



Mid-Atlantic Amateur Radio Club

www.marc-radio.org

P.O. BOX 557
EAGLEVILLE, PA
19408

REMARCS

Next Meeting: November 24, 2015 at 7:30 PM

NOV/DEC 2015

Letter from the MARC President

It's difficult to believe that another year is coming to a close. This is our final edition of REMARCS for 2015 and I want to thank you all for being members of this vibrant club and thanks to everyone for making this club the success that it is.

We mentioned in a previous issue of REMARCS and as we have discussed at the last several club meetings, the club bylaws were modified earlier this year so that all club functions are now on a calendar year. This will greatly simplify record keeping for all of us. This means that the election of officers will now take place in November with officers taking on their responsibilities January 1. This change also affects our dues cycle. Dues are now payable on January 1 instead of March 1.

At the October Board meeting we discussed the desirability of soliciting information from our members so that we might better serve you. We would like to know more about your ham radio interests and what programs you would like to see at future club meetings. In addition, since we are a volunteer organization, we would like to know how you can bring additional value to MARC – for example, do you have a particular skill or experience that you would like to share with your fellow members, perhaps by making a presentation at a future club meeting. In order to accomplish this, we are in the process of modifying the membership application form that we ask new members to complete and that we would also like existing members to fill out when they renew their membership. This information will not be shared with anyone outside of MARC.

We have a new Net Control Manager – Todd Tew, K1TEW. Todd will be working with Miguel Ramirez, KC2HMG, to provide coverage on our Wednesday night nets. Miguel also plans to start up a 'drive home' net that should be operational this fall. Thanks to Miguel and Todd for keeping the nets alive!

Our final club meeting for 2015 is November 24th. Please remember that when we changed our meeting location to the Newtown Public Library, we also needed to change the date to the 4th Tuesday of the Month. Our Holiday Party is December 12 at Uno Pizzeria And Grill Chicago Uno in Newtown Square, the same location where we have been for the past three years. More information about the event is on page 3 of this newsletter. You can also find information about club meetings and the Holiday Party on the club web site: www.marc-radio.org

I hope to see you all at one of our upcoming meetings, public service events or other club activities. Thanks for your continued support of MARC. For those of you who I won't get a chance to see, I hope the rest of 2015 is safe, happy and filled with lots of ham radio activities!

73/ Steve Werner - KD3WK
MARC President



MARC member Stephen Dubin, W3UEC, has an article he wrote, Taming The MFJ-226 Data File, featured on e-ham.net. Nice job Stephen! You can see the article here:

<http://www.eham.net/articles/34974>

Are you afraid of heights? If so, you might not want to watch this climb to the top of a 1768 foot high tower!

<https://youtu.be/QU7WyuC8Hy8>

The ARRL's National Parks On The Air event begins on January 1st and will run all year long. If you would be interested in activating Valley Forge National Park with a small group of MARC members, send an e-mail to Mike, KF3CD at kf3cd@arrl.net. Info about this event can be found at:

<http://www.arrl.org/news/arrl-national-parks-on-the-air-event-to-mark-national-park-service-centennial>

MARC's Tuna Tin Build-A-Thon will be rescheduled for a future date. If you bought a kit, watch for details by e-mail or in the next issue of REMARCS.

Do we have any club members that have experience with trunk tracking scanners or the Uniden line of "Home Patrol" scanners? If so, send an e-mail to Floyd, KA3OXA at floydsradio@aol.com.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE OF REMARCS:

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FROM THE
EDITOR'S DESK

While I do not consider myself a "QRPer," I have always been fascinated by how, under the right conditions, a tiny bit of RF power can travel a long, long way.

QRP operation refers to transmitting at reduced power while attempting to maximize one's effective range. The QRP Q signal was created to mean "Shall I reduce power?" but has since been adopted by the enthusiasts of low-power operation as their banner. QRP has come to mean 5 W or less output for CW, or 10 W PEP output or less for SSB (milliwattage is operating at less than 1 W output). Most amateur organizations and contests embrace these as the official QRP limits.

From my bicycle mobile station, I have worked 166 DXCC entities, all states (WAS) and all continents (WAC) and nearly all of my contacts are made using just 35 watts with simple hamstick antennas. I have also worked dozens of countries while operating pedestrian mobile with just 10 watts, using an MFJ Travel Radio and hamstick antennas. While these contacts may not be considered real "QRP," it demonstrates how far a little bit of RF power can travel.

I do own and occasionally use 2 "real" QRP radios, the Mizuho MX Series of HF hand-held radios, one for 15 meters and one for 10 meters. They are both genuine QRP radios, lighting up the ionosphere with a whopping 2 watts of RF energy on SSB or CW. I find it amazing that I have worked 26 countries on SSB with my 15 meter HT. Believe me, it takes a lot of patience but it's really exciting to work real DX with 2 watts from a handheld radio!

FCC Part 97 rules state that one must use "the minimum power necessary to carry out the desired communications" and most hams routinely use more power than really needed. Try reducing your maximum output in half sometime and then cut it in half again. Continue cutting power until you're down to 5 or 10 watts. I'm sure you'll be surprised how well you can communicate with reduced power. In many cases, the operator on the other end can't tell the difference.

If you want to really hone your operating skills, QRP is for you. With only a few watts of signal to work with, it becomes mandatory to perfect your operating technique, especially if you are going to work through that DX pileup.

If you operate QRP and would like to brag about your station and accomplishments, drop me a note to be featured in a future issue of REMARCS. Until next time, I ask: How low can you go?

73 de Mike, KF3CD



MARC Info

wb3joe@marc-radio.org
<http://www.marc-radio.org>

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS:

4th Tuesdays of the month at 7:30 PM
(Doors open at 7:00 PM) at The Newtown Public Library,
201 Bishop Hollow Rd. in Newtown Square.

BOARD MEETINGS:

2nd Tuesdays of even months, 7:00 PM
Paoli Hospital, Willistown Meeting Room, Paoli, PA.
Members may attend as observers.

WB3JOE REPEATERS:

(CTCSS or PL = 131.8 hz)
145.130 - / 147.060 + / 147.360 + / 224.420 - / 224.5 -
/445.675 - /444.050 -
The 145.13 and 147.06 2-meter repeaters are linked. The
147.36 MHz, the 224.50 MHz and the 444.050 MHz
repeaters are linked.

WEBMASTER:

Dennis Silage K3DS
k3ds@marc-radio.org
610-353-4829

2-METER NETS:

Club Net, Wednesdays, 8:30 PM

These nets occur on linked 145.13 - / 147.06 + Repeaters

NET MANAGER: Open

NET CONTROL OPS:

Miguel Ramirez, KC2HMG and Todd Tew, K1TEW

DUES:

\$15 Full (licensed Amateurs)
\$5 Associate (unlicensed persons)
Family rate \$5/ham - after first member pays full
dues

NEWSLETTER:

The REMARCS editor is Mike, KF3CD. Do you have
something to contribute to REMARCS? Please let Mike
know by sending an e-mail to kf3cd@arrl.net.



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7 @ 9 AM
MARC VE Tests
 Lower Providence Twp. Building in Eagleville

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14 @ 9 AM
Monthly MARC Breakfast Meeting
 Country Squire Diner in Broomall

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7 @ 9 AM
Vietnam Veterans Memorial 5K Run/1 Mile Health Walk at
The Norristown Farm Park. Contact Bob Palin, N3JIZ at
610-420-1535 if you can help to provide communication
services during this event.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24
Club Meeting @ 7:30 PM (Doors open at 7)
 Ron Bellamy, KC3ACL- Radiation
 Newtown Public Library in Newtown Square

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12 @ 12 noon
MARC Holiday Gathering
 Uno Pizzeria and Grill
 3910 West Chester Pike (Rt. 3)
 Newtown Square



MARC will hold its annual Holiday Party at noon on Saturday December 12th at Uno Pizzeria and Grill, 3910 West Chester Pike (PA 3 west of PA 252), in Newtown Square.

The Club subsidizes this event and the cost to members is \$10. For non-members the cost is \$20. Uno Pizzeria and Grill will provide us with a separate dining room with a fireplace and a flat screen TV for a college football game. Club members will be treated to a great luncheon with multiple entrees. A great time will be had by all!

If you would like to attend (YL's and XYL's are welcome), please e-mail Dennis Silage, K3DS at: k3ds@marc-radio.org with a head count. You can pay on Dec. 12th.

**MARC Board of Directors
 2014-2015**

PRESIDENT
 Steven Werner KD3WK
kd3wk@marc-radio.org 610-574-6836

VICE PRESIDENT
 Jeremy Carlo N2ZLQ
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 Richard Russo KB3VZL
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 To 9/30/2016 -
 Doug Wilkens NE3U
ne3u@marc-radio.org 610-692-6819

To 9/30/2015 -
 Jim Smith K3RTU
k3rtu@marc-radio.org 610-494-5897

CALLSIGN TRUSTEES
 - WB3JOE Dennis Silage K3DS
k3ds@marc-radio.org 610-353-4829

- W3NWA Dieter Hauer K3DK
k3dk@marc-radio.org 610-489-1920



MARC BOARD MEETING MINUTES- October 13, 2015

Officers Present: Jim K3RTU, Jim W3DCL, Rich KB3VZL, Jeremy N2ZLQ, Lou WX3I, Steve KD3WK, Doug NE3U

Officers Excused: Dieter K3DK, Dennis K3DS, Sal NC3U, Bob N3JIZ, Chris N3BGJ

Meeting Started at 7:00 PM

- 1) Approval of minutes of August 11, 2015 Board Meeting
- 2) Treasurer's Report
 - a. Current account balance = \$12, 330.18
 - b. Paid membership status = 91
 - c. Annual Treasurer's Review and Report –to be completed by 10/31/2105
 - d. Establishing financial controls for cash and ticket sales at Hamfest – better cash controls were established at the 2015 Hamfest and there will be an emphasis on better ticket controls in 2016
- 3) Upcoming General Meeting Programs
 - a. Presentations scheduled through remainder of year
 - b. Schedule for 2016 – Rich (KB3VZL) has confirmed several presentations for 2016
 - i. George Riveria (Oscilloscopes – to be rescheduled)
 - ii. Brian Kelly – Satellites, others?
- 4) Old Business
 - a. Net Control Manager Position
 - i. Miguel will start 'drive time' net in the Fall
 - ii. Todd Tew (K1TEW) – is a new net control operator
 - b. MARC Bylaws
 - i. Board approved revised bylaws, distributed to membership
 - c. Revisions to Annual Treasurer's Review and Report – the Board is satisfied that the current report format is consistent with our needs
- 5) New Business
 - a. New meeting location – the Newtown Library is confirmed for the remainder of 2015 and is available to MARC for 2016. The library may be undergoing certain renovations in 2016, in which case we will have the availability of the Edgemont Fire Company facility
 - b. Annual Election
 - i. Jeremy (N2ZLQ) will chair the Nominating Committee and will be assisted by Doug Wilkens (NE3U) & Brian Kelly (AA3BK). The election will take place during the November club meeting.
 - c. Hamfest
 1. Date for 2016 – options include July 9, 10, 16 and 17. Options will be discussed at the October club meeting
 - d. Special Service Club status renewed until 9/2017 – ARRL certificate has been received
 - e. Membership Information – the Board is reviewing options for obtaining additional information about club members in order to better assess how members can be better served and to determine which members may be able to assist with club operations. Such information would not be shared beyond our membership.
- 6) 2015 Board Meeting Schedule
 - a. December – prior to Holiday Party

Why I Wanted To Be An Amateur Radio Operator by Floyd Schoenberg, KA3OXA

When I was a young boy, my dad opened a store in Philadelphia in 1930 on Broad Street where Hahnemann Hospital now stands. The business installed radios in cars because the manufacturers did not include radios and heaters, they were an optional item. That was my early introduction to radios.

My dad sold the business and opened another radio store in 1937 at 8 North 52nd St. in Philadelphia where we sold small appliances, toasters, irons, and of course radios, and wind up and electric record players. We also serviced the above items and sold crystal radio sets. They were a kit that you put together and you had to find the right spot on the crystal to get a signal with an antenna to receive the signal. As you can imagine I put these kits together and showed them off to my friends.

In 1939 my parents took me to see the World Fair in New York. I saw the introduction to black-and-white TV's on a small screen. My dad became one of the first dealers to sell TV's in 1947 in the Philadelphia area and we were the first ones on the block to have a TV in our home and watch Milton Berle on Tuesday nights. It was the only night where there was a live broadcast. Our house was full of neighbors. The TV was in the living room. We were ready for the show to come on while my brother was up on the roof adjusting the TV antenna to get the best signal.

My wife's cousin was an amateur radio operator. In 1952 he picked us up in his car and drove us to George's Hill in Fairmount Park where he installed a 6 foot tall antenna on the back bumper, then connected a cable to a large transceiver that took up the whole front passenger seat of the car. He was able to talk with people around the world. It amazed me and I was overwhelmed that he could communicate with people outside of the United States.

When CB radio was released in 1980, I went to Radio Shack and bought my first CB radio. I found a whole group of new friends at that time. I was a salesman covering New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. For me CB radio was just the greatest tool to stay in touch with my friends.

In January 1983 I was licensed for GMRS, "General Mobile Radio Service". I brought two radios, one radio for my car and one for my wife. This was quite different from CB radio communication. It was clear and far-reaching. I made new friends who also had GMRS licenses, all in the Philadelphia and surrounding areas, to give you an idea how great it worked.

My wife was in an auto accident when her car was hit by a UPS truck on the driver's side. She was able to pick up the mic and call me on the radio. The conversation was heard by a friend of mine who had a radio in his tow truck. He immediately went to the scene. Another time I was coming home from the New York area on the New Jersey Turnpike in a bad snowstorm and a tractor-trailer jackknifed in front of me. I was able to stop in time, pick up the mic, and radio for assistance. I was able to contact Shadow Traffic. They radioed to an airplane in the area to my location. The pilot radioed to me to turn my flashers on to identify my car and thanked me by tipping his wings.

I'm sure we all have good stories to tell about radio incidents. One of my best experiences was working with the Core States bike race that went into Manayunk and back to Philadelphia. My job was to be inside one of the cars following the bicycle riders to see if anyone got hurt or their bike broke down and they needed assistance. I would radio the information to the officials to send for help.

Around January 1987, the federal government changed the regulations for GMRS to business use only. We no longer could use the GMRS frequencies so the group of us went into amateur radio. I attended Carter and Kay Craigie's classes at Cabrini College. I remember the first time Carter wanted to find out how we were doing with learning Morse code and gave the class a test. I studied a little bit but was not ready for the test. The teacher asked if anybody got it right and a young boy sitting behind me, maybe 15 years old got it right.

The teacher asked "How did you know that?" and he said "My dad is an amateur radio operator and he taught me how to read the code". I wanted so bad to get my license. With the help of my wife, I was able to learn Morse code and take the required test. I was quite relieved when it was over and I passed.

Over the years, I did a lot of volunteer work with the amateur community. There was a major fire in Philadelphia and I was sent to the Red Cross building at 23rd and Chestnut street to be the amateur radio operator covering the fire. ABC Channel 6 in Philadelphia asked for volunteers to help with the Thanksgiving Day parade. I did that for two years in a row getting up at 4 o'clock in the morning with a friend who was also an amateur radio operator through severe kinds of weather. One time I was sent to Willow Grove airport where there was a simulated drill of an airplane crash in Philadelphia. They triaged the passengers from Philadelphia to Willow Grove via helicopter. I was right on the tarmac as the helicopters arrived. My job was to log them in. I was amazed how real they looked with fake blood and lots of bandages. The injured people were tagged with signs that labeled their injuries including those identified as "DOA".

Other times our amateur radio club worked with the Boy Scouts and the Civil Air Patrol. I participated in many 5K runs in all parts of the city and also helped out with the Jerry Lewis Telethon. Over the years, I worked with handicapped children who participated in the Special Olympics where I provided the amateur radio communication. It's been over 25 years that I've been providing radio communication with the Memorial Day Parade in Wayne, PA. and The Penn Wynne 5K Run.

I enjoyed riding my bike on the boardwalk in Atlantic City with the radio attached to my handle bars with the mag mount antenna on the rear rack of my bike. I enjoyed talking with people down at the shore and transmitting to other amateur operators. One memorable experience was when the police put out an alert that a young child about 7 years old was missing on the boardwalk on a crowded night. He got separated from his parents. I looked down and saw the little boy, based upon the description that was transmitted by an amateur radio operator. I was able to communicate with the child and walked him over to a nearby police officer.

Through all of the years with my radio experiences, I have found this to be very rewarding and fulfilling. I met wonderful people and made great friends. As I look back and read all of this I am grateful that I was able to accomplish the many things on my bucket list as an amateur radio operator.





“Clarity on Parity” The Video

See the video here: <https://youtu.be/AMY-5U1cJ6E>

From the ARRL Letter 10/8/2015

In August, the ARRL acted to address objections and concerns being raised by representatives of community and neighborhood associations regarding the Amateur Radio Parity Act of

2015 — H.R. 1301 and S. 1685. “Clarity on Amateur Radio Parity” made it clear that the bill would not create new federal policy with respect to outdoor amateur antennas, nor would it require homeowners associations to approve huge radio towers. Now, a new video, “The Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2015 — Separating Fact from Fiction” doubles down on the arguments contained in the League’s August statement.

ARRL President Kay Craigie, N3KN, said the video will be made available on Capitol Hill to make sure that Members of Congress have correct information, instead of misrepresentations. “This short video is a companion piece for the “Clarity on Parity” statement on the ARRL website,” President Craigie said. “The video not only explains what H.R. 1301 and S. 1685 are all about but knocks down specific misinformation that opponents have been circulating on Capitol Hill.” The nearly 6 minute video begins by explaining Amateur Radio — and especially its public service role — in layperson’s terms. It includes video clips of FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate, KK4INZ, who addressed the value of Amateur Radio in emergencies when he spoke at the ARRL Centennial National Convention in 2014, and of Sen Roger Wicker of Mississippi, the sponsor of S. 1685, the Senate bill.

As the presentation outlines, radio amateurs living in deed-restricted neighborhoods may face “cookie cutter prohibitions” on outdoor antennas. It notes, however, that the FCC recognizes a strong federal interest in effective Amateur Radio communication from residences and, in 1985, adopted the PRB-1 limited preemption of state and local regulation of Amateur Radio antennas. As the statement, and now the video, point out, the Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2015 would extend that limited preemption to private land-use restrictions. The legislation “takes the time-tested 30 year old reasonable accommodation standard [in PRB-1] and applies it to deed-restricted communities,” the video states. “Unfortunately, there is a smear campaign against this legislation, and we need to respond to these blatant lies.” The video stresses that neighborhood homeowners associations (HOAs) would have the flexibility to reasonably accommodate amateur antennas in a manner that best suits the particular community, although HOAs could not just say “no.” The legislation also does not take away any jurisdiction from community associations, nor does it negate any private contracts, the video asserts.

“HOAs, not the hams, will decide on height and placement of radio antennas,” it says. “Amateur Radio operators in these communities just want a seat at the table to negotiate a reasonable accommodation from HOAs, but HOAs don’t want there to even be a table.” As the video concludes, “Opposing reasonable accommodation is just unreasonable.” President Craigie suggested that League members could use the video at club meetings to help their fellow hams understand the legislation and show why it’s so important to urge members of the US House and Senate to support the bills, which have more than 100 supporters in both chambers. “If your club has an e-mail reflector, Twitter feed, Facebook page, or newsletter, you could add a link to the video to make it easy for people to find it online,” she said.

President Craigie said her Congressman in Southwest Virginia is a co-sponsor of H.R. 1301. “I went to his official website and sent an e-mail thanking him and politely refreshing his memory about the appreciation we hams in the district have for his support,” she said. “I’d like everyone whose representative is already a cosponsor to call a local office or put a short e-mail on the official website saying, ‘Thank you!’ This is a great way to keep the legislation in the Representative’s mind and to let him or her know that the decision to co-sponsor is still very much on our minds. We should never take their support for granted. Speak out for Amateur Radio!”

Visit the ARRL website’s Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2015 page at <http://www.arrl.org/amateur-radio-parity-act> for more information about this legislation and how you can get involved.

Amateur Adventures by Kevin Perrot, K3NTD

In 1987 while Czechoslovakia was occupied by the Russians, and their hams sported a 'OK' call sign, I met Julo Hubert from Zvolen, Czechoslovakia, on four occasions, with his call sign: OK4YCQ/MM, on various bands in CW. It was a cold blustery January day here, but it was nice to hear that my /MM friend Julo was in his shorts. It turned out that he had recently set sail from a port in the Ivory Coast (TU2), near the equator, bound for Philadelphia with 3,000 metric tons of cocoa bean, destined for Hershey. He was interested in the weather in Philadelphia, which I happily provided. The weather would likely be a lot different by the time he arrived.

As I later found out, after his arrival in Philadelphia, that after each WX report he would announce it over the ship's PA system to the crew of 22. He would tell them that his radio friend near Philadelphia provided the WX report. He said he was in the Czechoslovakian merchant marine, but one would think how could a land-locked country have a merchant marine? They use Gdansk in Poland as their home port. Each of their ships in their fleet is named after one the 20 rivers of Czechoslovakia. His ship was the "Orava".

The Orava has a LOA (length over all) of 145.55 meters (451') a beam of 21.65 meters (67'); draft of between 8.319 and 9.116 meters (25.8 to 28.26'). At the time the Delaware had at least a 35' channel depth, deeper now. Seven engines produce 200 BHP (5,296 KW). It was owned by the Ocean Shipping International Jt Stk Co., licensed for general cargo, with a displacement of: 6,890 tons. The living quarters, offices, galley, recreation areas are in the stern.

We had four QSOs in February 1987: On the 4th at QTH 08 N- 16 W; west of Sierra Leone, AF, on 40 meters; the 5th at QTH 11 N- 21 W; NE Atlantic W of Africa; on 20 meters; the 8th at QTH 18 N- 39 W; NE Atlantic; on 15 meters; and the 12th at QTH 27 N- 50 W; North Atlantic; on 40 meters.

He was hugging the coast of Africa and then passed just south of the Cape Verde Islands (D44), heading west until he was about half way across the Atlantic and then turned north. We had a nice chat and signed off each time with the 73, -never to meet again-. There were no schedules. We did all this without the help of QRZ DX. Each QSO was a random find, as I heard his /MM signal on various bands, we would continue where we left off previously. He remembered my name and I, his. Each time he wanted to first know the WX.

Once as we chatted, he repeatedly said he 'was climbing'. That seemed strange, until I realized he was in a storm and his vessel was riding the waves. Being below in a windowless radio room during a storm, it seemed like he was being tossed around like in a clothes washer. That year there were reports of many bad storms in the North Atlantic, which resulted in freighters 'turning turtle'.

I looked into my copy of K3CHP's DX QSL GUIDE, which offers the same 12 sentences in 54 different languages, and sent one of the Czech ones to him. Julo repeatedly responded "I am shocked, I am shocked!" I thought I had said something about his mother and an international altercation was about to unfold. What Julo was shocked about was "that anybody in America knew 'czesky!'"

I have found that a few well chosen (foreign) correct words either written or spoken convey a genuine feeling of hospitality & good will. The recipient always assumes you know more than you do, in their language, which may lead to interesting exchanges. Since English is so pervasive worldwide and we (Americans) don't try to speak in their tongue, I have tried to reverse this trend and have had nothing but favorable responses.

At the end of each QSO, we would wish each other the best, never to meet again, but we did find each other on different bands. On the third QSO, we thought that it might be possible to meet, when he arrived in Philadelphia, and made plans accordingly. I asked him where his vessel would be berthed. He did not know, but gave me the name of his 'port agent'.

I called the port agent and inquired as to where the Orava would be docked. He said "who wants to know?" I tried to think of a 'suitable pretext' that I could use and finally went with the truth. I said I was an amateur radio operator, who has been speaking with their radio operator since he left Africa. He said that I probably knew more about their vessel than they did and told me everything I wanted to know.

We had one more unplanned contact on 40 meters and arranged a meeting. He would not be allowed to use his radio, when close to port. I took a long lunch break from work & went to the Food Center docks near the Walt Whitman bridge. Inhospitable fences with razor ribbon, gates and guards greeted me. Trucks were entering and exiting, their drivers had handfuls of papers for the inspectors, I was walking and I had nothing. It turned out I needed nothing. Another surprise was that the foreign crews did not need any visas, they could come and go as they pleased. The merchant marine society provides a free bus connecting the ports with downtown Philadelphia.

The U.S. Coast Guard, together with a 'Pilot' boards all ships entering our country and polls all the sailors. They don't need visas to enter the U.S., but they must be back aboard, before their vessel departs. I asked the guard where the Orava was berthed. He pointed to the ship's funnel over his guard house roof, the one with the 'hammer and sickle' logo of Russia. I walked over to their gangplank and stood with trepidation about venturing further because of the hype about US & Soviet goings-on at the time.

There was a man sitting in the bow in a plaid shirt. What do I say? All our QSOs have been in CW. So I blurted out: dah dit dit...dit...and started my call. The man said nothing, got up and went inside the Orava. Moments later two men approached me and said "I am not Julo but we know who you are!" The captain invited me aboard. Just inside the door, we removed our shoes. The vessel was spotless, signage was in English and Russian. He gave me a tour of the ship, ending in his cabin, where he offered me libation. "Would you like some brandy?" he asked. I replied "No, thank you." "How about whiskey?" "No thank you" I replied again. Then he offered gin, then Vodka, then beer, all with the same responses. Then the captain raised his voice and said "it is Czech beer!" Still my answer was the same. He said that he was told all Americans drink and I told him "not all Americans!"

Travel and currency restrictions were harsh in Czechoslovakia, especially under the Russians. There were very few opportunities to leave the country and see the world. Hence the merchant marine duty was a very sought after career. Once you get accepted to go on a freighter, you can stay on ship after ship as long as you want, but when you want a vacation, you then go to the bottom of the long list and may never get back on a ship.

I asked the captain, Jindrich Vodicka, how he was chosen for duty. He told me of the years of study in nautical courses, and in passing the tests. I said I knew he was qualified, as are so many others, so how did he get chosen? He repeated the course work again. I could have just let it drop there, but I pressed on and said "Yes, I know you are qualified from all your study, but how did YOU get accepted?" The captain replied: "Oh, you need pull!" All of the officers and the crew are married and it is no secret that if they don't return their spouses and children may suffer for it.

Julo was the only crew member who did not have a job when they make a port so he was allowed to leave the ship. He went on a shopping spree for radio equipment. We planned to meet at a center city bank but he was delayed with the 'free bus service' and we did not actually meet in person but we did manage to speak by phone several times.

He sent me a letter, dated February 27, 1987, enclosing the four QSL cards, while expressing his dismay over not being able to meet me in person. He gave up on the bus and walked to center city, arriving too late for our rendezvous. The next day the Orava left for Tampa, FL and we had another unscheduled QSO as he rounded south Florida. A few months later, we had yet another unscheduled QSO in the North Atlantic, as he was headed home.

Recently, I was speaking with a Czech station on SSB and he was able to inform me that Julo now has a new call sign: OM7AA. We will meet again, I am sure.

Fair winds and 73 de Kevin, K3NTD



C.Q.D. THIS IS TITANIC! IN HER OWN WORDS: BBC RADIO DOCUMENTARY 2012

Anyone hearing the morse code messages across the Atlantic would have heard this on the night the Titanic disaster happened. It brings to life the messages as they actually happened. Using the latest technology, all of the morse code messages received and sent by Titanic's wireless officers, Harold Bride and Jack Phillips, have been digitally synthesized in to electronic VOICE translations, before and after the iceberg struck the Titanic. It's quite interesting to hear.

CQD This Is Titanic! Documentary: <http://youtu.be/DqstKa3qcTw>

THE LAST SIGNALS

The Last Signals is the story of the sinking of the RMS Titanic from the point of view of its Marconi Telegraph Operators. Harold Bride, the Junior Operator, is the focus of the film. John Phillips is the Chief Operator.

This film was put together attempting to be the most historically accurate representation of the sinking of the Titanic. The sets were painstakingly made to represent the real Titanic's Marconi room using several sources- ship blueprints, photographic evidence, and first hand accounts. The story was pieced together and recreated to be exactly as the real story was- and in many places the scene unfolds pretty much word for word as it did on the real Titanic.

Over two years in the making, this film is only the shortened version of the feature film (as of now still in post-production). The feature film depicts more scenes aboard the Titanic- specifically Father Frank Browne's photography (the only known photo of the room), the ice warning (which were almost entirely cut from this version), and more information about their personal backgrounds. In addition to showing more of the Titanic story, it also depicts more aboard the Carpathia, and large segments of the story take place in New York City during the weeks of the US Senatorial Investigations, where not only do we see the world's reaction to the sinking, but we also see Harold Bride's recovery from the disaster.

The Last Signals Film: <https://youtu.be/7-AWbrdNo58>



John George "Jack" Phillips (11 April 1887 – 15 April 1912) was the senior wireless officer aboard the RMS Titanic. As the Titanic was sinking, Phillips worked tirelessly to send wireless messages to other ships to enlist their assistance with the rescue of the Titanic's passengers and crew. Although managing to find an overturned lifeboat to cling to, he perished in the icy Atlantic.

Harold Sydney Bride (11 January 1890 – 29 April 1956) was the junior wireless officer on the RMS Titanic during its ill-fated maiden voyage. After the Titanic struck an iceberg at 11:40 pm on April 14, 1912, Bride and his senior colleague Jack Phillips were responsible for relaying SOS messages to ships in the vicinity, which led to the survivors being picked up by the RMS Carpathia. The men remained at their posts until the ship's power was almost completely out. Bride was washed off the ship as the boat deck flooded, but managed to scramble onto the upturned lifeboat Collapsible 'B', and was later rescued by the Carpathia the following morning. Despite being injured, he helped the Carpathia's wireless operator transmit survivor lists and personal messages from the ship.