted by Dan and is used with his permission. We really appreciate it, Dan!

New Radio!

The KLARA Board of Directors has recently instituted a new policy.

Anyone who passes a Technician Exam at one of our VE test sessions; and attends the next regular club membership meeting; and signs on as a KLARA member; will receive a new 2m / 440 Baofeng radio.

Below is a picture of Chris Romanchock, of Alfred Station, with our president George Folkemer. Chris is the first person to take us up on our offer!

Given the current trade situation with China, we are not sure what will happen with the price for these radios, or how long we can extend this offer, if the price escalates dramatically. If you are considering testing for your license, **now is the time!**



Don't forget that there will be a test session at the KLARA Hamfest on August 18th, which will be held at the Howard Community Center. VE testing begins at 10:00 AM.

For those who are interested in a license, but feel the need of a bit more help, a question review session, followed by VE testing is scheduled for September 15th, beginning at 8:30 AM at the Civil Defense Center, on Route 54 in Bath.

It does require a bit of effort on the part of the student, but it's not that difficult! Come and join us! We'd love to see you!

Field Day 2018

Field Day 2018 was held on June 23rd and 24th at the Steuben County Civil Defense Center on Route 54 in Bath.

As always, Field Day had two different components ... the social component, where we sit and visit with our friends, and the contest component ... I know, I know, “it's not a contest” ... but it sure runs like one!

Thanks to John Babbit and Belinda Connor for photos!

Let's look at the social side first ...



Ben helping us to heed the injunction to “eat ... every two hours!”



Wow, what a layout! Dinner (or supper, depending on your family) on Saturday evening.



“Please copy Eight Alpha Western New York” It take a big group to put up eight stations ... and here we all are!



The YL contingent. Unfortunately Annie was feeling poorly and could not join them.



The pre-event briefing. This looks social, but really isn't. We're hashing out who is going to operate which band / mode before we get started.



Nancy “pounds the brass” for CW contacts.



Alan “talks it up” on 15 meters. He must be making contacts ... that's a pretty good smile!



Joel “talks it up”, while Donna logs for them on 40 meter phone. Donna says “W1AW? Isn't that the Headquarters station?” ... and so it was!



- Harold works 'em, while Dick logs for him. Great team, guys!

Finally, some facts and figures:

21 KLARA Participants

412 QSO's

Earned 2,808 points

Phone QSO's on 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meter bands

Digital QSO's on 40, 20, and 15 meter bands

CW QSO's on 40 and 20 meter bands

Copied Field Day message from W1AW for the first time in at least 5 years

For Next Time

- The second installment of the history of amateur call signs.
- Reports from:
 - The Wine Country Classic Boat Show Poker Run
 - The Red House Picnic
 - The KLARA Hamfest
- An article from you? What did you do on your summer vacation, related to amateur radio? I will be at Welsley Island State Park in August and hope to participate in a net or two in Canada ... how 'bout you?