

HISTORY OF  
THE BLUE RIDGE AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

A. ORGANIZED

1. Sunday, September 1, 1939
2. Meeting held at the old armory building, Park Avenue
3. Approx. 25 hams and swls joined at this time
4. Organized as the Greenville Amateur Radio Club
5. Officers to be : President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer and Activities Manager
6. No officer could succeed himself-one successive term only
7. Dues were fifty cents per month
8. Membership in the ARRL for the first year was required-Secretary required to verify each members status of ARRL membership at renewal time and renew ARRL membership for the club member if he desired to renew
9. A membership fee of \$5.00 was assessed all new members joining the Club, which was applied to membership for one year in the ARRL. Requirement of ARRL membership was to insure that the Club maintained the necessary percentage to be affiliated with the ARRL
10. If any member failed to pay his or her dues after three months, the Secretary or Treasurer notified the member in writing, and if no response was received by the next regular meeting the member was automatically suspended from the club.
11. Meetings to be held on the first and third Monday night of each calendar month

B. First officers elected

1. President Horace Morris, W4KZ
2. Vice President: Burton S. Anderson, W4EJH
3. Secretary-Treasurer: Hugh T. Anderson, W4FNS
4. Unable to remember who the first Activities Mgr. was

C. Writing the by-laws of the club

1. Newly elected officers met at Horace Morris' home
2. By-Laws written
3. Voting on took place at the next regular meeting

D. Meeting places of the club down through the years

1. Old armory building on Park Ave.

2.

2. **Cleveland Bldg., upstairs: corner Main and McBee Ave.**
3. **Western Union , corner of W. Washington and Laurens Streets**
4. **Old Post Office Bldg., corner Main and Broad Streets (now City Hall Bldg.)**
5. **Lewie Bates, W4IMW, home in shack behind house on Ackley Road**
6. **Sears Shelter, W. Park Ave.**
7. **Christ Church, East North and Church Streets**
8. **EOC Bldg, corner Main and Broad Streets**
9. **Shrine Club, Beverly Rd.**
10. **EOC Bldg, corner Main and Broad Streets**
11. **Possibly other locations, but memory a bit vague due to being out of town for long periods of time**

#### **E. Field Day Operations**

1. **First FD operation held in June of 1940**
2. **FD site was Paris Mtn., present site of the AT&T Microwave Bldg.**
  - a. Score was 5th best in the USA
  - b. Most all equipment was home built
  - c. Generator was wound by George Cunningham, W4HGB
  - d. Generator fell out of truck going up the mountain to the FD site and had to be taken back downtown and repaired.
  - e. Old "A " Model Ford was used to operate the generator.
  - f. 55 gallon drum used for radiator- Was filled with water by "lugging" buckets of water to the drum
3. **Buckhead, Paris Mountain**
  - a. Park gate was locked at 10PM each night.
  - b. One of the club members left to go home after the gate was locked. Instead of going to the Superintendent's house, which was only about a hundred yards from the gate, to get a key, he rammed the gate and broke the gate in order to leave.
  - c. As President of the club, I went to see Ed Miller, the Superintendent and a good friend of mine, to apologize for the incident and to offer restitution for repairing the gate. He was very upset about the incident, but would not accept my offer to pay for damages.
- D. **Needless to say, we did not use the Park for further FD operations**
4. **Firetower site at the present WNTV station.**
5. **Paris Mtn., site on the Greer side of the mountain**

5. Cleveland Park
  - a. Approx 2-3 times
6. Saluda Lake site of Jack Mulkey
  - a. Several years
  - b. Charlie Phillips to get generator from Southern Bell
    1. Brought DC generator instead of AC generator
    2. Took quick action to get AC generator before the contest started
    3. Charlie Phillips quickly went back to Southern Bell and got an AC Generator
    4. We luckily got on the air in time for the start of the contest
7. Field outside the Red Cross Building, 940 Grove Road
  - a. This site used a few times
8. Top of Tubbs Mountain Road near Travelers Rest
  - a. This site used a few times
9. Donaldson Center
  - a. Several locations
  - b. Several years
  - c. Usually had large participation with plenty of good food prepared by Buddy Rodgers

Footnote:

The Following information came from Ray (K4SUG) added to document by Rick (KD4DRA)

In 1958 the Club known as Greenville Radio Club was dissolved and a new Club was born,

#### BLUE RIDGE AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

The First President was, Harry Galloway (K4LBV)

Vice President, Roy Lindsay (K4QDV)

Secretary, Dave Slice, (K4JNT)

Treasurer, George Henderson, (K4QDU)

and the sole member, Ray Allison (K4SUG)

and the Club grew to what it is today.

HAM RADIO TODAY COMPARED TO PRE WW2  
AND  
A HISTORY OF THE BLUE RIDGE AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

I. Introduction:

- A. Being asked to talk about the history of the club
  - 1. decision to also discuss ham radio today compared with pre ww2
  - 2. merge both subjects into the discussion

II Ham radio still in its infancy in the 1930's

- A. Burt and I interest in ham radio began about 1934
- B. Interest began about 7 years after Lindberg's transatlantic flight in 1927
  - 1. Burt and I learned the code together
  - 2. Burt was licensed in 1936
  - 3. I was licensed in 1938

III. License requirements

- A. Written exam consisted of 10 discussion type questions.
  - 1. Included diagrams of various transmitter components
  - 2. Included FCC rules and regulations
  - 3. Usually consisted of a "trouble shooting" question about transmitter malfunctions
  - 4. Consisted of in depth discussion of various transmitter related problems
    - a. Such as "define frequency modulation and explain its undesirable effects"
    - b. Explain the principle of operation of crystals
  - 5. Passing grade was 70- could only miss three questions and still pass
- B. Code exam consisted of 10 wpm of 5 letter code groups with numbers mixed in
  - 1. Consisted of both send and receive tests
  - 2. Test was for three minutes
    - a. Must copy one minute solid to pass
- C. Test was not graded on site and required several weeks to either receive license or be notified of not passing.

IV. Only three classes of licenses were issued at that time

- A. Class A
- B. Class B
- C. Class C

## V Requirements for different class licenses

- A. Examinations had to be taken in an FCC office under the supervision of an FCC engineer
1. exceptions: anyone disabled could take the examination from a class A ham
  2. anyone outside a radius of 150 miles from an examining point could take the exam from a class A ham
  3. the applicant's first license was a class B license if examined by an FCC examiner, or class C if examined by a class A ham.
  4. the examination was the same for class B and class C.
  5. for class A license, one must have held a license a minimum of one year and another written exam and 13 wpm code test administered at an FCC office
  6. license was for three year periods and in order to renew license a requirement of declaring that a minimum of five cw contacts had been made within three months of expiration

## VI. Commercial built equipment almost unheard of pre WW2

### A. Homebrew transmitters and receivers.

1. Problems in keeping the "note" pdc on cw
2. Problems with distortion and splatter on phone
  - a. improper neutralization
  - b. lack of filtering
  - c. lack of voltage regulation
  - d. unstable frequency
3. RST method of describing signal quality
  - a. R from 1 to 5
  - b. S from 1 to 9
  - c. T from 1 to 9

## VII. Full time FCC monitoring ham bands

### A. Citations for improper transmitter operation (called 'pink tickets')

1. called "pink tickets"
2. citation had to be answered within three days of receipt
  - a. explanation of what caused the trouble
  - b. what steps will be taken to prevent recurrence of problem

### B. Visit from the FCC inspector

1. if repeated recurrences of trouble
2. unsatisfactory disposition of discrepancy reports
3. also for radio interference from neighbors (no TV in those days)

## VIII. Bands and operator privileges

- A. 160 meters- all classes and modes
- B. 75 meters- restricted to class A operators only
- C. 80 meters-CW only- all classes
- D. 40 meters- CW only- all classes
- E. 20 meters-phone portion restricted to Class A operators only
- F. 20 meters-CW- all classes
- G. 10 meters-phone and cw- all classes
- H. 5 meters (later freq change to 6 meters) all classes
- I. 2 1/2 meters (later changed to 2 meters)

Note: only 160 and 10 meters were available for HF phone for all classes of licenses

## IX. DX operating

- A. DX operators often operated outside the bands
  - 1. USA hams tried to get to the edge of the band without getting outside the band.
  - 2. DX stations generally began listening from the low end of the bands upward.
  - 3. show "pink ticket" for out of band operation

## X. Self policing of ham bands and operating procedures

- A. Firm action taken by hams when unacceptable conduct was used
- B. If local actions were ignored, the FCC was informed and usually resulted in visits by the FCC inspector to the violator's home.
  - 1. example: licenses being sold by local ham
  - 2. his refusal to stop the practice when confronted
  - 3. FCC visited the ham selling licenses.
    - a. all persons that were given the exam by him were called in for reexamination and those failing the exam had their licenses revoked
    - b. also, all class C hams were called in and given the exam by the FCC inspector. many of them had their licenses revoked mostly because they operated phone all the time and their code speed had dropped below the required speed

## XI. Examinations changed from discussion type to multichoice . Also code requirement was changed to 13 wpm for class B and class C and to 20 wpm for class A.

## XII. All ham operations were shut down on Dec. 8, 1941, the day after Pearl Harbor, for the duration of the war.

- A. All hams had to register any transmitting equipment they owned or possessed with the FCC.
- B. No operating was allowed for nearly five years ( only after Japan surrendered)

### XIII. Authorization of operating again

- A. Only the 10 meter band was authorized at first.
- B. Advance notice was given that operation would be authorized beginning at midnight on a certain date
  - 1. On that date, and several hours prior to the authorized starting time, the band filled up with hams "jumping the gun" and getting an early start
  - 2. Various bootleg calls were used, mostly nicknames such as "Bud", "Red", "XGI" etc
  - 3. After midnight, the correct calls were used
- C. Other bands were opened up later, one at a time

### XIV. After the war, the FCC restructured the licensing

- A. New classifications of licenses were put in effect
  - 1. Advanced class
  - 2. General class
  - 3. Conditional class
  - 4. Sometime later the Novice class and Extra class licenses were added
- B. Operating privileges also changed
  - 1. phone operation authorized in the 40 meter band.
  - 2. lower 25 khz in each band reserved for extra class licensees only
  - 3. lower 25 khz to 50khz in each band reserved for advanced class licensees only
  - 4. general class licensees had access to the remaining frequencies

### XV. Many changes have taken place since those days

- A. Commercial built equipment began coming on the market
- B. Crystal oscillator operation began phasing out
  - 1. VFOs (originally called electron coupled oscillators - {ECOs})
  - 2. electronic keys began replacing hand keys and bugs
  - 3. at first the transmitters and receivers were separate units
  - 4. later transceivers came on the market making the equipment more compact

### XVI. FCC begins deemphasizing ham radio

- A. Beginning VEC program
- B. Monitoring routinely a thing of the past now