SVARC Monthly Newsletter

May 2020

Seaway Valley Amateur Radio Club

Next Club Meeting: Wednesday 27 May, 2020

Where: Virtual meeting on repeater—VE3PGC 443.650 and Echolink until further notice.

Time: 19:00h (07:00 PM)

Guest Speaker: Cancelled until further notice

Weekly SVARC VHF/UHF net:

Monday on VE3SVC (147.180+ MHz; CTCSS 110.9 Hz.) at 7:00 PM local time, followed by a 70CM net on VE3PGC (443.650+ MHz. CTCSS 110.9 Hz.)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - Larry Giguere (VA3RSQ)

Well our combined virtual meeting on Zoom and VE3PGC was a test for the times to come. The Executive decided that we will hold our virtual meetings on VE3PGC only as we ran into a few snags using both. Just a reminder to those that can not reach VE3PGC that you can still use Echolink. Doug was also mentioning that we can connect the Moose Creek repeater as well for our meeting night so we will try that as well.

Not much else to report. The Children Treatment Center on May 30 2020 has been cancelled this year as well thanks to Covid 19. We are going to have to wait till the Ontario Government decides on when we can have a gathering of more than five people to see if we can have our field day on June 27 and 28 2020 or not. Hopefully we will know before the end of May. We can discuss his at the next general meeting to see who would be interested in this event.

As the Government slowly opens up the economy lets all stay safe, wear face masks where needed and remember to keep our social distancing to two meters. We will get through this together with every ones help and understanding.

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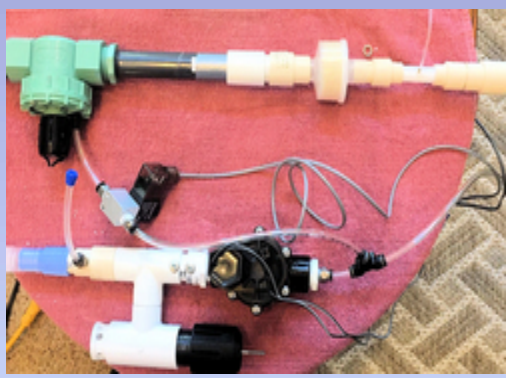
From the Editor - Steve Harvey (VE3EZB)

I've given up my space here this month so I could share an article fitting for the times. This article was suggested by Art (VE3AIH).

From the ARRL Newsletter April 30, 2020

Emergency Ventilator Designed and Constructed by Hams Going to FDA

Radio amateurs have succeeded in providing a complete, working ventilator system to University of Florida researchers who are in the process of applying to the Food and Drug Administration for an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). A successful submission would blaze the way for volunteers and manufacturers around the world to create low-cost, highly functional Intensive Care Unit (ICU) or anesthesia-care ventilators that offer many of the features of modern ventilators at a fraction of the typical cost. Dr. Gordon Gibby, KX4Z, who is associated with the project, said efforts to further improve the device are ongoing.

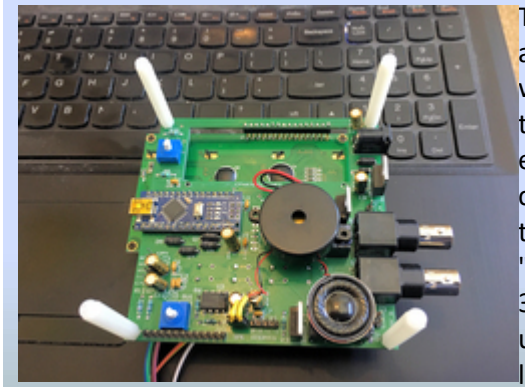


Airway components of the emergency ventilator. [Photo courtesy of Gordon Gibby, KX4Z]

"We made a stunning improvement in accuracy of the system and measuring volumes last night at about 1 AM," he told ARRL. "Accuracy of that particular alarm measurement went from about 300%, down to about 10%. The FDA submission is being readied, but we keep making engineering improvements."

Gibby credited some of the primary volunteers. "Bob Benedict, KD8CGH, has provided incredible volunteer testing, now exceeding 1.6 million cycles on one crucial valve and 300,000 on another. Jack Purdum, W8TEE, is the main 'code-cleaner' for one of multiple teams building software, following the initial lead of Marcelo Varanda, VA3MVV. Ashhar Farhan, VU2ESE, not only created the ventilator controller schematic but the printed circuit board layout that will be part of an expected University of Florida submission." Farhan was among the founding code writers of what we now know as Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP).

Other hams worked on mechanical designs for flow measurements and retooled potential manufacturing capabilities otherwise used to produce transceivers. In another example of ham radio ingenuity, Marc Winzenried, WA9ZCO, modified a readily available lawn sprinkler to serve as a durable expiratory valve. This development enabled the ventilator to go more than 1 million breaths before significant valve issues developed, and the part can be replaced for less than $15.



The ventilator controller circuit board, designed by Michael Stapleton, WD4LHT. [Courtesy of Gordon Gibby, KX4Z]

The completed prototype in Florida was built using typical tools by a radio amateur, and assembled boards provided by LifeMech, a manufacturer working with the project. Farhan crafted an extendable menu structure for the Arduino Nano-based controller, and gas-flow measurements are made every few milliseconds by an I2C-based differential pressure transducer that can measure down to tiny PSI fractions, allowing the design to accurately track patient-induced variations in the volume of delivered gasses.

"Using Wenzenried's expiratory valve, electronic on-off control at the rate of 30 Hz allows modulation of the valve to set the continuous airway pressure used to keep the patient's lung alveoli open against virus-induced water-logging of the connective tissue," Gibby explained.

"Perhaps the most surprising development was the addition of the ability to sense patient effort to take a breath and immediately switch to assisting the patient with that breath, known as 'assist-control' ventilation," Gibby said. "This is expected to allow far lighter sedation of patients -- potentially even no sedation."

Meeting Agenda — General (Monthly) Meeting—Wednesday 27 May 2020

Virtual Meeting on VE3PGC

07:00 PM Meeting starts

Business Arising :

Minutes of last meeting April 29 2020 – Chris (VA3CRR)

Treasurers Report – Elizabeth (VE3EZH)

Net Controllers Report – Tom (VA3KD)

Newsletter Report – Steve (VE3EZB)

Miscellaneous Reports

Repeater Report - Doug (VE3HTR)

Web Report – Ed (VE3EAH)

ARES Report – Earle (VE3IMP)

New Business

Discussion on Field Day: June 27, 28 2020

Presentation:

None till further notice

Upcoming Events

- Children Treatment Centre May 30 2020 CANCELLED
- Field Day June 27/28 2020

Adjournment:

Date, time and place of next meeting: Wednesday, June 24 2020 at 7PM on VE3PGC

Getting to Know You—Steve Harvey (VE3EZB) (Newsletter Editor/Publisher)

I suppose the beginning is as good a place as any to start so here goes. It was a dark and stormy night, the thunder was thunderous and the rain was very wet... just kidding. My interest in radio began when I was approximately 6 years old. I had received my first "Panasonic, 5-Transistor, solid-state" radio for Christmas and a tool kit. I was fascinated with radio; "How did it work?" When I asked my mom this question (one of I'm sure was a hundred), of course she didn't know, and probably just tired of my incessant questions she brushed me off tell me that there was a "little man in there". "A little man eh?" Well, I needed to see THAT for myself. As you can well imagine, I never did find that "little man", the radio never worked again and I was soundly and thoroughly "corrected", but (speaking of "butts" – felt like I couldn't sit for a week) what I found, opened the door for a lifelong career in electronics and radio.

My education in radio electronics began that following July when for my birthday, I received a crystal radio kit from Radio Shack. Once I heard those voices from such far away places as my local 10kW AM station (maybe all of 7 km away) in my headphones, on a radio that I built, which had no power source (that I understood at the time), I knew that day, that I wanted a career "in radio". Sometime later, my grandfather gave me a "short-wave" radio, further solidifying my interest in the magical world of radio.

In my teens, I heard about this group of "old guys" who would meet at the local Radio Shack every Saturday morning and discuss electronics and radio stuff. The "old guys at the Shack" (as I called them) patiently (and seemingly tirelessly) answered the stupid questions of an inquisitive kid, drew out circuits and explained how they worked. I would go home and try to build the circuits, returning the next Saturday to ask for advice and ask "why doesn't this work?" I am forever grateful for those "old guys at the Shack" for my electronics/radio education.

Later, I saved enough money to purchase and assemble a heath kit stereo kit. I wish I still had that but I had priorities … I needed beer money one weekend so I sold it. Ah... the priorities of the young and stupid. Oh well, I digress.

While in my twenties, after an 18 month stint as a computer technician, I began working as the head technician for small UHF "Country Cable" type TV re-broadcaster service (9 channels). Satellite TV was still in its infancy and the 12-foot satellite dish just becoming popular. Well before the small dishes we have today.

I got my big break in the late 1980's when my hometown AM radio station, received a license to increase output power from 10Kw to 50Kw. When the station's "Chief Engineer" contacted me and offered me a job as his "Broadcast Technician" of course I said yes and thus began 10 plus years in broadcasting as a technician, an announcer and eventually as a Chief Engineer with "my own station".

> *It needs to be pointed out that in the "radio biz", the term "Chief Engineer" or the often used "Chief Broadcast Engineer" does not necessarily mean that the person in the position is a "real engineer" with an engineering degree from a university. The term is used to denote the person responsible for all technical aspects of the radio station. The same can be said of the term "Broadcast Technician".*

I earned my Amateur Radio License in 1991 – VE1DSH. In early 1993, working as a Broadcast Technician and on-air announcer, I felt I was ready to be a "Chief Broadcast Engineer" at "my own station" and the job search began. My bosses were disappointed I wanted to leave but they understood and supported my job search.

Summer 1993, there was a small 1000 watt AM station (CJRW) in Summerside, Prince Edward Island looking for a "Chief Engineer". I applied and because I could do "double duty" as the "Chief Engineer" and on-air announcer, I was hired. Moving to PEI, my call sign became VY2DH. Here, there were a few "firsts" for both me and what I later dubbed "the little station that could". The broadcast day at CJRW ran from 6am to midnight. I implemented a hybrid automa-

tion system to reclaim the advertising revenue we were losing overnight by being of the air. This system had music on CDs, ads on tape cartridges or "carts" as they are called, all controlled by a PC server (first first).

The carts we had were quite old and maintenance was driving me crazy. I have a strong aversion to unnecessary manual labour (rewinding the old carts with new tape seemed to be an endless job), so I suggested that for a small budget, I could implement a fully automated station which would save money. The big markets were all moving towards full computer automation so why couldn't our little station? The boss liked the idea of saving money so he was in. Soon, I had the first, "fully computer automated" radio station on PEI. Everything was on the server – the music (no more CD), the ads (no more carts), and this new thing called "voice-overs" (no need for announcers after 1800h each day and holidays). This was a big savings for our little station (second first).

Next, we were ready to take on the big kids on the island; the Charlottetown stations. We received approval from the CRTC (much to the protest of the "big kids" in Charlottetown) to cease broadcasting on the AM band and begin broadcasting on the FM band with 50kW ERP as C102.1 FM aka Spud FM (third first). Now officially, we were "not in the Charlottetown market" but you know how radio works ... it knows no borders. Within the first year of being on the air, our new FM station was so successful at liberating some ad money from the "big kids" that they offered to purchase the "little station that could" and the boss was listening.

During negotiations to buy our little station, it was clear that when the "big kids" owned the station, I was not part of the plan. No big deal, this often happens in the radio biz when one station takes over another. Announcers, sales staff and technical staff are usually out ... competition. It goes with the territory as they say but who are they to say anyway? So I began looking for another job rather than give the "big kids" the satisfaction of "letting me go" once they "owned us". To this day, I still hold a special place for the "little station that could" and I still call it "my station".

I secured employment with a fibre-optic cable manufacturing company (Fibre Connections International) eventually being promoted to training officer. The job was good by maritime standards but after the events of September 11, 2001, things began to slow down for the company and eventually I was laid-off. No need for a training officer if they were not hiring.

I applied for a Federal Government job as a technician. During the final interview for the job, I was asked for my "papers", my diploma from a school, proving that I was "educated" in electronics. I explained that I didn't go to school for my training and that I was (mostly) self-taught. The interviewer said "That's too bad. I can't offer you the job because without the diploma, it will look like I gave you a job that you are not qualified for" – and the proverbial door slammed in my face.

So, at 38 years old, I went back to school. Two years later I graduated with a Diploma as an Electronics Engineering Technologist. Now What?

During my last year at school (2004), my lab partner talked me into going to see the Military recruiter with him. Listening to the recruiter convinced me that it was time to live another one of my dreams ... to serve in the Canadian Armed Forces full time.

> *Side-step for a moment. Back in 1999, I decided to join a sub-component of the Canadian Forces (as they were known at the time) Reserves – the Cadet Instructor Cadre (CIC). I served 5 years (part time of course) as the Commanding Officer of the Summerside Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron.*

Things happened fairly quickly and by Thanksgiving, 2004, at 40 years old, I was off to basic training at St Jean, QC as a new recruit. I was going to be an Aerospace, Telecommunication and Information Systems Technician (ATIS Tech). I

Getting to Know You (continued)

will say that this was the single best decision I ever made. My first posting was to 42 Tactical Control Radar Squadron at 4 Wing Cold Lake, AB. (Call sign – VE6GVR) Can't tell you much about what we did there except as we like to say, "Air traffic controllers are there to keep aircraft separated ... and we were there to bring 'em together for that "special meeting". The Squadron's call sign is "Trapline", Squadron members are known as "trappers" and we hunted mostly "Bear". I really enjoyed time there; 7 deployments (4 training, 3 "real-world") during my 5 years at the Squadron.

Ok, this is going on way longer than I intended so I'll shorten things up here –

2009 – Posted to the Wing Telecommunication and Information Squadron (WTIS) at 14 Wing Greenwood, NS – I spent my time here in charge of the ground based FM mobile radio & audio/visual section. Having moved back to NS, I requested my original call sign VE1DSH.

2012 – Posted to the Base Information Section (BIS) at CFB Esquimalt in Victoria, BC – during my tour here, I was the Technical Change Manager for the base, in charge of the Classified Networks shop, and the Telephone and Unclassified Networks shop (not all at the same time). My BC call sign was VE7GTW.

2016 – Posted to the Aerospace Equipment Project Management Division – Radar and Communications Systems unit in the National Capital Region, Ottawa (Gatineau to be precise). I manage the Battle Control System and the Beyond Line of sight HF Tactical data link system for Canada's Air Sovereignty and NORAD missions. As I like to say, my systems are used to track Santa and occasionally ... "Bears". Moving here, I received my current call sign, VE3EZB

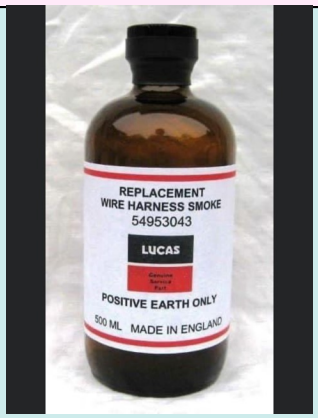
2020 – In July, I will be promoted to Master Warrant Officer (or as the Army calls it – the Regimental Sergeant Major) and posted to a new job within my current Division and Unit as the Team Lead, managing all the Navigational-Aids, X-Ray, and Meteorological Systems used by the Royal Canadian Air Force. This will probably be my last posting in the military as I only have 4 years left before I hit the military's mandatory retirement age. By the time my military career is over, I will have served a total of 25 years in the Royal Canadian Air Force.

Well, that's me ... and of course, as you know, I'm the SVARC Newsletter and web "guy".

One never knows what the future holds but for now, my wife and I are content to retire right here, in our very comfortable, ham-friendly "igloo". But (there's always a big but) one thing I've learned is to never say never.

Cheers,

Steve (VE3EZB)



For all of us who like to work on boat-anchors and need to do the smoke test as the old radio warms up at lower voltage. Brilliant idea from the Brits. (Submitted by Art (VE3AIH)

The Pot Stirrer—by Paul VE1DX {https://www.ve1dx.net/Stories/story017.html}

One of the local QRPers came around the curve at the bottom of the hill and just stood there, looking up the hill. As we may have mentioned before, living on a hillside has its advantages . . . but it also has its disadvantages. The disadvantage this morning was we couldn't quite make out the expression on the QRPers face. Usually they plough right on up and it's possible to get a look at their expression. This often helps in making the decision whether to get out the ice tea or bar the doors and take the phone off the hook.

The QRPer stood there, hands on his hips for a full five minutes and then, just as we were distracted by the squawk of the 2-metre spotting repeater, he made his move . . . beating his way up the hill full stride. By the time we had turned back to look his way, eye contact had been made and we were trapped. Not that this was necessarily a bad thing, but our option of locking the door and going into hiding had been lost. The QRPer made it to the verandah and stood looking at us with a pensive stare. In hindsight, even had we studied him with binoculars while he was down on the road, we wouldn't have been able to read a lot from his expression.

The QRPer just sat there and stared and stared. We'd never seen anything like it! This one, in particular, always had something to say . . . he'd always had an opinion on everything DX related. There was cause for concern. "What's up?", we finally asked, for even after all these years we too could be worn down. He just looked at us and continued to stare. We were becoming concerned. Something must have rocked the foundations of the DX world. This was serious. We tried again. "How are the bands?" Nothing. We gave it a final shot; "The ARRL has put the DXCC listings back in QST, right?" The QRPer just looked at us with a blank stare.

Son of a Gun! Ever since the Early Days of DXing, there never had been a QRPer so stoic. So we hauled him up to the Old Timer. This time there was no stream of words and no arm waving and pounding of fists to drive the point home. QRPers always find some concern about DX or, more commonly, a newly perceived flaw in the DXCC program they thought they had found. The Old Timer looked over at the QRPer for a moment, and then back at us. "What's wrong with him?", we asked in a truly concerned tone. "Nothing", the Old Timer replied, "it happens every few years. Usually with one of the newly minted QRPers like this one. They can't understand the confusion, so they seize up for a few days. He'll be OK by New Year's."

We thought about it for a few minutes. "Of course!", we replied, smacking ourselves in the forehead as it became clear. "This is the first time he's seen the Pot-Stirrer in action." The Pot-Stirrer was Slim's cousin and he was more active than Slim, but usually he got ignored. The Pot-Stirrer rarely worked HF, and more recently had been showing up on the Internet. "It's the FT5 Pot-Stirrer, isn't it?"

The Old Timer nodded in agreement. "Yep . . . and he did a real good job. One whine and he had a couple of hundred bites. Even a few of the Big Guns bit this time. And when a newly minted QRPer sees all these guys sling the DX muck at each other for the first time, they often end up forgetting that DX IS! They become disillusioned with DX and DXers. A few give up altogether. And while Slim just steals your QSO, and maybe your green stamp, a Pot-Stirrer and the Legion of Hand Wringers that listen to him steal DXers from the hobby. That's the way it's always been and that's the way it always will be. But this fellow, he won't quit. He still understands that DXers are a cut above the rest. And while this is a learning process for him, he'll be back. He has to . . . look at the bands. There's DX for all! The Great Days of DXing have returned!"

We thought about this as we led the QRPer back down the hill. The Palos Verdes Sundancers had worked four long years to bring the flux back up. The Old Timer was right. There is DX for all, although for some more than others. We wondered if the Pot-Stirrer was a DXer or not. We still wonder. It's a good question. Meanwhile, DX IS!

QSL Rules — by Paul VE1DX {https://www.ve1dx.net/Stories/story018.html}

Son of a Gun! We were sitting on the veranda in the early fall when one of the local QRPers made his way around the curve and beat his way up the hill. He was not happy. "I worked a lot of DX over the years, and lately I've been running into the same roadblock. I can't get a QSL. Or, more properly put, I can't get one on time, according to the rules!"

"What rules?", we replied, looking at the QRPer with our standard poker face. "Well", he replied, "I don't know if there are QSLing rules set forth by any organization, but I would think that I should get my QSL the same time as all the other DXers. And furthermore, why do I have to wait so long? If the operators of a DXpedition don't get the cards out right away, we miss our chance to submit them in time for the listings in the DXCC Yearbook. Until last February, we always could look in QST, but they don't list the DXCC standings anymore. Now I only have one chance to get listed . . . and if I miss the DXCC Yearbook, I have to wait a whole year to get another chance!"

We looked at the QRPer for a moment and thought about the discussion that had gone on in the DX community during the past 6-8 months. Why were the listings in QST missing? Some had said that it was because of a computer format conversion. We weren't sure what that was, but it sounded reasonable to us, the computer uninitiated . . . some of the more knowledgeable DXers who knew about computers weren't buying it. And a couple of the members of the Legion of HandWringers went so far as to say that we'd never see the DXCC standings in QST ever again. Their theory was that the DXCC listing pages had been replaced by advertisements. We weren't about to re-hash any of this again, so we looked the QRPer straight in the eye and repeated one of the Eternal Enigmas of DXing.

"The DXCC program", we began, "is an awards program offered by a radio club. A radio club that has its headquarters in Newington, CT. You have chosen to participate in this radio club's awards program. If you follow the rules as they set forth, then you will be on equal footing with other DXers who also compete in this awards program. Understand?"

The QRPer was shifting from foot to foot. "Yes, I sort of follow you", he answered, "but isn't the DXCC program the top echelon of DX achievement in DXing. Isn't getting you call listed in the DXCC the pinnacle of DX achievement?"

"Maybe so", we replied, "but if the folks in Newington change the rules, and you are a member of the club, then you have to change your way of thinking with them. Follow the rules of the awards program, and all this will be equal. But remember, it's just an awards program offered by a radio club."

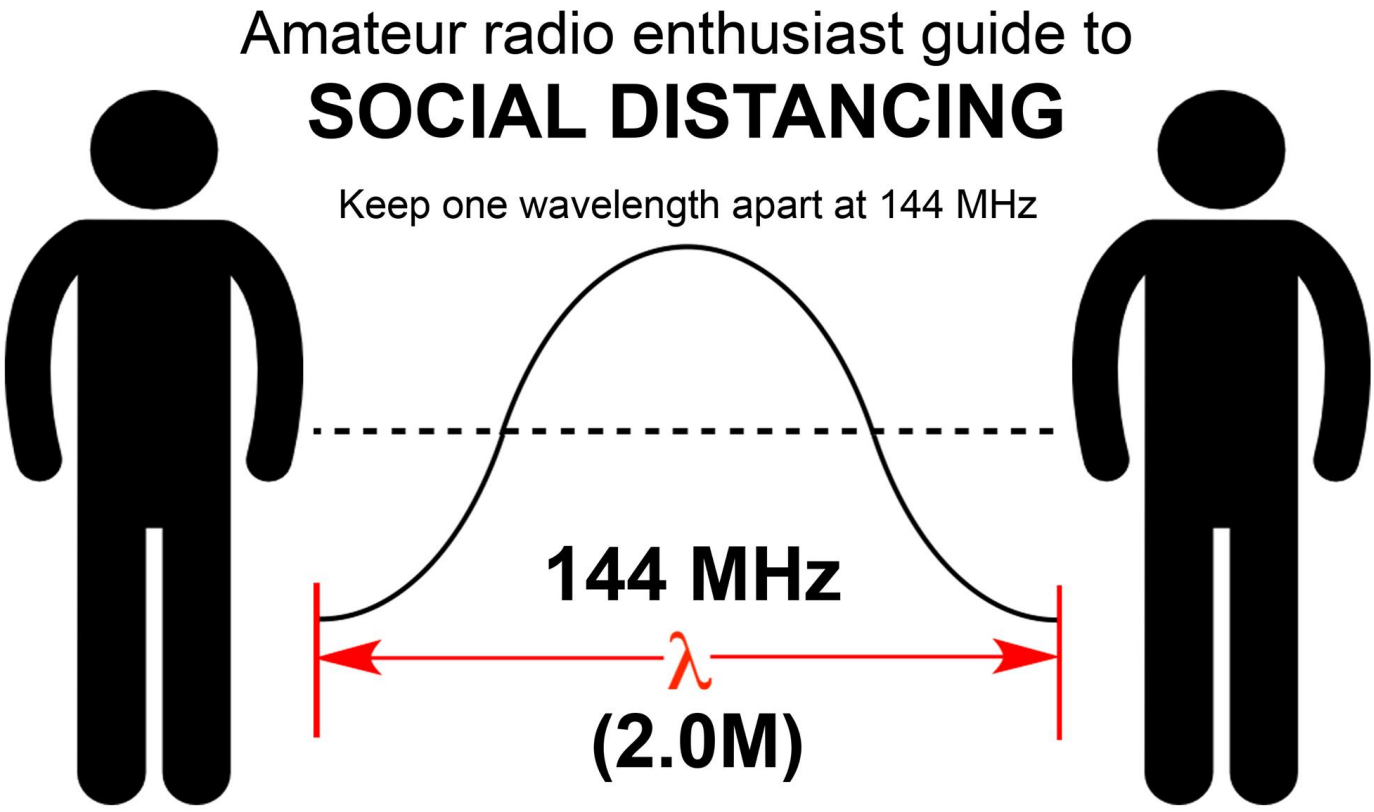
The QRPer looked at us for a moment then started with "But I thought . . . " We raised our hand and stopped him in mid-stream. "You are a DXer, son!", we said, standing up, "and DXers are the top echelon of Ham radio. Make no mistake about it. Stand tall! DXers are better looking, richer, more competent in their operating style and wiser than other Hams. DXers realise that their DX contacts are true-blue before any net controller or radio club gives it their blessing. They realise that no radio club can take away from their achievements by changing a date, or allowing or disallowing a QSL because of a technicality. Believe this, for it is the essence of a true-blue DXer! You know you worked the DX station. You will get a card! Don't let a radio club take away the enjoyment of DXing. They set the rules for their awards program, but they do not define a DXer! Understand?"

The QRPer looked at us for a moment, then said, "I never thought of it that way. I worked the DX. And I know it was a good QSO. Why do I have to prove it to anyone?"

"A good question." we replied, and we were silent. The QRPer was as well. He was deep in thought for several minutes, then he looked up at us and simply said, "Thanks." He made his way down the hill and around the bend in the road. We thought things over for a few moments and turned back to the rig. The flux had been good the past few days, but the Ap index was high and the bands were not that good. And

QSL Rules (continued)— by Paul VE1DX {https://www.ve1dx.net/Stories/story018.html}

even though conditions were poor, we tuned the bands . . . as DXers always do. The rare and exotic land were out there, ready to be worked. They always are. And will they send a QSL? Probably. And if they do not . . . who cares? Always remember, DX IS!



The Death of Ham Radio As We Know It? — by Art Horovitch (VE3AIH)

I have spent the last year or so mourning the death of rag chewing and lack of activity on the bands. But I've come to the conclusion there is nothing to be done about it. Perhaps the guys who used spark were upset about the new - fangled CW back in the early days of ham radio. Same for the AM guys who decried "Donald Duck" ssb back in the 50's and those who said the newfangled solid state "transistor" could not amount to much because it could only handle small amounts of power. Who ever heard of holes moving anyhow? How could you warm up your attic shack in winter without auxiliary heat from those 811 tubes in the KW? Besides they looked so nice glowing in the dark.

Look where we are 70 years later. KW amps using power FET's.

So what if the newcomers want 30 second partially “automatic” QSO’s using FT-8 to work around the world? They are advancing the art of ham radio with Arduino microcomputers and still playing with antennas and “hotspots” to connect from anywhere. Those who love programming (or “coding” as it sometimes is called) are having a ball testing and re-testing their connections. For my part, I am ecstatic that we have Brandmeister on our DMR repeater. I can combine my daily walk for exercise with QSO’s with stations from around the world.

The virus has revived interest in the bands. Many more stations on 40 and 20m CW every day. I am fortunate to have at least one good CW QSO every night, even though I have to slow down from my usual speed of about 25wpm to 20wpm or less. Most of the rag chewers are at least 60 years old and they also decry the automatic QSO's and proliferation of contests. But we should be happy that our numbers are rising and the bands are more active. So I've made my peace with the changes that have occurred.

Just like Covid 19, we are not going back to "normal" when this is all over. Some things will change for the better.

Art VE3AIH

(Submitted by Art—VE3AIH)

Reprinted from the author's story. VE2PX is now listed as silent key on QRZ.com.

He worked in the same DOT office as Charlie Carriere in Montreal. Charlie was the one who administered my CW tests in 1961-62. He had only two thumbs, all the other fingers were amputated. He could sure send CW. But that's another story.

{http://www.ganderairporthistoricalsociety.org/_html_war/RMasse.htm}

A Radio Operator in Gander 1943 - Roland Masse's story

by R.G. Pelley

The buildings are gone, the papers have been burnt and the memories are fading. So how can we capture the excitement of the moment, the mood of that wartime era and the day-to-day reality of living in Gander during the war? The best way of course is to talk to someone who lived through that period.

After very much searching, I actually found such a person, a gentleman now living in Laval, north of Montreal. Luckily he is still an avid (and well-known) amateur radio operator, which helped me finally find him.

His name is Roland Masse, aged 90 at the time of this article, and he very generously shared his story with me over the last several months. The following is a compilation of his information about his employment with VOAC, staying as close as possible to his own description. VOAC was responsible for ground-to-air communications, mostly concerning weather information.)

Roland Masse VE2PX

How he says he got involved

"In the summer of 1938 Hitler's name was on everyone's lips, and his message was loud and clear that eventually he would stop talking and bring on a war. The Department of Transport chief radio inspector, Mr Bernard Monday, a friend of my grandfather, recommended that I attend a school for radio operators for the Merchant Navy."

“So I attended the school to study for what they called a second class ticket, as obtained from Department of Transport Canada, to qualify for Merchant Navy operations. After graduating from the radio school in 1939, the year war was declared, I was getting ready to pass the qualification test at DOT. The first part of the test was on the Marconi receiver MSA (I forgot the number), which was the unit, used on Merchant Navy boats. The second test was on the Marconi transmitter. The third test was on a contraption called auto alarm and on a direction finder. The last test was Morse code which you had to master at not less than 20 words a minute, no mistakes allowed.”

“Four days before I was to be tested on Morse code, three officers from RAF Ferry Command made their appearance at the radio school. They were looking for Morse code operators able to work at 20 words a minute or better sending and receiving, capable of typing and receiving messages using an old Underwood typewriter. “

“The senior officer’s name was Gordon Lynn and he gave us a test right then and there. He jumped on a telegraph key and went at it. Four of us made the test and were told to report the next day to the Dorval administration building radio division. We made it to Dorval and another officer gave us second test, which we all passed. We then signed a bunch of papers attesting we were now members of the RAF Ferry Command organisation. I remember we signed a secrecy pledge, to not divulge any information about our operations. “

”So we began operating the next day. Traffic was mostly coded weather messages, five letters and numbers to a word, 150 words per message. The amount of traffic was enormous – which well prepared us for our next job. “

”One day in 1943 I received a message which read roughly as follows: ’Your services are required in Gander for a period of no less than six months. You will be leaving on a flight departing on March 19 at 08h00. We request your presence at the administration departure hall by 07h00.”

“Pre-arranged pay deposits were made and off we went. Room and board in Gander was paid by Ferry Command and to this day, I have no idea how much it cost to keep us there. “

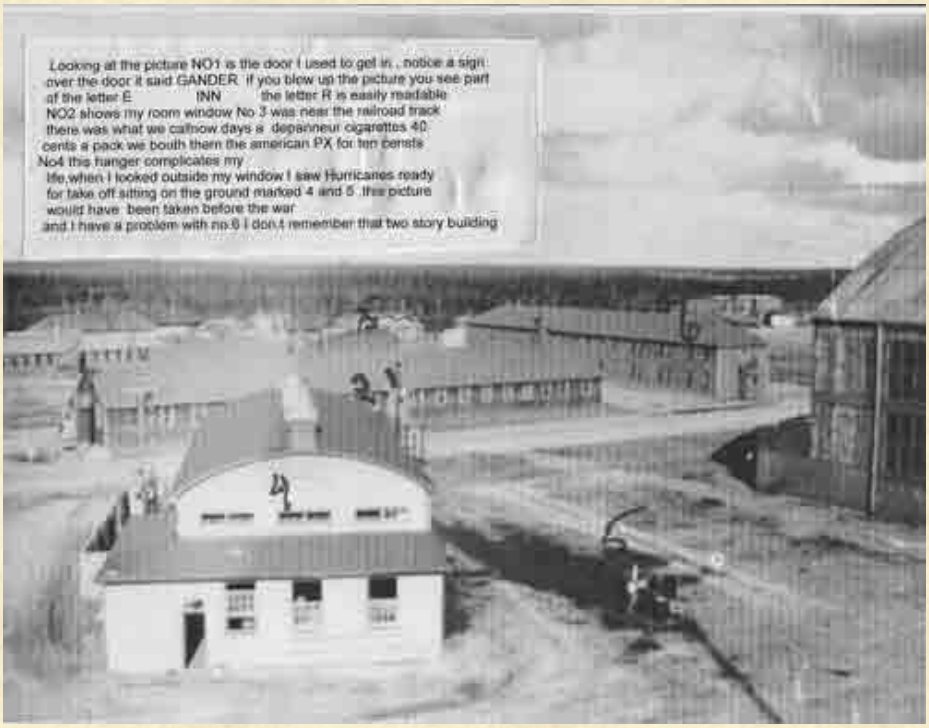
Roland (Rollie to his friends) describes his arrival in Gander.

“On March 19, 1943, I eased myself down (no steps or ladder!) from the belly of a four-motor Liberator bomber, also know as a B-24, thus completing a six-hour flight from Montreal to Gander (a 90-minute displacement in today’s jet age). I made my way to Security to have my picture and fingerprints taken, to assert that Roland Masse, a member of the Royal Air Force Ferry Command 45th Group, had arrived in Gander for a tour of duty as a wireless radio operator for a period no less than six months. I was handed a mini passport confirming my identity and was told to make sure it would be carried with me at all times.”

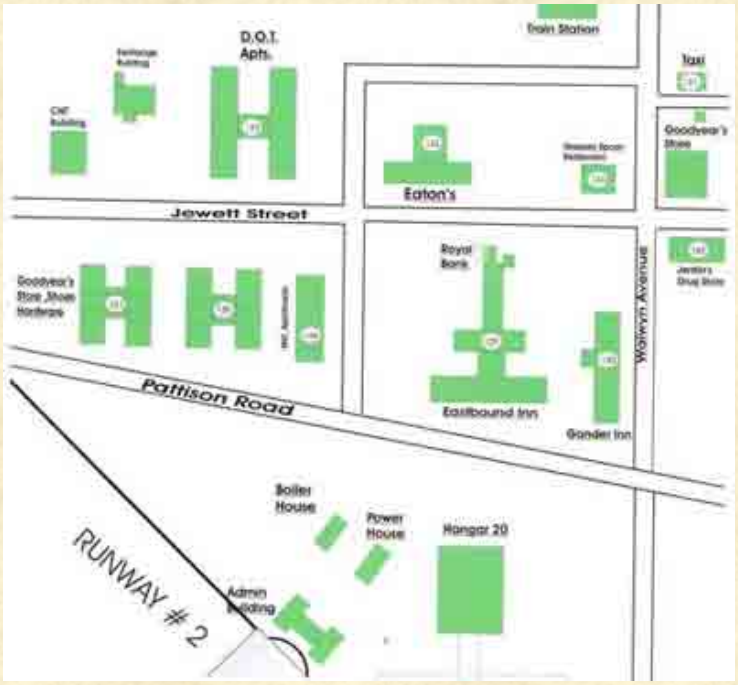
“I found my way to Eastbound Inn, my new address, where the Inn manager directed me to a large room with two beds, on the first floor of this U shape building. My roommate had yet to arrive.”

“The sound of voices directed me to the recreation hall, where I met the off-duty boys. Most of them had familiar faces for having had the pleasure of working with them at the Dorval radio communications station. A few had arrived the previous day, while others had completed their tour and were now waiting eagerly to find their way home. Actually the VOAC operating staff was completely renewed. The new arrivals were a mixed bag of French- and English-Canadian, including four local boys. “

Shown below (next page) is a photo annotated by Rollie.



On the map below, the building where Rollie stayed is indicated as Eastbound Inn, just above Pattison Rd.



Rollie explains his job in Gander

"I remember asking about the working schedule. The answer came from André Pepin, a friend and class mate from radio and Morse code classes, who confirmed that I was on duty from 8 to 4 the following day, adding I had to make sure I stood at the Eastbound Inn door by 07h30. I was also reminded to check my watch, to learn that it was one hour and half late, the time difference between Montreal and Gander!"

"The following morning I boarded the bus and took a seat a few rows back. As we drove on, we came to a road curve – I saw a car coming towards us and we are not getting out of his way. I braced myself, waiting for an accident - but nothing happened! I was reminded that in Newfoundland vehicles drive on the left side of the road. My fellow passengers laughed their heads off….that experience was one I was not about to forget."

"We came to a stop facing a large house called the receiving house, meaning no radio signals emitted from that location. The main floor was the VOAC communication center, furnished with desk large enough to stack two receivers. The lower one was a GE all band receiver, while the top one was an HRO National, considered top of the line in those days. The upper floor housed the station manager whose name was easy to remember - you only had to think of the ex heavy weight champion boxer of the early 20s Jack Dempsey. My memory reminds me also of Mrs. Dempsey who was a very attractive and pleasant lady."

(Editor's note : This was not the VOAC building out on Receiver Road. When Rollie went out the front door, the bus went right on Patterson Road, towards what is now the new town of Gander. The area referred to these days as the Old Navy Site and was near the present Walmart.)

" Within an hour I began feeling at home. The operating was identical to Dorval's, with the exception of the identification call letters VOAC instead of VR5, the Dorval call sign. Our job was to establish communications between ground station and planes, plus our other circuits specifically used to assure that airports located in the North Atlantic would receive up to date weather reports, on the hour, so crews getting ready to take off were made aware of the best routes."

"In the first week in May 1943, the bus taking us to the receiving station took a detour, this time turning to the left, and within 10 minutes, our new destination in a hangar was reached. *(Editor's note: Rollie describes this as across the runway from his living quarters. Also, it is known that there was a Signals section in Hanger 21, so this may be where VOAC was set up in that period,)* We filed in the direction of VOAC's new location and surprised to be standing in the middle of a spacious office, from first glance a much more functional setup. There were larger tables with an inlaid typewriter shelf which offered a very comfortable typing position. We now had an RAF oversize English issue telegraph key, installed at the table's edge. Another improvement over the old receiving house was that the ground to air circuit was caged in a glass office, which served to eliminate white noise heard on speakers or headphones."

"The new station included two circuits to Dorval, one to Preswick and one to Ireland. The bulk of the traffic exchange between Dorval and Gander remained weather reports, which originated from the meteo office in Dorval, responsible for compiling weather conditions for the whole of the North Atlantic. Gander and Preswick in Scotland were the two most important users. Planes ready to leave Gander to fly the Atlantic needed be informed accurately. The Gander flight plan office was their last information source, so VOAC radio receiving the right information within the shortest possible time frame was the key to giving the green light to take off or not. Even the Americans were using VOAC radio control on the frequency of 6500kcs - needless to say Gander was the now one of the busiest airports in the world. "

The type of radio transmissions

"A reminder of what a coded weather message contained : not less than one hundred and fifty words of five characters, a mix of numbers and letters which amounted to about 800 Morse code characters. If you multiply this by 50 messages received over a period of eight hours, it meant receiving and typing 40,000 characters. To accomplish such task, your most needed asset was concentration. Manipulating a Morse key to send 40,000 Morse code characters was not an easy task either, but we enjoyed doing it.

"The information ground to aircraft was done basically through "Q-codes", largely familiar to ham radio operators. Some of the more common Q-codes might be:
- QTC I have a message for you

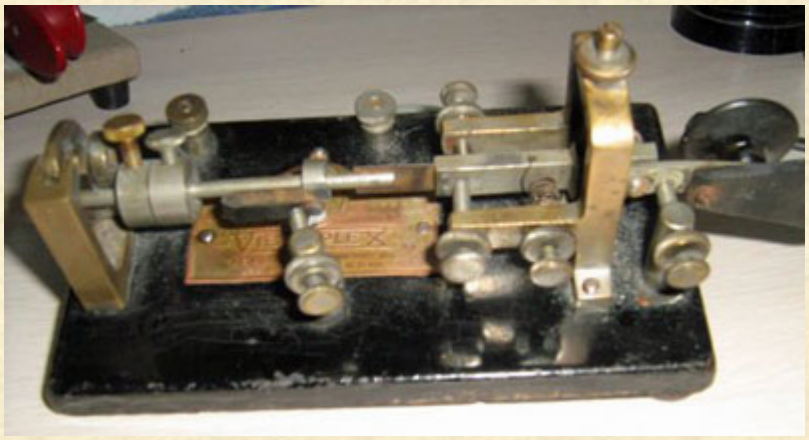
- QRS send Morse code more slowly,
- QRZ who is calling me
- QTA what time will you arrive
- QRA identify yourself
- QRT silence "

"These are not "secret" codes, so theoretically anybody, including the Germans, could hear them. But it was a question of time. If you had a message for a plane you Morse-coded his call sign – for example "W3ABC from VOAC - QTC". The plane would answer "R ok". A German direction finder would never have had enough time to tune in the plane's signal and to pinpoint it. With a direction finder, you need to triangulate from 3 different locations and the plane would have to hold the key down for at least 20 to 30 seconds, so the Germans could not pinpoint the plane. Of course, they knew the message came from Gander but they still didn't know where the plane was."

"If confidential info was sent from VOAC, that could be coded. The plane crew could also encode a message, for example the time a plane was landing by using a pad with a 26 letter alphabet slide, which was used in conjunction with a card that was changed every 24 hours, at 00h00 GMT. Every plane leaving from Gander would be given a card. If it they flew over two different days, it would be given two cards. By the appropriate placement of the card, a given letter would be replaced by another."

"This Morse code was sent by a telegraph key. There are basically two types of key, the first being the one we see most often, the one with a button on the end of a shaft that goes up and down. The other one, used by the pros, is called a "bug" and goes back and forth. This was the type of key used in Gander."

(Shown in the photo is Rollie's personal "bug")



Some of Rollie's personal recollections

"In July of 1943 something unusual happen, never seen before, as 104 B-17 bombers left for England. They took off at one-minute intervals. The flight plan said they would fly in four-plane formations. To make sure the ships could get into position, they flew a large spiral until the first plane reached 9000 ft, where it took a sea bound direction. The second plane flew a shorter loop to position itself behind the lead plane, as did the 3rd and 4th. The spiral idea was designed to ease your way into a four plane formation, so when all planes had reached the altitude, you had a global formation of twenty-six 4-plane flights, which was quite a sight !"

"Two or three planes had to turn back, and I saw another first for me,
a huge 4-motor bomber with only one motor running, one propeller turning and the other 3 frozen. Imagine the pilot with only the outboard motor running on the left wing - he had to find a way to keep the ship flying a straight line. It

looked awkward coming in on one motor and I guess I said a hundred prayers !"

"A third unusual event took place that same day, involving the person operating the ground-to-air circuit. Upon reaching altitude, each plane's wireless radio operator turned on the radio transmitter and using Morse code, began to transmit their identification. At the VOAC receiving station, you can imagine the noise Morse code characters sent by fifty or more transmitters sounded like in our earphones. It was identical to a philharmonic orchestra before a concert when musicians tune their instruments. The ground operator got very excited, completely at loss, without the faintest idea how to advise these boys to stop transmitting. The officer in charge did not have a solution either. But he knew I was the most experience operator at hand, so he came to me hoping I held the magic baton to end that symphony. He requested I take over. "

"Now I needed someone to take care of the log. I turned to my old friend André Pepin, who had extraordinary handwriting, like that a notary public of yesteryear. I was to handle the telegraph key. The nervous ground operator was anxious to know if we had some procedure had in mind, so we quickly answered: "None"! I would simply wait until transmissions quieted down a bit and would then take control. The planes had just began an eight-hour flight or more - so we had plenty of time to complete the roll call..."

"Finally the frequency is quite. I sent out a three-word message QRT, meaning no more sending. I began by calling the lead plane. Andre was logging and we got answers from all of remaining hundred or so planes remaining on mission."

"The original arrangement was only the lead plane of each group had to report every thirty minutes while flying over the ocean. But in case of trouble any plane can break radio silence. As they reach half way to England called the "point of no return"", the ground to air station in England takes over. We fellows in the radio room had lived through quite a day and it remained a subject of discussion for quite a few days!"

Off-duty hours

" One thing that was easy to do was to walk around the airport - I used to do it twice a week, a seven mile hike. We could lay softball till ten o'clock at night. In Newfoundland during summer, nights are very short, so you could play ball till ten or ten thirty before darkness would stop the game. Daylight was back by four a.m. "

"Swimming in Gander Lake in July and August was also fun. On bad weather days, you could fall back to the rec hall with the pool, ping-pong, cards, or just sit in a quite corner with a book. But the cherry on the sundae was the American movie theatre. Programs changed twice a week. Pictures came directly to us from Hollywood, before been sent to theatres across the US or Canada. I was therefore able to write my girl friend to inform her which good pictures to watch for."

"One day I am standing in line waiting for the theater to open. I happened to turn around to see a tall American pilot. I am twisting my brain, trying to identify that man. I knew him from somewhere but could not recall - then it hit me. He was the well-known actor James Stewart who held the rank of captain on a B-17 bomber. I read a few months later he had done a tour of duty, which consisted of 25 flights over enemy territory. Clark Cable was also seen at the theatre."

"During that period, in August, I was also sent to Botwood on loan to Pan American and the British Overseas Airways Corporation in support of Boeing Clipper flying boats. These planes begin their flight from Ireland, a neutral country, ferrying businessmen or high-ranking officers traveling to Canada or USA. It was easy to detect them as they simply took off their officer's cap and tunic and put on a sweater or sports jacket to make believe they were civilians. The first stop over was Botwood for fuel and then on to New York. "

"This was quite a change from the busy life in Gander. In Botwood you only had to be in service when one of these planes took to the air, which gave you one or two days off occasionally. Compared to Gander, the receiving station was just a small wooden construction inside an RCAF base compound. This receiving station was however connected to

Gander via teletype machine, and all coded messages coming from the clippers were typed directly to Gander."

"One day I found out the probable reason why I had been selected to go to Botwood. With my 35-40 words per minute in code, I was able to work quickly and securely at a very fast speed. On one day in particular, as a Clipper was en route, I remember commenting the RAF liaison officer that this was the first time radio traffic with a Clipper was so heavy, but he did not comment. Finally the Clipper docked and passengers began to descend and one man started to walk towards the RCAF building. As I came out of the radio shack, this man is lighting a long cigar. He looks at us and gives us the V sign with his right hand while puffing on his cigar, Yah it was Churchill. The RAF officer friend saluted him he returned it. I don't remember but I think I did salute him too!"

Conclusion

"Our group included a great bunch of nice guys, and we manage to have an interesting life style. Over 10,000 planes came through Gander controlled by V0AC, so bravo to all the boys who participated.

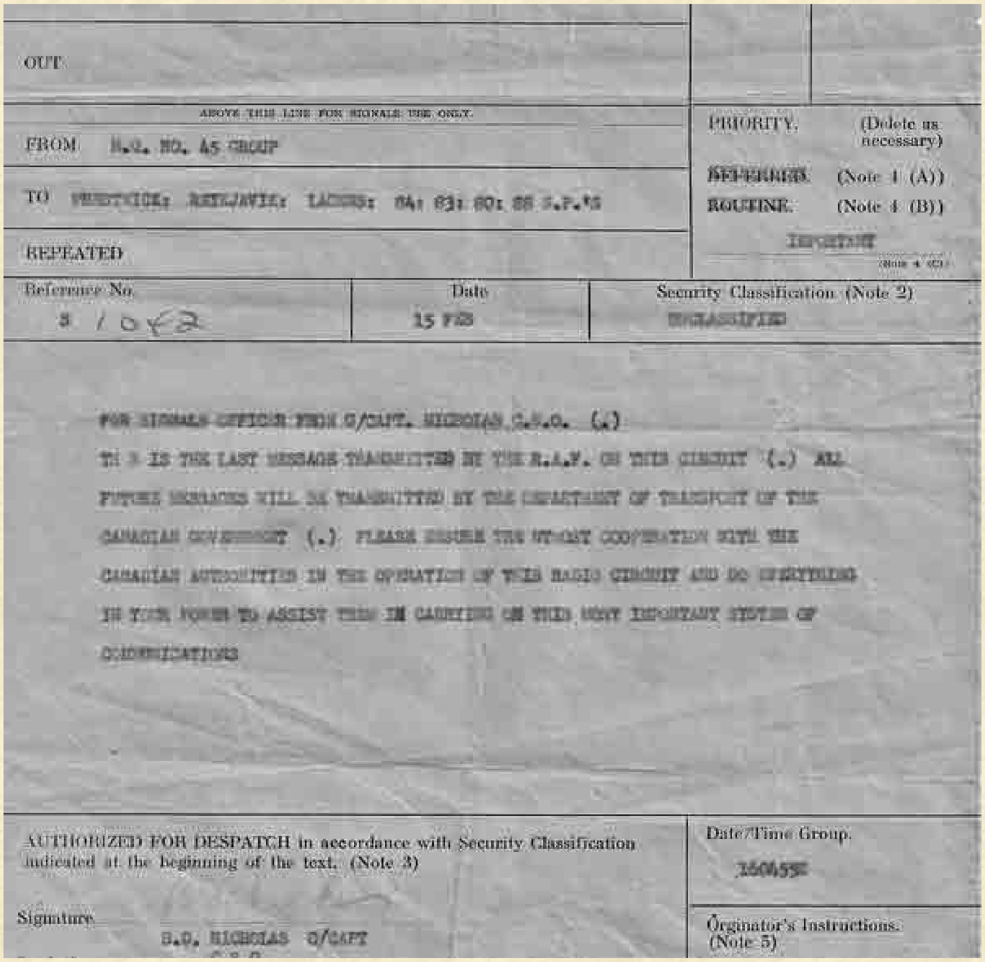
"On occasion, when they show on TV hundreds of planes converging to Germany during the war, when you see those pictures, it reminds you every one of those planes came through Gander on the call letters VOAC."

Editor's comments

On leaving Gander, Rollie returned to Dorval for a short time and was then sent to Elizabeth City, North Carolina helping aircraft flight being ferried to Africa. On his return to Dorval he became supervisor and remembers well Sir Frederick Bowhill, the Commander of Ferry Command and later Transport Command, would come in for a time check. Bowhill had two watches, the left one on local time and the other on Greenwich Mean Time. Rollie would pick up a time signal from Ottawa and then hand the headphones to Bowhill who would fiddled a few minutes with his two watches and then walk out with a brisk "Good morning, Rollie".

Rollie left that job on 14 February 1946 when Ferry Command / Transport Command closed down its operations on this side of the Atlantic. Below (next page) is a photo of a very rare document owned by Rollie, the actual document advising personal the operations were now being transferred to Canadian DOT.

(continued next page)



OUT

ABOVE THIS LINE FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY.

FROM H.Q. NO. 45 GROUP

TO PRESTWICK: REYKJAVIK: LAGENS: 84: 83: 80: 88 S.P.'S

REPEATED

PRIORITY. (Delete as necessary)
IMMEDIATE (Note 1 (A))
ROUTINE (Note 4 (B))
IMPORTANT
(Note 4 (C))

Reference No.	Date	Security Classification (Note 2)
S / 0 4 2	15 FEB	UNCLASSIFIED

FOR SIGNALS OFFICER FROM G/CAPT. NICHOLAS C.S.O. (.)
THIS IS THE LAST MESSAGE TRANSMITTED BY THE R.A.F. ON THIS CIRCUIT (.) ALL FUTURE MESSAGES WILL BE TRANSMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT OF THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT (.) PLEASE ENSURE THE UTMOST COOPERATION WITH THE CANADIAN AUTHORITIES IN THE OPERATION OF THIS RADIO CIRCUIT AND DO EVERYTHING IN YOUR POWER TO ASSIST THEM IN CARRYING ON THIS MOST IMPORTANT SYSTEM OF COMMUNICATIONS

AUTHORIZED FOR DESPATCH in accordance with Security Classification indicated at the beginning of the text. (Note 3)

Date/Time Group. 150455Z

Signature S.G. NICHOLAS G/CAPT

Originator's Instructions. (Note 5)

Roland Masse has been an amateur radio operator VE2PX since 1948, mainly using Morse code. In fact he is so good at it that it was not difficult for him to communicate all over the world using a surplus World War II "No 19", set, designed only for short range battlefield use of about only 15-20 miles.

During Expo 67, it was his idea to set up a ham radio station not only to let ham radio operators talk to the world but also, in those days before Internet, to help foreign visitors remain in contact with friends back home. He is also a published author with a book called "Keiko", the life story of a young Japanese girl.

To conclude, this is a photo provided by Rollie of his RAF Ferry Command jacket badge.

The Charlie Carrier Story — (Submitted by Art Horovitch (VE3AIH))

Here is the story of Charlie Carrier, who was the radio inspector at the Montreal office of the DOT, where I and many of my university friends took their ham radio exam. The story is told by his friend Rolland, VE2PX (SK), who served with him during the war.

Charlie Carrier

Inspector Charlie Carrier had been a member of the Ferry Command station with me in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, while the Ferry Command radio station in that city was responsible for radio-monitoring of bomber aircraft issued for the African Front fling across the Atlantic to North Africa.

Charlie was a very good operator, he had been a member of the flying staff as a radio operator-gunner aboard the bombers delivered to Europe. During a crossing over the Atlantic on a B-24, a problem in the system distributing the oxygen to the crew had suffered a failure in the position of the radio operator and Charlie had been semi-conscious for some time before his unfortunate situation was discovered. He had probably fallen to the floor where his hands were in contact with the interior metal frame of the plane. When he was found, his hands were frozen to such an extent that he had to have his fingers amputated. He lost all fingers on both hands except for the thumbs.

Despite this handicap, he still managed to write using a typewriter, pushing the letters of the keyboard using the only two fingers he had at his disposal, the thumbs. I thought he was very brave.

He later became a radio inspector at the Montreal office of the DOT and administered ham radio tests.

Art's (VE3AIH) note— I have memories of Charlie as a stern inspector, sometimes failing a prospective ham for a minor error, but always with a little joke and encouragement to try again. I remember one incident in particular, where I was asked to draw a schematic of a simple Wave meter for measuring frequency at the output of a transmitter. We had to draw full schematics in those days: transmitter, superhet receiver, power supply, etc, not block diagrams and no multiple choice questions. So I drew the wavemeter showing a tuned circuit connected to a meter with a symbol for the an an antenna. Charlie asked me if I intended to measure just one frequency. I didn't understand the question, then I looked at what I had drawn and realized my error. I had drawn the symbol for a fixed capacitor instead of a variable one with a curved line and an arrow through it. I quickly corrected the mistake and he let it pass. I walked out with a passing grade on the theory and received my certificate and license a few weeks later.

This ‘n’ That

Random pictures of the recent work carried out at the “Antenna Creek” Repeater Site.

Social distancing is being maintained … Safety first.

Why 'HI' ?

By Bill Chaikin, KA8VIT
February 2018

(This is a rewrite of an article I first wrote about 25 years ago and was published in a few amateur radio club newsletters.)

Most of us know even if we're not CW ops, that “HI HI” or “di-di-di-dit dit dit di-di-di-dit dit dit”, is Morse code for laughter or a laugh. Younger hams can equate it to LOL as used today in text messages and on social media. So universal is its meaning that its usage has even crept into the phone and digital bands. “That's a funny story old man, HI HI”. I'm guilty of doing that myself. But have you ever wondered *why* we laugh that way?

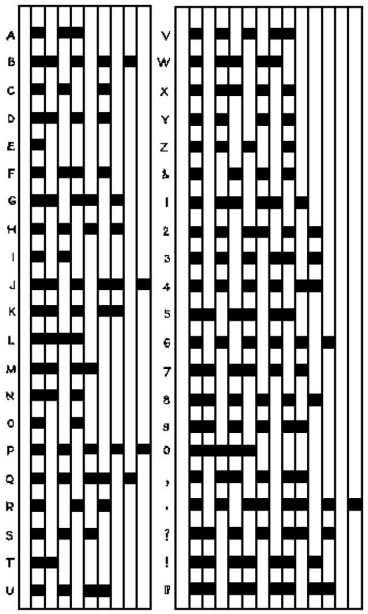
If the Internet or social media were to give us a clue, you'd think that the way we would laugh in lazy man's shorthand would probably be “HA HA” or “HE HE” as these are in common usage on the Internet. Some believe that “HI HI” was really “HEE HEE” like someone giggling and that over the years the two “Es” have been run together so that instead of sounding like “di-di-di-dit dit dit” it now sounds like “di-di-di-dit di-dit”. I even read one post where one ham was telling another that “HI” is a pro-sign for “HUMOR INTENDED”. That *really* made me laugh… HI HI.

But, it is not “HI HI” or “HEE HEE” we're sending when we laugh in Morse code. It's “HO HO”. Like Santa's laugh. What? No, really. Let me explain.

Many things with today's International Morse code usage can be traced back to its roots in the old American Morse code, (also known as the Land-line or Railroad Morse code).

In American Morse code there is a longer intra-character space used in the characters C, O R, Y and Z, (and also the & character) which is two element times long, (see figure #1).

Fig #1.



1911 Chart of the Standard American Morse Characters

So, back in the day, the telegraphers laughed by sending, “HO HO”, and it sounded like, “di-di-di-dit dit dit”. With a noticeable pause between the last two dits. Why “HO HO” and not “HA HA”? That can be attributed to mid-nineteenth century American English.

Later on as radio telegraphy came about and some land-line telegraphers took their skills to the air waves, “HO HO” went along with them.

Over time the Morse code went through some changes to become what is now known as the International Morse code. One of the changes was dropping the two element time intra-character space which lead to a simpler, more efficient Morse code. This is what has lead to a lot of the confusion over the origin of “HI HI”.

So, as a CW op, history and tradition dictate that when we send “HI HI”, we send it as “di-di-di-dit dit dit”, ***with a noticeable pause between the last two dits***.

That's my story and I'm sticking to it… HI HI.

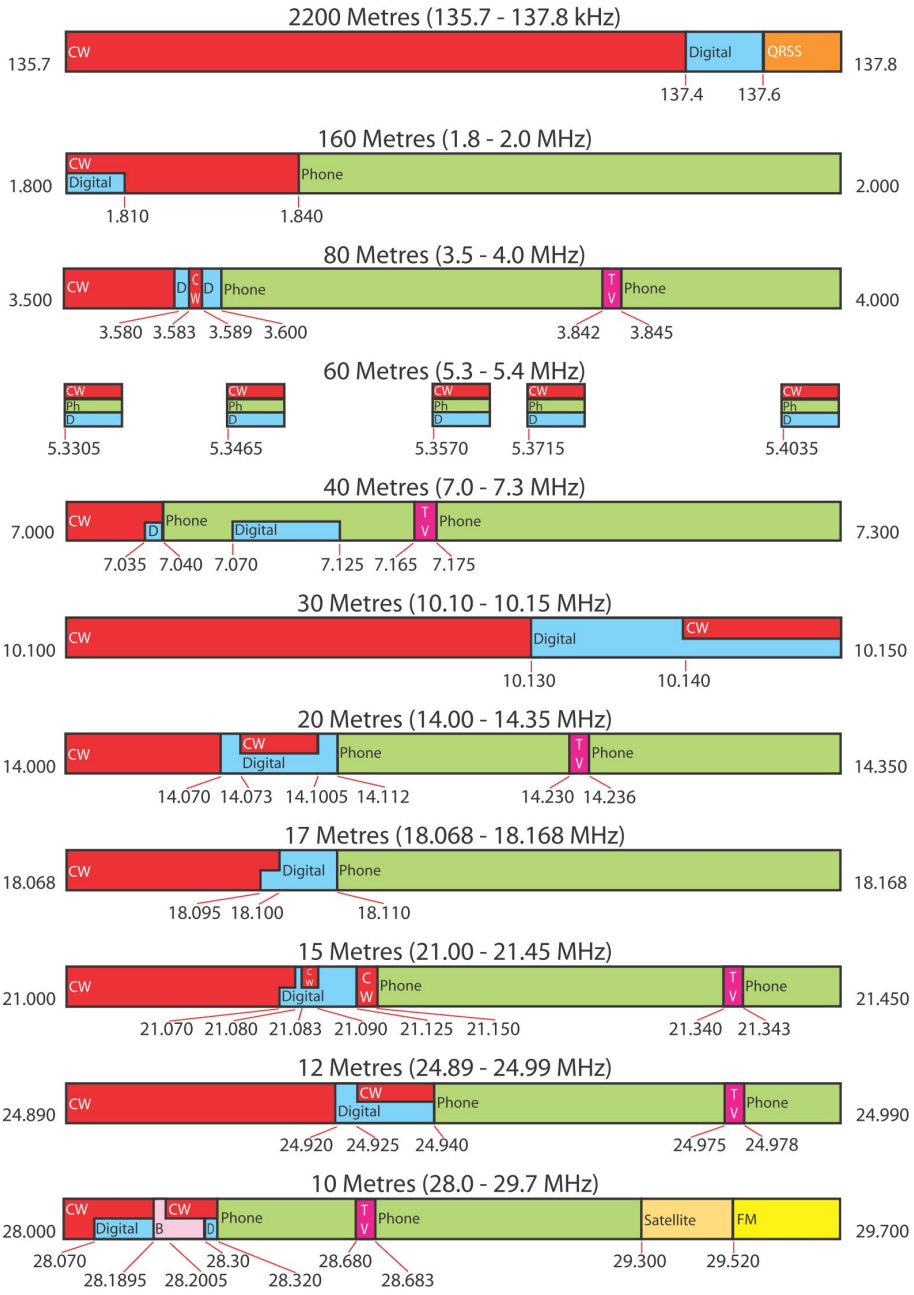
Submitted by—Dave (VE3JLV)

Canadian 0 - 30MHz Band Plan

Effective Date: December 1, 2015

1. This is a simplified version of the official RAC Band Plan. Not all permissible modes/activities are represented.
2. LSB is used on 160, 80 and 40m. USB is used on all other bands that permit SSB, including 60m.
3. Consult various online resources for detailed information on what digital modes are used.
4. Maximum bandwidth permitted on 2200m is 100 Hz. Maximum power is 1 Watt EIRP.
5. Refer to the IC and RAC websites for full details before operating on the new 60m channels.
6. Remember not to allow your signal to spill over into adjoining band segments when operating close to the edges. During major weekend contests, activity in certain modes can spill over into other segments. Operators should avoid NCDXF beacons on 14.100, 18.110, 21.150, 24.930 and 28.200 MHz.
7. This graphic is a living document and will be reviewed and updated periodically to reflect changes in the band plans and operating habits.

www.rac.ca



Key

CW CW	FM FM	TV SSTV
QR CW QRSS	B Beacons	D Digital
Ph Phone	S Satellite	

Seaway Valley Amateur Radio Club

4672 O'Keefe Road
St. Andrews West, ON
K0C2A0

www.svarc.ca

The Seaway Valley Amateur Radio Club operates a number of repeaters in Cornwall and Area. VE3SVC is a VHF Yaesu Fusion digital repeater operating on both analog and C4FM modes at 147.180 + and a tone of 110.9 Hz. On UHF, VE3PGC (previously VE3MTA), also a Yaesu Fusion repeater with wide area coverage, is located at Bonville. It operates at 443.650 + and a tone of 110.9 Hz. For other repeaters see the Repeater Page.

SVARC Executive 2018—2020

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- **Vice President:** Doug Pearson (VE3HTR)
- **Secretary:** Chris Lauzon (VA3CRR)
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- **ARES Coordinator:** Earle DePass (VE3IMP)
- **Editor/Publisher:** Steve Harvey (VE3EZB)

Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES)

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) is composed of certified Radio Amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment for communications duty in the public service when disaster strikes.

Upcoming Events

- Children's Treatment Centre May 30 2020—**Cancelled—COVID-19**
- Field Day June 27/28 2020

The Seaway Valley Amateur Radio Club is a proud Radio Amateurs of Canada Affiliated Club.

The SVARC Repeater reports are available on the club website under "Area Repeater List"