



Smoke Signals

Newsletter of Fullerton Radio Club

August 2014

August Meeting Presentation

Dennis Kidder W6DQ will be our featured presenter for the August meeting. Dennis will cover the history of Voice of America at the Delano, California site. Dennis will also be discussing recovery of Collins 821A shortwave broadcast transmitter from the site, now located at the AWA museum in Bloomfield, NY. Below is an article for you to read in advance of Dennis' presentation, with some of the history details.

Saving a piece of shortwave history - Dennis Kidder W6DQ

I may be a bit biased but this had to be one of those great moments that many of us dream of -- being part of a team performing some radio "archaeology" and recovering a significant piece of the history of the Collins Radio Company and preventing it from being turned into scrap. I am speaking of a Collins 821A-1 shortwave broadcast transmitter, one of three that were located at the Voice of America's Delano Relay site, here in California's Central Valley. Collins manufactured and installed nine of these transmitters, the largest shortwave transmitter they ever produced, weighing in at a "cool" 22 tons and producing 250 KW of carrier power. Do the math ... that's one megawatt peak output power!

The Collins Collectors Association (CCA) was tasked with removing this transmitter from the Delano site and placing it into storage so that it may eventually be put on display at the Antique Wireless Association (AWA) Museum in Bloomfield, New York. The Collins Collectors Association, in association with the AWA, have formed a cooperative alliance known as the Collins Radio Heritage Group (CRHG) whose mission is to preserve "and display the anecdotal heritage of the Collins Radio Company." As a member of the Board of Directors of the Collins Collectors Association, I was suddenly thrust into the project, and as those of you who know me, rather than kicking and screaming, I jumped in headlong!

The road to this end has been a long one. It began when the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) ceased

operations at the Delano facility in October of 2007. Created in 1994 as part of the United States Information Agency (USIA), IBB became the operator of VOA. VOA operations had been under USIA since it began operations in 1953. In 1999 the USIA was disbanded and IBB became an independent federal government entity. Delano Relay, as the name implies, was used to relay broadcasts from Washington, D.C. on to other USIA transmitting sites located in the Philippines and Africa. More recently, VOA Delano supported Radio Marti, targeting Cuba and also carried program material for the British Broadcasting Company. Newer technologies such as satellite communications along with the increasing scarcity of replacement parts for the site's nine transmitters eventually led to the shutdown.

Following the shutdown, IBB transferred ownership of the facility to the Government Services Administration (GSA) who was tasked with disposal of the site. Several years ago an effort led by Mike Dourrough, KO6NM, a very notable broadcast engineer, was mounted to try to save the site and turn it into a museum. Unfortunately, the high asking price by GSA for the property all but shutdown his efforts.

After years of seeking to dispose of the site, GSA was approached with a plan to remove and preserve one of the Collins transmitters in a museum setting. This plan had the backing and support of Rockwell Collins, the Collins family and the newly formed alliance between CCA and AWA, CRHG. After a year of bureaucratic roadblocks and red tape, ownership of the transmitter, "DL-8" and other associated "paraphernalia," was transferred to the CRHG. There was one catch ... we had two weeks to get the 22 tons of gear off of the site.

The extraction team was assembled and we descended on Delano to get to work. The team consisted of Bill Carns, N7OTQ, President of the CCA, Jim Stitzinger, WA3CEX, former board member and secretary of the CCA and Jim's helper, Tim Zeichik, Scott Kerr, KE1RR, Vice President of the CCA, Rod Blocksome, N0DAS, former Collins engineer, Brian Gieryk, KE6IYC, Dave Jennings, WJ6W, Joe Knight, representing the AWA, and myself, Dennis Kidder, W6DQ, Board Member and Secretary of the CCA. Our task was a daunting one ... disassemble 22 tons of

transmitter and prepare it for transport, documenting every piece so that we may reassemble it down the road. There were a LOT of pieces.

Take a look at the article on the CCA Website at <http://www.collinsradio.org/821A/>. To give you an idea of what was involved, one of my tasks was to disconnect the wiring harnesses from the control room to the transmitter. This would seem a pretty simple task. But when you consider that there were 1600 wiring tie points just to the "diagnostic panel" of the transmitter, this isn't so simple.

In the end, we all realized that the transmitter would never take to the airwaves again and a decision was made that in order to expedite the removal we would cut the cables behind the racks rather than trying to preserve the wiring harnesses intact. I must tell you that cutting through that first cable was a very emotional moment for me. The cables were cut such that when the transmitter goes back on display, they cuts are concealed by the valence panels of the transmitter racks.

We did manage to extract the transmitter and have it loaded out and on the road within the allotted timeframe. We even finished a bit early, giving us some time to do a little "sightseeing" on the property. There is nothing quite like standing at the base of a 400 foot tall dipole curtain array! That is a very large antenna. In addition to the five dipole curtains, there are six large curtain rhombics. Four are each installed on four 150 foot towers. The other two, also using the 150 foot towers, are so large that there are four additional towers at the center of each span. There is *nothing* small at the VOA Delano Relay site.

I mentioned at the beginning that the project included some radio "archaeology." When the site was shutdown and abandoned in 2007, it was as if everyone packed their bags and walked out the door, leaving behind a treasure trove of VOA and USIA memorabilia. When we had time to take breaks from the tasks at hand, we found ourselves exploring the environs of the transmitter building and several outlying structures. There were two goals in doing this. First, we had to locate some of the specialized "tooling" to accompany the transmitter to the museum. This included custom winch assemblies to remove the PA and modulator tubes, as they each weigh nearly 100 pounds. One of the notable bits of history that we found in the flotsam was a pile of unanswered reception reports and QSL card requests! And of course we found a few blank QSL cards as well. This material was handed off to the AWA with the hope that those QSL requests may finally be fulfilled. Other pieces of history from the site will eventually be placed on display at AWA.

But the project doesn't end here. We are at the halfway point, so to speak. Over the next two years we will be continuing to raise funds to support the placement of the mighty 821A-1 at the AWA Museum. And for me personally, it will mean that I get to get my hands dirty again. We will attempt to reconvene our team to restore and reassemble the 821A-1 at the museum. Something I am very much looking forward to doing. Stay tuned ... there will be an upcoming talk at FRC!



Two of five dipole curtain arrays at the VOA Delano Relay Site. Two others are visible in the background. The three towers are three hundred feet in height. Those in the background reach to four hundred feet!

Fullerton Radio Club
P.O. Box 545, Fullerton, CA 92836-0545

Web site: www.FullertonRadioClub.org

President

Bill Preston, KZ3G
Phone: (714) 529-8004
E-mail: billpreston@roadrunner.com

Vice President

Richard Belansky, KG6UDD
Phone: (714) 970-6385
E-mail: rhubelansky@raytheon.com

Secretary

Linda Endsley, KJ6IHB
Phone: (714) 992-4645
E-mail: lindiend@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer, Public Service

Gene Thorpe, KB6CMO
Phone: (714) 680-4258
E-mail: kb6cmo@arrl.net

Membership

Larry McDavid, W6FUB
Phone: (714) 630-5672
Email: Lmcdavid@Lmceng.com

HDSCS

April Moell, WA6OPS
Phone: (714) 879-6895
Emergency Coordinator, HDSCS
E-mail: emcom4hosp@aol.com
www.hdscs.org

T-Hunt

Joe Moell, K0OV
<http://www.homingin.com>
E-mail: homingin@aol.com

OCCARO Representatives

Robert Gimbel, KG6WTQ
Larry McDavid, W6FUB

Trustee

Bob Reitzel, KD6DA
Phone: (562) 691-1514
E-mail: breitzel@juno.com

Directors

Larry McDavid, W6FUB
Phone: (714) 630-5672

Robert Gimbel, KG6WTQ
Phone: (714) 657-2862

Mike LeFevre, WD6AQH
Phone: (714) 674-7687

Director & Newsletter Editor

Paul Broden, K6MHD
Phone: (714) 871-9478
E-mail: pbroden@sbcglobal.net

Show –and–Tell

Bring something of interest to the meeting to show and share your story. Something old, new, or just of interest to hams.

Photo; Continued from feature article, page 1



W6DQ gleefully removing one of four Eimac 4CV100000C vapor-cooled tetrodes from the PA compartment of transmitter DL-8. That is a 97 pound tube! Call it a case of "QRO envy!"

August 6, 2014 Board Meeting Minutes

The August 2014 Board meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Vice President, Vice President, Richard Belansky KG6UDD. Other members present were: Treasurer Gene Thorpe KB6CMO, Secretary Linda Endsley KJ6IHB, Directors Larry McDavid W6FUB, Paul Broden K6MHD, OCCARO representative Robert Gimbel KG6WTQ, and member Cheryl Thorpe KE6TZU.

Minutes from the July Board meeting were reviewed and approved.

Treasurer's Report: Checking Account, \$2,433.85. Savings Account, \$3,073.19.

Old Business:

Trustee in pursuit – Gene has paperwork – needs to be filled out and signed.

La Palma Days Parade will be in November.

New Business:

Discussed TASMA changing/dividing frequencies.

TBA will speak at the August general meeting. The topic will be TBA [To Be Announced].

The next Board meeting will be Wednesday, September 3.

The meeting was closed at 7:50 PM

Submitted by Linda Endsley, KJ6IHB

ARDF Team USA 2014 has formed

USA's Amateur Radio Direction Finding (ARDF) Team for 2014 has formed and is in training for the Seventeenth ARDF World Championships, September 6 through 13, 2014 near Burabay, Kazakhstan. "Training camps" in three states are helping them get ready with one or more challenging all-on-foot radio-orienteeing events every day.

First, the Backwoods Orienteering Club (BOK) sponsored the Birkhead International ARDF Competition and Training Camp near Asheboro, North Carolina for seven days beginning July 17. Then on the weekend of July 19-20, west coast ARDF fans gathered at Mt. Pinos near Frazier Park, California for three competitions plus a barbecue cookout. Another weekend session of ARDF at Mt. Pinos takes place August 16-17, with results and photos posted in the "Homing In" Web site (www.homingin.com/park). Finally, during the last week of August, Vadim Afonkin KB1RLI will set training courses in the Boston area.

Because of their performances in the USA ARDF Championships in North Carolina (2013) and Massachusetts (2014), twenty radio-orienteeers were given invitations to join ARDF Team USA 2014. For various reasons, twelve of them are not able to go. The team now includes five men and three women, ranging in age from 29 to 72, plus one member of the international jury. Two years ago, the thirteen members

of Team USA brought home thirteen medals from the World Championships in Serbia. I look forward to reporting on the team's performance in this year's World Championships in an upcoming issue of Smoke Signals.

73, Joe Moell K0OV

ARRL ARDF Coordinator

Next Year with FRC

The countdown has begun! Club By-Laws require that "The President shall appoint a nominating committee at the September regular Club meeting." That's the first indication that we must prepare for elections for Club officers for next year. Nominations are to be presented to Club membership at the October, with elections in November. Sooooo – – we seriously need to seek candidates for ***ALL*** offices. Note that new candidates must fill offices of President and Vice President, as the current officers are not eligible for another term. Other offices requiring nominations include Secretary, Treasurer and Board of Directors.

Lets not wait until the last minute for the identification of a slate of candidates. Please consider ***seriously*** that you could be a good candidate for office. Volunteers for candidacy are accepted. **Duties are as follows:**

President: The President shall preside at all meetings of the Club. The President shall call special Club meetings as needed, appoint chairpersons of standing and special committees, and shall serve as the chairperson of the Board of Directors. In the absence of the President the Vice President shall assume all duties o the President. The Vice President shall serve as Program Manager, and shall be responsible for the procurement of speakers or other program material for the monthly meetings. The Secretary shall record minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Directors' meetings, and records of other club functions. The treasurer shall collect and disperse funds as authorized by the board of Directors, shall keep an accurate record of all receipts and expenditures, and shall provide the Board of Directors a monthly statement of funds present and of fund dispersals. The Treasurer shall maintain a list of all paid members.

OK, now see where you fit in this scheme. It's ***your*** Club. Duties aren't really that difficult. Don't expect someone else to take all the responsibility. Volunteer for a nomination, or at least say "yes" if the nominating committee asks you to run for office.

Newsletter Articles Requested

How about some input from the members? Does anyone have an article of interest to club members that we can present in the newsletter? It's hard to fill the "white space." It's another of those 'things' that shouldn't be left to someone else every time! Many thanks to those who do provide articles or information!

FRC Regular Club Meeting

Third Wednesday of each month
Chapman Activity Center
2515 San Carlos Dr.
Fullerton, CA

Next Regular Meeting
Wednesday,

August 20, 2014

Dinner before the meeting at 5:00 PM at:
Coco's Restaurant, 1011 N. Harbor Blvd.

Meeting time: 7:00 PM
FRC Board Meeting

Open to all members

Marie Callender's Restaurant
126 Yorba Linda Blvd., Placentia
First Wednesday of each month.

Next Board Meeting
September 3, 2014

QSO and dinner; 7:00 PM

Meeting: 7:30 PM

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL / APPLICATION

Fullerton Radio Club
PO Box 545, Fullerton, CA 92836

(Please Print)

Name #1 _____

Call: _____

Class: _____

Name #2 _____

Call: _____

Class: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State/Zip: _____

Phone #1: _____

Email #1: _____

Phone #2: _____

Email #2: _____

ARRL Member Yes No

Special Amateur Radio Interests: _____

Dues are \$20 per member, or \$25 per family. Students (full time) \$10

Bring your application and dues payment to the next meeting or mail to the above address.