

**Report of the Historical Committee  
to the July 2007 meeting of the ARRL Board**

The Historical Committee cares for and administers the ARRL's considerable collection of preserved documents and donated artifacts. Most of the documents are located in a caged area on the 2nd floor of the League's offices in Newington, CT, and most of the artifacts are displayed in the foyer and first floor hallway. Care and cataloging of the collection are provided by the part-time services of Perry Williams W1UED, and volunteers, principally Charles Griffin W1GYR.

Cataloging of the document collection is important work and cannot be accomplished quickly if any degree of thoroughness is to be achieved. A single folder can take approximately 40 minutes to peruse, and if significant content is discovered therein, that can extend to an entire day of more of examination, cataloging and cross-referencing.

This level of investigation requires considerable experience and institutional memory. Otherwise the significance of some of the documents can be overlooked. While Mr. Williams and Mr. Griffin have considerable experience and depth of knowledge in this regard, it is important that more staff and volunteers become involved in this effort, and that they be educated in the procedures of institutional archiving and radio and League history. In the future as the committee as a whole examines these requirements, I would anticipate a forthcoming request for additional staff and volunteers to be funded/recruited. The target for this request to be formalized is the January 2008 board meeting.

With the amateur radio population's recent awareness of the treasures in the League's collection, donations are increasing. It is important that the committee establish policies for accession and deaccession of documents and artifacts, as well as a policy for borrowing from and loaning to the collection that is consonant with American Association of Museums (AAM) guidelines. The importance and value of the League's collection cannot be overstated. Many pieces of the collection go beyond interesting to the level of irreplaceable evidence of the very foundations of radio the the League per se. The process of cataloging is also the process of discovering and recognizing the value of individual documents and artifacts. The "wow" factor is considerable, and great excitement is evident when a long lost document/artifact is again brought to light. This is fascinating work and deserves the League's full support.

A case in point was a recent discover which I am happy to be able to formally announce at this time. The source was the Secretary's letter No. 226, dated April 14, 1934, in an "NBC" file. NBC had proposed a 13-part series called "QST Sketches." These were subsequently aired on the NBC-WEAF network on Tuesday evenings as 15 minute (!) "dramatic" stories citing the "courage, resources and persistence of America's amateur radio operators." The first episode, "The Palm Beach Hurricane," aired on June 12, 1934. Other programs included "Radio at Neah Bay," and "Blizzard on the Rails." The programs continued up to September 1934.

The idea originated with RCA Radiotron Company, yet they did not sign on as sponsors to avoid and possibility of commercial conflict. The stories were written by NBC staff writer George P. Lundam, based on material supplied by Clinton B. DeSoto, ARRL's Assistant to the Secretary. After each broadcast, listeners were encouraged to contact the League about how to become an amateur radio operator.

The original Secretary's letter signed by K. B. Warner is on file in the League's collection.

The cataloging effort has been helped considerably by grants from the YASME Foundation, first of which was for \$20,000, and a similar grant is pending. Mary Hobart has been instrumental in obtaining and coordinating these grants. The foundation requested that the League send them a detailed status report on the state of the collection and cataloging effort. Mr. Perry and Mr. Griffen's response to the grantor's request is illuminating and is attached to this report as it adds depth to the status of the League's preservation efforts.

Thank you to the Board of Directors for your continuing support of this important work.

Gary L. Johnston KI4LA, Chair  
ARRL Historical Committee  
June 20, 2007

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Attachment:

## History Project Report to The YASME Foundation

### OVERVIEW

For a number of years, the ARRL maintained a small museum of Amateur Radio artifacts in the lobby of its HQ, 225 Main Street, Newington, CT 06111. As the variety of activities supported by HQ grew over time, space for new people needed for these tasks took priority over less-necessary things. Finally, a few years ago, almost all of the artifacts had to be stored in warehouse space. Today, only about two percent of our museum treasures are on display in various parts of the building and W1AW.

Some day, when substantial resources are available, ARRL hopes to have a place where historic equipment can be displayed to the public. Only a small Fund for Historic Preservation has been gathered so far from the donations of interested amateurs and friends of amateur radio: The League, of course, is an organization recognized by the Internal Revenue Code under paragraph 501 (3) (c). Scant space is available for donated artifacts on speculation. Thus, the ARRL History Committee, currently chaired by Gary Johnston, KI4LA, Vice Director from the ARRL Great Lakes Division, has to approve any acquisitions of amateur radio equipment before acceptance.

Other portions of the collection – historical paper and photographic items; magazines, books, domestic and international documents; and memorabilia – were stored on the third floor of HQ. In 2003, these were relocated to a dedicated space approximately 350 square feet on the second floor “The Cage.”

We appreciate the continued interest and support of the YASME Foundation in preserving the history of Amateur Radio, its documents and its artifacts.

1. What is the overall scope of the project? The overall scope of the project is to identify and preserve the amateur radio equipment, documents, photographs and slides, magazines and books that are associated with the history of the ARRL for the benefit of current and future historians. This task is being carried out by Perry Williams, W1UED, part-time Archivist (16 hours/week) and Charles Griffen, W1GYR, a part-time volunteer (6 hours/week) who are members of the ARRL Historical Committee. A new addition to the Cage staff is Bob Allison, WB1GCM, a HQ volunteer tour guide, who is now working on the project between tours, and can access the Archive files from the guides' workstation in the lobby. He's scheduled for up to 6 hours/week when HQ tourists are scarce.

2. Into what segments is the project organized? The project is organized by categories: (a) equipment and memorabilia; (b) documents; (c) photographs (*QST* articles, ARRL Board meetings, and other significant events); (d) amateur and technical magazines, (e) FCC dockets and international conference papers, (f) earlier federal government documents of: the Bureau of Navigation, the Federal Radio Commission, and the Federal Communications Commission [the U.S. regulators of Amateur Radio successively from 1912 to the present]; (g) QSL collections from long-time Vice President Wayland M. Groves, W5NW, [after retirement from the oil business, "Soupy" Groves took trips as a maritime radioman now and then]; Samuel G. Ashdown, W4HLY, a military man and world traveler, and George Hart, W1NJM, retired Communications Manager—all of which gathered extensive QSL troves. A special QSL treat in the Archives: The Morris Guzick W5IO (ex-W5BGP), DXCC QSL Album, covering all DXCC countries authorized as of the date it was compiled (Morris was W5 QSL Bureau Manager for years, incidentally).

Progress to July 1, 2007

(h) The Archives of the International Amateur Radio Union, essentially complete from 1925 to the 1980s in the "Cage." They comprise fifteen file drawers, with one more (discovered late) still being preserved and edited. IARU country files for the 1990s and later are considered active, and are still located in the EVP suite.

(i) QSL cards—The bulk of the cards received from members or their families have been sorted (perhaps a few of special interest retained) and most cards sent on to the world-wide non-profit QSL Archives in Vienna, Austria [Shipping address for them: ORF/QSL, Argentinierstrasse 30A, A-1040, Vienna, Austria. Also see its website: [www.qsl.at](http://www.qsl.at) <<http://www.qsl.at/>> .] Cards from George Hart, W1NJM and the estate of W4HLY have been sent; a box of cards from of W5NW's station remains to be examined.

3. What is the estimated completion percentage for each area?

(a) Equipment and memorabilia – Dr. Jim Maxwell, W6CF, (now a Silent Key) about five years ago completed as "walk around" inventory of ARRL hallways, offices to identify amateur radio equipment and memorabilia. The items on display in the former Museum of Amateur Radio in the lobby are stored in boxes outside the archival room or in rented space off-campus. When he died, Jim was the Director from the ARRL Pacific Division and a member of the ARRL Historical Committee.

(b) Documents - approximately 60% (97 of 133 file cabinets) of the collection have been examined and the contents entered into a data base.

(c) Photographs – no estimate has been made because the bulk of the collection has only been sorted by broad categories (*QST* by date, WWII military electronic equipment) and placed in file cabinet drawers. (Photographs that are contained with correspondence folders are added to the data base at the time the files are recorded.) There is a need for a specialist to examine the collections in greater detail and assist in the preservation of both black and white photographs and film negatives. A good overview of the major preservation needs is outlined in "Caring for Your Photographic Collection" prepared by The Library of Congress. A copy of the document is attached to this report, and can be found on the Web at <http://www.loc.gov/preserv/care/photo.html>

(d) Amateur and technical magazines – Little has been done with these collections except to house them in the archival room ("the cage") and outside on nearby shelving. These represent the equivalent of 40 boxes (15" x 20" x 10") in the collection. In addition, there are another approximately 5 shelves of magazines (perhaps 1500 items) in another area of the building. These probably amount to another 15 boxes.

(e) FCC dockets and International Conference documents are all listed, except for some new arrivals from the EVP area.

(f) Other Federal government documents: little more has been done with this collection other than placing them on a shelf with appropriate labeling.

(g) QSL cards – the bulk of the cards have been sorted, a few selected cards retained and the remainder sent to the QSL card Archive in Vienna, Austria. These include those belonging to Samuel G. Ashford, W4HLY, and George Hart, W1NJM. The collection (1 box) of cards from the station of Wayland M. “Soupy” Groves W5NW, longtime Vice President of the League, has not been examined by the Archives crew to date, but there are plans to place many groups of them in albums for browsing.

(h) The Archives of the International Amateur Radio Union, founded in 1925, are essentially complete through the 1980s in the Archives workspace. They fill 16 file drawers (one is still being worked on, re the earliest years of the Union.). More-recent IARU files are still active in the EVP suite.

4. What determines the sequence and priorities within the project? The sequence and priorities of the project are defined by the ARRL Historical Committee, but the day-to-day decisions are made by the Archivist.

5. What is the projected time frame for completion of the project? With the present level of three part-time workers it will require another estimated four years to complete the processing and data entry of the document, amateur and technical magazines and books, and QSL card collections. The time required to examine and process new acquisitions from ARRL staff, board members, amateurs and their families, and institutions has not been factored into the four year estimate.

Acquisitions since September 2002

#### COLLECTIONS, GIFTS AND MEMORIALS

Since 2002. Compiled 06/25-07 To 09-2007

The William N. Anton, W3KJD/K4ATZ Memorial Collection, donated

by the Vienna Wireless Society of Virginia: commercial and amateur licenses in the forties,

WERS permit 1943, MD Civil Defense Certificate and fingerprint card; amateur certificates and

Awards. [We did not accept Anton’s homemade equipment because of a lack of space.]

Accession about 3/31/2005.

Buddy Robins Memorial Collection: memoirs, QSLs, and logs for ham radio operations under all these calls: W2KN, W2JKN, W8RSA, FG8AYO, EA8BUC, G5AVF [Isle of Man]; and as Portable /KL7. /PJ7, /KV4, FG/. Gift of Buddy’s widow and fellow traveler Cherry Robins. Accession January 7, 2007. Most of his QSLs were sent to the QSL archive in Vienna and the logs to David Patton, NN1N, Membership and Volunteer Programs Manager, for inclusion in LoTW when/as time permits.

Vincent S. Balhorn, 1-16-2007, Gift of books and magazines: 2 Copies, 1972 *License Manual; A Course in Radio Fundamentals, 1972; The Radio Handbook*, Editors & Engineers, 12th & 13th Editions; *The Novice and General Class Amateur Radio Q & A, 2nd Edition ;CQ Amateur Radio*, July 1980; and *Amateur Radio Action*, December 1981.[Added to the ARRL Technical Library].

Deed of Gift, Lou Schall W1JLI, 1966 ARRL National Convention brochure, Boston April 22-24. This work is 45 pages long, and its list notes on Convention speakers is a *mini-who's who of Amateur Radio*. Accession 5-11-2006.

Archives of the Intercontinental Traffic Net, 1960-2004; donated by long-time Net Secretary, Ruth Hoffman, N4MLC, Accession 12-15-2004. It includes net directories, meeting photographs, scrapbook in 3-inch ring binder, film, audio & videotapes, etc.

Samuel G. Ashdown, W4HLY, Memorial Collection, Silent Key April 2, 1997

(Collection housed in 2 boxes on top of Cabinets 6 & 7), Edited 11/16/2006; photos, logs, DXCC credits, QSLs, licenses etc., of a very active ham and traveler. [QSL cards sent to Vienna, Austria QSL Collection June 2007].

Stephen K. Stone, N1AOB, gift of the actual DeMaw 140- Watt Solid-state Linear Amplifier built for a QST article and used in the 1979 ARRL Radio Amateur's Handbook, Page 6-40. Accession July 1, 2005. Now on display in Lab showcase.

Roger K. Hansen, KL7HFQ, gift of First Day Covers, 1964 Amateur Radio Stamp, Alaskan Earthquake and the 50th Anniversary of ARRL. Accession, April 4th,2007. [Panels of the stamps were on file, but no First Day Covers until this spontaneous gift.]

Walter R. Supina, N3WS, Amateur Radio Contest and Award Papers, Central Radio Club of the USSR, accession July 18, 2006.

William L.Coale, PhD, W8WC, Replica of the Wouff Hong, 1st.Great Lakes Division Convention, May 27-29, 1950. Accession 5-18-2006. [Stored in Programs and Services Department, for loan to ROWH teams at ARRL Conventions.]

The Emil H. Fahrlander, W0YOD, Memorial Collection - ARRL Archives, donated by his son Daniel C. Fahrlander, W8MHC: books, magazines, and artifacts. Accession 05-01-2003. A List of items and their condition is on file and can be e-mailed on request: to w1ued@arrl.org. The prize artifact of the collection is a Micrograph offset speed key of 1908.

G D Steele, W1NFG, gift of a 24-record set, Basic Radio Code, United States armed Forces Institute. Accession 7-25-2003.

Arthur M. Gentry, W6MEP Memorial Collection,—Documents relating to building and maintaining the W6MEP and K6MYK open repeaters, in two very full file drawers, one on technical matters, the other organizational , (including dealing with uncooperative users, remote sites, supplying electrical power to them, replacing antenna elements in the dead of winter etc). A “Ten Best Acquisitions” entry, gift Of William W. Ahrens, N6NMC, 04-01-2003, full of human-interest anecdotes.

The Francis Edward Handy, W1BDI, Memorial Collection ARRL Archives, Donated by son Richard A. Handy, ex-W1RZP. Accession September 15, 2004 . Documents, personal letters, FEH's desk copy of the Radio Amateurs' Handbook, First Edition, 1925, [the copy used to make a facsimile of that edition, as a premium, for the 2006 Handbook]; FEH's custom-bound Retirement Presentation Book, four picture albums; and other loose photos. Another Ten Best entry!

THE DEXTER ANDERSON, W4KM, COLLECTION. Translations from Russian-Language Amateur Radio magazines 1976 to 2000 of high interest to Amateurs during the Cold War. A long time Foreign Service Officer of the State Department, Anderson also sent along various official documents bearing on worldwide Communications Conferences.. Thirty six listings on two pages. Accession September 13, 2004

In Memory of Norman J. Clark, W9IUR, Mrs. Norman J. (Lee) Clark, Donor. Gift of five ARRL books, two of them First Editions. Accession 9-2-2006.

Logbook of British/ 2BHM, beginning in 1930. Contacts, technical notes, schematics, photos of DX operators etc. Beautiful work. Gift of John Bazley, VK4OQ, Accession 06/28/2007. A well-kept photo album of U. S. radio amateurs and short-wave listeners, from the 1930s, also a gift of John Bazley, VK4OQ. Accession 12-23-2006.

The W1AW Cellar Collection Via Joe Carcia, NJ1Q, Station Manager, W1AW. Accession 09-08-2003; editing completed 12-10-2003.

6. What additional resources could be contributed to the project?

- (a) A part-time clerical person to assist the Archivist with correspondence, donation acknowledgements, document labeling and maintenance of the Archivist's and ARRL Historical Committee files.
- (b) Photographic preservationist to organize and care for the black and white photographs and negative films now housed in file cabinets. In addition, it would be desirable for this person to help treat and preserve paper correspondence particularly paper used during WWII and telegrams which have become yellow with age. Please refer to "Caring for Your Photographic Collection" attached to this report.
- (c) Equipment – florescent lighting suitable for an archival storage area, photographic storage cabinets, portable light box for viewing film negatives and slides, paper and photographic preservation supplies and library-type book shelving.
- (d) What major challenges are faced by the project? The most pressing immediate need is for younger people to work on the project in order to become familiar with the contents of the collections and the routines of the Archivist and volunteer because the Archivist and original volunteer are both over 75 years of age. Another challenge is to decide where the project is headed. Will it form the basis for the reestablishment of the former Museum of Amateur Radio; creation of a virtual museum; provide the resources for updating of Two Hundred Meters and Down; and offer scholars, ARRL staff and amateurs an accessible resource? The collection provides a rich history of amateur radio (1914 to date) and the contribution its' members have made to the advancement of communications and in times of disasters.

Prepared for the ARRL Historical Committee by Charles S. Griffen, W1GYR

June 6, 2007

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Other contributors: Mary Hobart, K1MHH, Chief Development Officer  
and Perry Williams, W1UED, Archivist

