

## **Report of the Historical Committee to the July 2004 meeting of the ARRL Board**

The big job of cataloguing our historical archives continues with Perry Williams, W1UED, on a part-time basis, along with some regular volunteer help from Charles Griffin, W1GYR.

The donation of Art Gentry archives from Bill Ahrens, N6NMC, last year blossomed into a very nice March 2004 QST article. "Once Upon a California Hilltop," was written by Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, and is about Art Gentry, W6MEP, and his repeaters K6MYK, WR6ABN, and W6MEP - the very first repeaters in service.

A number of other very interesting and useful donations were received. One is many years of summary translations of Russian Amateur Radio magazines from the 1970s and 80s from Dex Anderson, W4KM. Another consists of three books from Steve Sanderson, W7FXH, that would have been used by hams in the 1920s - titled The Wireless Experimenters Manual, Vacuum tubes in Wireless Communication, and Practical Wireless Telegraphy. They are in mint condition and all by Elmer E. Bugher, and published around 1920 by the Wireless Press.

Ken Check, W6SKI, donated his entire Heathkit station to the ARRL. All the equipment is in working order and in restored condition, built by him in the early 70s (SB102 transceiver, SB230 amplifier(rare), SB-630 station console, SB-640 remote VFO, SB-600 speaker and the station mike).

Once in a while Perry Williams passes along some comments about items he has come across while doing the inventory work, here's a timely example from a couple of months ago:

Today's gem in the archives is a nontaxable "payday" in satisfaction for yours truly -- in a very messy, definitely miscellaneous file was a folder, "Olympic Relay 1956." The summer games that year were in Australia. There is only one mountain in the country named Olympus, and it's in Tasmania. Two livewire hams in the Tasmanian Division of WIA sold it on the idea of an Olympus to Olympus Relay, and were (of course) appointed by WIA as a committee of two to make it happen. And they did!

Along the way, they asked ARRL for help in locating a Greek station, in clearing the third-party issues, and in organizing back-up relay stations in case the direct route worked. A wet-behind-the-ears assistant secretary, who had only been aboard two years, coordinated the Hq. help which helped immeasurably in the entire success of the project.

When I opened the folder and peeked inside, I was shocked to find "Perry Williams, W1UED" had handled the ARRL coordination of the project; I had completely forgotten about it. Wow! Talk about job satisfaction -- so what if I occasionally eat dust on the job? 73, Perry, w1ued

The archives cover quite a variety of topics that tell many stories. For a recent radio club talk my folder included copies of:

- 12/8/1921 - original log of Paul F Godley in Scotland noting 1<sup>st</sup> reception of US signals in ARRL Transatlantic tests
- 5/24/1922 - correspondence about commercial manufacturing of radios on an assembly line (9ZN)
- 1932 - Madrid (Spain) International Radio and Telegraph Conferences (10" of paperwork)
- 2/18./1936 - letter to Directors announcing that ARRL President HP Maxim, W1AW, had passed away
- 1937+38 - photos showing construction of W1AW building and antennas
- 12/7/1941 - W1AW log showing bulletins sent to shut down Amateur Radio in WWII
- 1957 - FCC Report & Order agreeing with ARRL that Part 15 interference limits should not be relaxed

As we get closer to completing the inventory of paper archives, and still have quite a job ahead with the physical artifacts, it is not too early to be considering how we can best use our collection. It is now quite useful for scholars and researchers, but its best use will ultimately be when we have the resources to display the collection and tell many stories that are waiting to be told about the early history of radio, radio amateurs and the ARRL. This will require several thousand square feet of display space, and the staff support to make it come alive.

*Tom Frenaye*

Historical Committee  
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