

THE SHORT CIRCUIT

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The official publication of the Antelope Valley Amateur Radio Club

October 2004

The President's Corner

Rich Stocking N7OP

This weekend was a hectic and busy one with loads of visitors to the QTH. The third weekend of October is always Jamboree on the Air (JOTA) for Scouts from all over the world. This year was the 47th Annual JOTA and this year I added Radio Merit Badge sessions to the mix of operating activities I host for scouts.

The requirements for the merit badge, (written by Scouting Hams), reflect most of the requirements for the technician license. Next year I may add the option to have a radio class for technician in conjunction with the merit badge sessions. If I plan this I really would need some more volunteers – so stand by for me asking!

I started in ham radio when I was the same age as some of the scouts attending my merit badge sessions. As we went through each merit badge requirement that every scout has to complete I found many examples from my book shelves, my junk boxes, and mostly from my experiences. It is amazing that while the equipment has changed drastically over the decades the lure of buttons and knobs on the radios still have that magnetic attraction to small fingers. I still remember the feel of the mechanical tuning of that first Hammarlund HQ-110 Receiver. Somehow the multi-level menu selections on a modern LCD screen just don't seem the same...however the feel of modern electronics seems to be

very natural and agreeable to today's youth. I think that there will definitely be some potential additions to the hobby as a result of the experiences this weekend.

We also had every scout get on the air and talk to other stations hosting scouts. Conditions on 20, 17 and 15 meters were pretty good and we were able to have extended sessions with stations in Northern Alaska and across most of the Midwest and Northeast USA. DX wasn't too plentiful but we did hear South American Scouts and a few Europeans working the east coast. We completed 8 Radio merit badges this weekend and have some continuing prospects for future sessions. We had groups visiting starting Friday afternoon and ending late on Sunday. Many parents, grandparents, Scout Masters, and other adult scouting leaders brought their scouts and siblings. Plus it was a great excuse to crank up the tower trailers and ensure they were still ready to go in an emergency. All in all, it was a good ham radio weekend.

This next meeting is elections for Officers and Board Members. Please bring your ideas for nominees and of course a sharp pencil for filling out ballots. We will of course avoid hanging or dimpled chads on ballots at all costs.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting,

73,

From The Veep

Charles Turner K6ARU

October 2004 is election time for 2005 AVARC positions. I will not be running for Vice President 2005 and sorry there is no October presentation and I will not be at the October meeting. The group can plan and discuss next year's events or have any comments/suggestions for the club at the October 28th meeting. My presentation for November has just cancelled so I'm still working on it, and anyone who has any suggestions please contact me or any members.

73,

Meeting Notice

Thursday, October 28, is the next meeting of the AVARC at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at Lancaster City Hall, 44933 N. Fern Ave. in Lancaster. Talk-in is available on 146.73 MHz. if you need directions. This month's meeting will feature the election of 2005 officers and board members. A few candidates offered to be on the ballot. Bring your own list of candidates you would like to see for each position, or consider throwing your own hat in the ring. Hope you c a n join us!





—TriviaTronics

By Vern Eubanks KØLVS

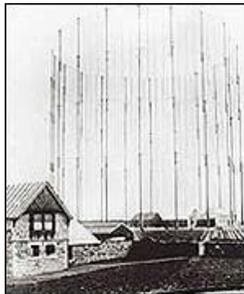
Across the Atlantic by Radio!

In high school, we all learned about Guglielmo Marconi and the first transatlantic radio transmission on 12 Dec 1901. He received the Nobel Prize for physics 1909 for that demonstration. Stamps, coins, and commemorative celebrations have lauded that historical event when a wireless signal (the letter "S") originating in Europe was first received on North American soil. It wasn't his first noteworthy achievement. He demonstrated communications across 14 miles of ocean from the UK to the Isle of Wight in 1897, and spanned the English Channel in 1899.

But what really happened in Newfoundland on that cold December day in 1901?

The stations on both ends of the experiment were essentially "untuned", with the antenna dimensions determining the frequency of operation. His receiver was a simple "coherer", a glass tube filled with a granular conductive substance whose resistance increases when struck by radio waves (today, we know this device to be an extremely insensitive reception device). The transmitter was a high powered spark transmitter. From limited documentation and faded photographs of the antennas constructed, modern investigators have concluded the frequency of

transmission to be approximately 850 kilohertz. Marconi's choice of wireless equipment for the transatlantic demonstration produced only a click in the receiving station's earphone (not a raspy dit or dah as in other transmitter/receivers of the day). Successful reception of the UK transmission would be 3 clicks in the earphone. There were no impartial observers or press at the Newfoundland site. To this day, the only proof of his successful reception is Marconi's terse entry in his laboratory notebook: "Sigs at 12:30, 1:10 and 2:20". The only witness was his assistant George Kemp. Note that no one, not even Marconi, has duplicated the transatlantic experiment with the crude equipment of his day. Engineers today say a transatlantic link with his crude suite of equipment was impossible.



This is the aerial as it was erected for the transatlantic experiment. It was later blown down by a

Did Guglielmo Marconi stoop to a hoax to demonstrate the viability of long range wireless communications? Most experts say no – but he WAS highly motivated to achieve a successful demonstration before his expedition to Newfoundland was completed. Marconi had spent much of his family's fortune in previous research in wireless demonstrations. His massive transmitting station in the UK; and receiving station in Nova Scotia, though primitive by today's standards, were immensely expensive. Marconi's ex-



Guglielmo Marconi, December 1901

Marconi at Signal Hill with instruments used

periment HAD to succeed.

Marconi and Kemp had been straining their ears day after day in an unheated radio shack – on 12 December, they heard something – What was it? The most likely explanation is that they heard common atmospheric static.

In a sense, the transatlantic demonstration of December 1901, which technical minds now know was flawed, was a huge success for radio, and therefore for mankind. It took a gutsy individual to raise the capital and set up a decisive experiment "proving" the viability of long distant telecommunications. No one understood radio propagation well enough to challenge Marconi's claim, so it was accepted at face value. The world now knew that wireless techniques were not just a desktop amusement in Hertz's laboratory, but had potential for worldwide communication to places unreachable by cable. The race was on to invent sensitive receivers, improved signal generation, and efficient antennas and procedures. Marconi's "failed experiment" had changed the world forever.

October Trivia Question: You know the operators on the receiving end were Guglielmo Marconi and George Kemp, but who was the operator of the telegraph key on the transmitting end?

Answer: Professor John Ambrose

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From the Secretary's Desk

AVARC MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Minutes of the AVARC General Membership Meeting

Date: September 23, 2004

Location: EOC, City Hall, 44933 N. Fern Ave., Lancaster, CA 93534

The Vice President called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with 51 members present, constituting a quorum of at least 10% of the total eligible voting membership. No Treasurer's Report was presented. It was moved and seconded that the Secretary's Minutes of the last General Membership meeting and the last Board of Director's meeting be accepted as printed in the last issue of the Short Circuit (newsletter). Motion carried.

Announcements:

1. Dick Norton, N6AA, candidate for ARRL Southwestern Division Director introduced himself and discussed his experience and qualifications for the position.
2. In accordance with Club By-Laws, Article V, Section 2, nominations for Officers and Board Members were sought from the membership present. Dan Schrader, N6SLH, was nominated for the position of Board Member. No other nominations were made. Nominations for all Club offices can be made at the October general membership meeting and election of all officers for 2005 will follow at that meeting.
3. Adrienne, WA6YEO, announced the next VE test session will be held on October 2, Saturday, at 1 p.m. at the Kumon Center in Lancaster. It is a GLAARG session. VEs are needed.
4. Tully, WB6CYP, said the AO-51 ECHO satellite is active. See him for more information.
5. Pat, N6RMJ, said the Western States Weak Signal Society (WSWSS) Conference will be on October 9 at M² in Fresno. Pat has tickets and Keith, K6GXO, can take passengers to the event.

Program: The program was our annual

Anchors Away swap meet.

The next General Membership meeting (and election of Club officers for 2005) will be held on October 28, 2004 at this same location and time. The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on October 14, 2004 at 7:30 p.m. at Keith's, K6GXO, QTH in Palmdale, CA. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.

**Submitted by
Claude A. Brown, K7TEN
Secretary, AVARC, 2004**

AVARC Board Meeting

Minutes of the AVARC Board of Directors Meeting

Date: October 14, 2004

Location: Keith's, K6GXO, QTH, Palmdale, CA

Members Present: Rich Stocking, N7OP, President: Chuck Turner, K6ARU, Vice President: Claude Brown, K7TEN, Secretary: Gary Mork, WA6WFC, Master at Arms: Harold Bragg, K6HAB, Board Member: Keith Hoyt, K6GXO, Trustee

Members Absent: Dave Alpert, KX6Z, Treasurer: Vern Eubanks, K0LVS, Past President: Elizabeth Alpert, KG6JDH, Board Member

Others Present: Bruce N6SFV, Membership Chairman: Dolores, KG6VPS: Justin, KD5PEV

The President opened the meeting at 7:40 p.m. with at least five Board Members being present to constitute a quorum.

1. Harold, K6HAB, is looking for more old and historical Club records. The Board asked that Harold keep the Club records we have accumulated to date in the file cabinet donated by Keith, K6GXO. Special documents of significant interest and historical value will be preserved in document protectors or by lamination.

2. Claude, K7TEN, moved to make the position of Club Historian a Board appointed position with the Historian serv-

ing at the will of the Board for an indefinite term. Motion carried. He also moved that the Board appoint Harold, K6HAB, as Club Historian. Motion carried.

3. The question of raising the annual dues was discussed at length but the decision was tabled until the next Board meeting in order for the Board to have an opportunity to examine the financial status of the Club and the need for a dues increase in more detail.

4. The Board attempted to contact Adrienne, WA6YEO, regarding reimbursement of her expenses for printing and mailing the newsletter. Rich, N7OP, will determine how much is owed to her and mail her a check.

5. The radios located in the Lancaster EOC room are in need of serious attention before they could be useful in an emergency. However, they belong to the City and we cannot access them without the permission of the City. Therefore, no action by the Club will be taken at this time.

6. The Board will present the following names as its nominees for Club officer positions for 2005 to the next general membership meeting: President: Rich, N7OP; Master At Arms: Gary, WA6WFC; Board Member: Harold, K6HAB.

7. Keith, K6GXO, said Dennis Kidder, WA6NIA, of Long Beach, CA may be a speaker at a future meeting. His topic will be EME. Keith also reminded all that he has the donated Cushcraft R-8, HF, vertical antenna, new in box, for sale by bids with all proceeds going to the Club. Anyone interested should make a bid.

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on November 4, 2004 at Rich's, N7OP, QTH in Lancaster. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

**Submitted by
Claude A. Brown, K7TEN
Secretary, AVARC, 2004**





Antelope Valley Amateur Radio Club 2004 Officers



President	Rich Stocking	N7OP	949-1039
Vice President	Chuck Turner	K6ARU	945-9097
Secretary	Claude Brown	K7TEN	948-2672
Treasurer	Dave Alpert	KX6Z	267-0338
Master-At-Arms	Gary Mork	WA6WFC	948-8317
Board Member	Elizabeth Alpert	KG6JDH	267-0338
Board Member	Harold Bragg	K6HAB	256-7465
Board Member	Bruce Mowers	N6SFV	942-5986
Trustee	Keith Hoyt	K6GXO	533-4025
Ex Officio	Vern Eubanks	KØLVS	822-8772

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